

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Heyburn-Adelaide No.1 Transmission Line Loop for Rural Substation Interconnection

Project No.: L0468

Project Manager: Charla Burke – TEPS-TPP-1

Location: Minidoka County, Idaho

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.11 Electrical power substations and interconnection facilities

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to create a loop from BPA's Heyburn-Adelaide No.1 transmission line between existing structures 6/2 and 6/3 into United Electric Co-op, Inc.'s (UEC) new substation. The loop would include replacing existing wood-pole structure 6/2 with a new wood pole, installing three light-duty steel single-pole structures (6/4, 6/5, and 6/7), installing two light-duty steel H-frame pole structures with disconnect switches mounted on steel lattice stands (6/3 and 6/6), and modifying the cable connections at 6/8 (existing 6/3). At the base of each switch structure and associated stand, grounding mats would be installed along with grounding rods then covered with 3-inch imported rock. Grounding mats would have footprints measuring approximately 10 feet by 30 feet. BPA would then string conductor from existing structure 6/1 of the Heyburn-Adelaide No. 1 transmission line through the newly-installed structures, terminating at new structure 6/8 (old structure 6/3). This work would allow UEC to interconnect their new 138/12.47-kV Rural Substation with BPA's transmission system.

No roadwork is proposed for this interconnection project, however, structure landings may be needed in order for vehicles and equipment to safely operate. This may involve grading an area approximately 20 feet by 60 feet directly adjacent to the new structures.

General equipment used for structure and switch installation work includes: excavator, augur truck, tractor-trailer, transmission line bucket truck, transport dump trucks, dozer, grader, and vibratory roller compactor.

In addition to structure and switch installation, BPA would be providing and installing a new revenue metering rack inside UEC's new Rural Substation control house. BPA's metering rack would include one revenue meter along with the associated air circuit breakers, isolation knife switches, and a separate cellular modem for remote communication.

BPA would also obtain an easement from UEC adjacent to its existing Heyburn-Adelaide No.1 transmission line encompassing the area where the proposed line loop equipment would be installed.

A construction storage area may be required for the proposed work, however, a location has yet to be identified. Any newly identified work areas would be environmentally reviewed prior to its use on the project.

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/ Laura Roberts

Laura Roberts
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

<u>/s/ Katey C. Grange</u>	<u>July 25, 2022</u>
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: Heyburn-Adelaide No.1 Transmission Line Loop for Rural Substation Interconnection

Project Site Description

The proposed structures and switch installation to accommodate UEC's Rural Substation interconnection is located along the existing Heyburn-Adelaide No. 1 transmission line right-of-way (ROW) on private land in southern Idaho's Minidoka County (T9S, R24E, Sections 30). The project area occurs within an active agricultural plot surrounded by agricultural, residential, and industrial land uses. Surface waters in the general vicinity of the proposed project consist of an agricultural canal and several wetlands.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: On March 30, 2021, BPA sent an initiation of consultation letter under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) to the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation, the Shoshone Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation, and the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation (Consulting Parties). The letter informed the Consulting Parties of the project and provided an opportunity for the Consulting Parties to provide information on the Project Area of Potential Effects (APE). SHPO concurred with the APE by letter on April 16, 2021. Following which, a cultural resources field survey was conducted within the APE that resulted in no cultural resources being found. On August 11, 2021, the field survey report and BPA's determination letter of No Adverse Effect was sent to the Consulting Parties for a 30-day review period. SHPO concurred with BPA's determination on September 21, 2021. No other responses were received within the 30-day review period. During construction, any ground-disturbing activities would adhere to BPA's Unanticipated Discovery Plan for cultural resources.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A small amount of soil disturbance would occur at the structure and switch installation locations from grading of equipment landings and construction of structures and switches. Any un-rocked areas of soil disturbance would be restored and seeded with a climate appropriate mix.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A small amount of temporary disturbance and permanent removal of agricultural land would occur at the structure and switch installation locations from grading of equipment landings

and construction. The proposed project would have no effect to Federal/state special-status plant species or habitats.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: In general, the project would have temporary noise and disturbance impacts to local wildlife related to elevated equipment noise and human presence, but any disturbed wildlife would temporarily disperse to adjacent habitat during the temporary disturbance. There are no federal/state special-status species or habitat present within the general vicinity of the project.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The nearest water body, a non-fish bearing agricultural canal, occurs approximately 450 feet from proposed project ground disturbance. The project would have no impact to surface waters and there would be no effect to Federal/state special-status fish species or habitats.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The nearest wetland occurs approximately 650 feet from proposed project ground disturbance. The project would have no impact on wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project area occurs in an existing agricultural plot that historically exhibited a high water table resulting from irrigation. Depending on the groundwater levels at the time of construction, there may be isolated impacts to localized groundwater resulting from the excavating and auguring required for the proposed project. However, these impacts would be temporary as the area would be stabilized and seeded following construction.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A small amount of agricultural land would be converted into transmission line land use as a result of this project. There would be no change in specially-designated areas as a result of the proposed project.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed line loop interconnection project would cause visual changes to the project area and immediate surroundings. These changes would be minimal and consistent with the existing transmission line right of way and new UEC Rural Substation.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A small amount of vehicle emissions and dust may occur temporarily during construction.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary construction noise would occur during daylight hours. No ongoing noise increase is expected for this area as a result of the proposed line loop interconnection project.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No impacts to human health and safety are anticipated to result from the proposed project.

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: BPA Realty is in coordination with the adjacent landowners and easement holders.

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

Signed: /s/ Laura Roberts July 25, 2022
Laura Roberts, ECT-4 Date
Environmental Protection Specialist