

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: LSN Ross Franklin Fiber Optic Vault and Cable Installation

Project No.: LURR 20180311

Project Manager: James Hall

Location: Klickitat County, WA

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.9 Multiple use powerline rights-of-way and B4.7 Fiber Optic Cable

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration proposes to allow LS Networks (LSN) to install an underground 7' x 7' utility vault approximately 10 feet from an existing BPA vault near the McNary-Ross No. 1 transmission line structure 116/3 in Klickitat County, WA. LS Networks would install underground conduit from the BPA vault to the new LSN customer vault, and continue trenching approximately 385 feet of underground conduit to an existing Klickitat Public Utility District pole south of the BPA right-of-way to connect to the LSN fiber optic network.

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/ Christopher H. Furey

Christopher H. Furey
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: November 9, 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: Ross Franklin Fiber Optic Vault and Cable Installation

Project Site Description

The fiber optic cable and vault installation would be on maintained BPA right-of-way. The site is located in Township 3 North, Range 11 East, and Section 7. The project area consists of the area near the McNary-Ross No. 1 transmission line structure 116/3 with some low grasses and shrub vegetation at an elevation of approximately 1,440 feet. The surrounding topography consists of rolling land and flat areas with neighboring parcels comprised of forested areas, some developed rural homesites, and some farmed land. A review of the National Wetland Inventory, soil information, topography, and aerial photos did not reveal any wetlands or waterbodies at the site. A freshwater pond and freshwater emergent wetlands are located over 800 feet northwest of the project location. Jewett Creek and an identified unnamed creek are located approximately over 700 feet to the east and south of the project location. The city of White Salmon, WA is located about 2 miles south of the project location.

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"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> BPA archaeologist reviewed proposed activities and determined that these activities at the project area for the installation of the fiber optic cable and vault do not have potential to cause effects to historic or cultural resources.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> There would be some soil disturbance for installation of the fiber optic vault and cable. Some digging is expected for the installation. All work is occurring in the established BPA right-of-way. Note: Use BMPs for limiting soil erosion and dispersion.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The project would be occurring in the BPA right-of-way that is currently managed for low-growing vegetation. In addition, there are no listed or special-status species present.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The work would be in established BPA right-of-way. The site is not identified to provide northern spotted owl habitat or nesting sites. Installation of the vault and cable is expected to occur during daytime hours with limited to no effect to wildlife species, including any listed or special-status species.</p>		

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



Explanation: The nearest freshwater pond is located over 800 feet northwest of the project location. Jewett Creek and an unnamed creek are located over 700 feet to the east and south of the project location and would not be impacted by the vault and fiber optic cable installation. There would be no in-water work occurring and project activities would not be near the pond or creek.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No wetlands are present in the project area. There are freshwater emergent wetlands located over 800 feet northwest of the project location.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The shallow digging for the project would not impact groundwater or aquifers.

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



Explanation: There would be no impact to land use or specially designated areas. The National Gorge Scenic Area is located 2,500 feet west of the project area.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: There would be limited visual changes to the project area or surrounding environment by installation of the vault next to the transmission structure and existing BPA vault in the BPA right-of-way.

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 is expected.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No direct impact.

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: BPA Realty in coordination with LS Networks for this project.

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

Signed: /s/ Christopher H. Furey
Christopher H. Furey, ECT-4

Date: November 9, 2018