

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Bell Substation Security Upgrades

Project Manager: Gerri Colburn—TEPF-CSB-2

Location: Spokane County, Washington

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 remove a 7-foot-tall chain-link fence surrounding the Bell Substation and Maintenance Headquarters (MHQ) and replace it with a new 8-foot-tall chain-link fence (9,211 linear feet). Approximately, 100 feet of the fence would be realigned. Small portions of curb, sidewalk, and asphalt would be removed and replaced as needed for the fence installation. Additionally, approximately 1,640 linear feet of fencing salvaged from the perimeter fence would be used for interior fence replacement around the shunt capacitor banks. Four 4-foot-wide pedestrian gates, one 10-foot-wide gate, four 8-foot-wide gates, seven 20-foot-wide double swing gates, three 20-foot-wide pivot gates, and one 30-foot-wide double swing gate would be installed. Security card readers would be installed at some of the gates, as needed. Three inches of aggregate rock would be spread around the perimeter of the energized yard.

The grounding system in the substation yard would be upgraded by installing 2,200 linear feet of conductor 18 inches below the surface. Approximately, 100-cubic yards of switchyard rock would also be replaced in conjunction with the grounding system upgrades.

Ten 20-foot-tall poles would be installed to mount security cameras to. The poles would have a 6-foot-deep footing. Approximately, 3,300 feet of trenching would occur (4-foot-wide by 3-foot-deep) to install power conduit to the new pole locations.

Additionally, a new 7-foot-tall fence (2,680 linear feet) would be installed around the laydown yard and storage building, located on the north side of E. Hawthorne Road, across the street from Bell Maintenance Headquarters. The removed Bell substation fence would be reused at the laydown yard location. A 4-foot-wide pedestrian gate would also be installed at the entrance. Rock would be put down around the perimeter of the fence (approximately 3-foot wide by 3-inches deep). Several conifer trees would be removed for the fence installation. A small section of fencing and an existing gate would no longer be needed and therefore, would be removed for this 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/ Beth Belanger

Beth Belanger
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Flux Resources, LLC

Reviewed by:

/s/ Carol Leiter

Carol Leiter
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: February 5, 2020

Attachment: 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: Bell Substation Security Upgrades

Project Site Description

The proposed project is at BPA's Bell Substation in Spokane, Washington. The substation is in Section 16, Township 26 North, Range 43 East. The surrounding area is a mix of undeveloped land, with a smattering of commercial and industrial development; notably, the former Kaiser aluminum plant is located north of the substation and west of the laydown yard.

The site is in the Dartford-Creek-Little Spokane River watershed. There are no wetlands, streams, or other water bodies in the vicinity of 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"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> On August 7, 2019, a Section 106 initiation letter and an area of potential effects (APE) map were sent to the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Federation, Kalispell Tribe of Indians, Spokane Tribe of Indians, and Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). DAHP replied on the same day that they concur with BPA's APE. A no effect determination letter was sent to the consulting parties on December 23, 2019. On January 9, 2020, DAHP concurred with BPA's determination. As of January 23, 2020, the remaining consulting parties have not responded.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> During construction, all appropriate Best Management Practices would be used to implement site-specific erosion and sediment control. Excavated spoils would be disposed of in a BPA-approved location. All disturbed areas would be stabilized and seeded.</p>		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The project is largely a like-for-like fence replacement that would only involve minimal disturbance to vegetated areas. Several juniper trees would be removed for the project. There would be no effects to Federal/state special-status species or habitats.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> There are no known occurrences of Federal/state special-status species within five miles of the project area. The site does not have high quality habitat. Construction activities may temporarily displace non-listed wildlife but there would be no long-term impacts to wildlife.</p>		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> There are no water bodies, floodplains, or fish in the vicinity of the project location; therefore, there would be no impacts to these resources.</p>		

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: There are no wetlands at, or near, the project location; therefore, there would be no impacts to wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: The site is above an Environmental Protection Administration (EPA) Region 10 Sole Source Aquifer known as the Spokane Valley Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer. The groundwater at the site is approximately 160-feet below surface level and the maximum depth of disturbance would be 6 feet.

Spill prevention measures would be utilized during construction activities. The project would not provide a pathway for groundwater contamination.

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

Explanation: The land use would not change at the project site. Nor is the project within, or near, any specially-designated area, such as National Scenic Rivers.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: The visual quality would not change at the site. The project area is a large electrical substation, surrounded by undeveloped or industrialized land.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions would occur during construction; however, there would be no significant changes to air quality during or after construction.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: Construction noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours. Operational noise would not change.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: During project activities, 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:

- 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 area is on BPA-owned land, with no adjacent residences nearby that would warrant notification.

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

Signed: /s/ Beth Belanger

Beth Belanger, ECT-4
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Flux Resources, LLC

Date: February 5, 2020