

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Installation of Bird Flight Diverters on Transmission Lines Crossing Port of Vancouver, WA Property

Project No.: N/A

Project Manager: Stefan Fraering TELC-TPP-3

Location: Clark County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.6 Additions and modifications to transmission facilities

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration proposes to install bird flight diverters on portions of four lines crossing through the Port of Vancouver property, in Vancouver, Washington. Bird flight diverters would be placed on four spans of the Ross-Alcoa No. 2 and 3 230-kV lines, on two spans of the Ross-Carbordundum No. 1 115-kV line, on one span of the Ross-Rivergate No. 1 230-kV line, and on one span of the Ross-St. Johns No. 1 230-kV line. The installation would include three different types of bird flight diverters. Three hundred thirty-five extruded plastic spiral Swan Flight Diverters and 151 small (approximately 10-inches in diameter) Avisphere aluminum marker balls painted yellow and red would be used on the conductors. Three hundred and eighty Firefly High Wind clamp-on diverters would be used on the overhead ground wires.

The area under the transmission lines would first be mowed to allow vehicular travel. A boom truck would then be driven under the transmission lines and the bird flight diverters would be installed from the bucket of the truck. Construction is expected to take approximately a week and will take place during the late summer/early fall of 2017.

Findings: In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) of the Department of Energy's (DOE) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Regulations (57 FR 15144, Apr. 24, 1992, as amended at 61 FR 36221-36243, July 9, 1996; 61 FR 64608, Dec. 6, 1996, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011), BPA has determined that the proposed action:

- (1) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D (see attached Environmental Checklist);
- (2) does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- (3) has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

/s/ Douglas F Corkran
Douglas F. Corkran
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel
Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: August 22, 2017

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Checklist

This checklist documents environmental considerations for the proposed project and explains why the project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources and would meet other integral elements of the applied categorical exclusion.

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Project Site Description

The project location is in the BPA corridor under the Ross-Alcoa No. 2 and 3, the Ross-Carbordundum No. 1, the Ross-Rivergate No. 1 230-kV, and the Ross-St. Johns No. 1 lines on Port of Vancouver property. The site is approximately two miles west of downtown Vancouver, WA. The surrounding topography consists of Columbia River floodplain, with industrial areas to the east and south. The project area contains a number of seasonal wetlands and there are some open water areas nearby. A wetland mitigation bank exists near the project area.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. Historic and Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> BPA archaeologist reviewed proposed activities and determined that these activities at the project area for the installation of the bird flight diverters does not have potential to cause effects to historic or cultural resources.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There would be no soil disturbance for the installation of the bird flight diverters. The bucket truck would set up on the existing ground surface with no earthwork needed. All work is occurring in established BPA rights-of-way.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project would be occurring in BPA rights-of-way currently managed for vegetation growth. The existing reed canarygrass and small shrubs would be mowed prior to installation of the bird flight diverters to allow vehicular traffic. There would be no effect to any listed or special-status species.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project is located in a floodplain and wetland area. Wildlife in the area would be temporarily disturbed by construction. The purpose of the project is to improve the conditions for birds, particularly waterfowl, which are susceptible to colliding with BPA's lines. No ESA-listed species would be affected by the project. Mowing of the project area will take place after the nesting season for migratory birds.		

5. **Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish**
(including federal/state special-status
species and ESUs)



Explanation: The project area is located within the Columbia River floodplain, and sometimes floods during high flows. Work will take place during the late summer/early fall when the ground is dry. No fill or removal would take place. Bucket trucks and crew vehicles would drive over the ground surface. There would be no in-water work occurring.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: Some of the project area contains seasonal wetlands. These wetlands dry up during the summer. Work will take place during the late summer/early fall when the ground is dry. No fill or removal would take place. Vehicles would drive on existing access roads or over the ground surface. No new roads would be constructed. Vegetation would be mowed and/or crushed, but not removed. Only some very minor, temporary impacts to wetlands would occur.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The project would not impact groundwater or aquifers.

8. **Land Use and Specially Designated Areas**



Explanation: The land use would not change, and there would be no effect to access or current uses.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The installation of the bird flight diverters would cause the lines to be more visible from adjacent areas, especially River Road to the south and the industrial park to the east. However, no sensitive viewing areas (e.g., homes, recreation areas, etc.) are located nearby; thus, impacts to visual quality would be minor.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions would occur during installation.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Temporary construction noise would occur during daylight hours. No ongoing noise increase would result.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No changes.

Evaluation of Other Integral Elements

The proposed project would also meet conditions that are integral elements of the categorical exclusion. The project would not:

- Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those of the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health.

Explanation, if necessary:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: The project would be occurring on Port of Vancouver-owned property. BPA is in coordination with landowner.

Based on the foregoing, this proposed project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts to any environmentally sensitive resource.

Signed: /s/ Douglas F Corkran
Douglas F. Corkran, ECT-4

Date: August 22, 2017