

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Qualco Energy Small Generator Integration

**Project No.:** G0659

**Project Manager:** Chad N. Caldwell, TPCF-OLYMPIA

**Location:** Snohomish County, Washington

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B1.7 Electronic equipment

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to integrate a small generation project into its balancing authority (BA) in response to a request from Snohomish Public Utility District No. 1 (Snohomish PUD). Qualco Energy, a Snohomish PUD customer, is constructing a 675-kilowatt (kW) biogas-fueled engine generator at their existing facility, which is serviced by Snohomish PUD's Woods Creek Substation. In order to integrate the proposed generation, BPA and Snohomish PUD would enter into an agreement stating that Snohomish PUD would install, test, calibrate, and energize a single generation dedicated revenue meter and associated telecommunication equipment at the Qualco Energy generation site and at Woods Creek Substation. Under this agreement, the meter and associated equipment would be owned, operated, and maintained by Snohomish PUD. However, Snohomish PUD would provide BPA access to the meter to monitor the generation output from the Qualco Energy generator. BPA would not fund or carry out any ground-disturbing activities or substation structural modifications.

**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, Jul. 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/ W. Walker Stinnette

W. Walker Stinnette

Contract Environmental Protection Specialist

Salient CRGT

Reviewed by:

/s/ Carol P. Leiter

Carol P. Leiter

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey C. Grange                      July 8, 2021

Katey C. Grange                      Date

NEPA Compliance Officer

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.

**Proposed Action:** Qualco Energy Small Generator Integration

## **Project Site Description**

BPA's proposed small generator integration activities would occur indoors at existing facilities, including Qualco Energy's generation site and Snohomish PUD's Woods Creek Substation, located near Monroe, Snohomish County, Washington.

## **Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources**

### **1. Historic and Cultural Resources**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing work or substation structural modifications is associated with BPA's generation integration activities. Therefore, the proposed undertaking would not have the potential to cause effects on historic properties, assuming such historic properties were present.

### **2. Geology and Soils**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing work is associated with BPA's generation integration activities. Therefore, the proposed integration would not impact geology and soils.

### **3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing work is associated with BPA's generation integration activities. Therefore, the proposed integration would have no effect on special-status plant species or habitats.

### **4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing work is associated with BPA's generation integration activities, and the activities would not create noise with the potential to disturb or disrupt wildlife. Therefore, the proposed integration would have no effect on special-status wildlife species or habitats.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing or in-water work is associated with BPA's generation integration activities. Therefore, the proposed integration would not impact water bodies and floodplains and would have no effect on special-status fish species or habitats.

## **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing work is associated with BPA's generation integration activities. Therefore, the proposed integration would not impact wetlands.

## **7. Groundwater and Aquifers**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing work is associated with BPA's generation integration activities, and no new wells or other uses of groundwater or aquifers is proposed. Therefore, the proposed integration would not impact groundwater and aquifers.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA's generation integration activities would not require a change in land use and would have no impact on any specially-designated areas.

## **9. Visual Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA's generation integration activities would not impact visual quality.

## **10. Air Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA's generation integration activities would not impact air quality.

## **11. Noise**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA's generation integration activities would not create noise with the potential to disturb or disrupt any noise-sensitive receptors. There would be no long-term change in ambient noise.

## **12. Human Health and Safety**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA's generation integration activities would not adversely affect the health and safety of BPA employees, its customers, or the public.

## **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: N/A

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

Explanation: N/A

**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: N/A

**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: N/A

### **Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description: No landowner notification, involvement, or coordination is required.

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

Signed: /s/ W. Walker Stinnette July 8, 2021  
W. Walker Stinnette, EC-4 Date  
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist  
Salient CRGT