

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Slatt and Bakeoven Substation Series Capacitor Upgrades

PP&A No.: 3765

Project Manager: Amy Gardner – TEP-TPP-1

Location: Gilliam and Wasco Counties, Oregon

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.3 Routine Maintenance

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to conduct maintenance upgrades to the series capacitor equipment at its Slatt and Bakeoven substations in Gilliam and Wasco counties, Oregon. At Slatt substation, BPA proposes to add arrestors to the lines associated with series capacitors and to replace the existing retired Thyristor Controlled Series Capacitor (TCSC) with a new fixed series capacitor. The existing TCSC platform would be stripped of its assets and the new series capacitors would be installed on this platform. Additionally, the TCSC control building and the associated fiber optic system and cooling system would be removed and disposed of. All activities and staging areas would be within the existing substation fence line.

At Bakeoven Substation, BPA proposes to add capacitor cans to the existing series capacitors. The existing capacitor racks have open spaces for the additional cans and no ground disturbance will be necessary for these activities. Additionally, BPA would add arrestors to the lines associated with series capacitors. All activities and staging areas would be within the existing substation fence line.

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/ Emma Reinemann

Emma Reinemann

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: March 16, 2018

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: Slatt and Bakeoven Substation Series Capacitor Upgrades

Project Site Description

Slatt Substation is located approximately 2.5 miles southeast of the town of Arlington, Oregon in BPA’s Tri-Cities district, Section 35 of Township 3N, Range 21 E. All project activities at Slatt would take place within the substation fence line. The surrounding area includes farmland and rangeland that consists of undeveloped terrain surrounded by grassland and shrub-steppe habitat.

Bakeoven Substation is located approximately 8.5 miles east of the town of Maupin, Oregon in BPA’s The Dalles district, Section 2 of Township 5S, Range 15 E. All project activities at Bakeoven would take place within the substation fence line. . The surrounding area includes farmland and rangeland that consists of undeveloped terrain surrounded by grassland and shrub-steppe habitat.

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The work is located within the substations and consists of replacing/upgrading existing equipment; therefore, there is no potential for effect to historic properties. Slatt substation is located in an area of extreme cultural sensitivity and it is important that all project activities remain within the boundaries of the substation.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project includes excavation within previously disturbed substation yards; therefore, the project would have no impact to geology in soils.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No known federal/special status species are present in the project area. Since the project will take place in the substation yard, it is expected that the area of impact will already be free of vegetation and plants will not be impacted.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project area does not include habitat for any special status species. A species list for the Slatt project area was generated from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service on February 22, 2018 for the proposed project and was given the consultation code: 01E0FW00-2018-SLI-0250. The list included Threatened and Endangered listed, proposed, and candidate species potentially occurring in the project area. No critical habitat is present in the project area and the only ESA listed species was Bull Trout. Bull Trout are known to use the Columbia River for migration, but the project would be approximately 2.5 miles away and would have no effect.		

A species list for the Bakeoven project area was generated from the USFWS on February 28, 2018 for the proposed project and was given the consultation code: 01EOFW00-2018-SLI-0263. The species list stated that no Threatened and Endangered listed, proposed, or candidate species are potentially occurring in the project area. No critical habitat is present in the project area. Proposed actions at Bakeoven substation would have no effect on ESA species or critical habitat.

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

Explanation: All project activities at Slatt substation will occur approximately 2.5 miles from the nearest water body, which is the Columbia River, and will have no impact due to distance.

The closest stream to Bakeoven substation that supports anadromous fish is Buck Hollow Creek, approximately 2.7 miles away. The project will have no impact on the creek due to distance. There is a seasonal stream approximately 300 feet west of Bakeoven substation that drains to a pond approximately 1/3 mile southwest of the substation. Erosion control measures will be implemented to prevent off-site sediment migration.

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: There are no wetlands in the vicinity of the projects at Slatt or Bakeoven.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: Spill prevention measures will be utilized during construction activities. The projects would not provide a pathway for groundwater contamination.

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

Explanation: No change in land use would occur and project activities would not impact land use.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: There would be no change to the visual quality of the areas as a result of the proposed activities.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: The project would have no significant impacts on air quality; however a small amount of vehicle emissions and dust may occur during construction.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: Some temporary construction noise would occur during daylight hours. The operational noise of the substations would not change.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: During project activity all standard safety protocols would be followed. Project activities would not impact human health or safety.

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: NA

- 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: NA

- 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: NA

- 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: NA

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Bakeoven is jointly owned by BPA and Wasco Electric Coop, Inc. who will be notified of all changes prior to construction. Slatt substation is owned by BPA so no notification or coordination is necessary.

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

Signed: /s/ Emma Reinemann
Emma Reinemann
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: March 16, 2018