

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Substation Equipment Upgrades and Expansion- Pasco Bundle (*Update to previous CX issued March 25, 2020*)

PP&A No.: 4,395

Project Manager: Sarah Sprague, TEPS-TPP-1

Location: Gilliam, Morrow, and Umatilla County, OR and Clark and Walla Walla County, WA

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.6 Additions and Modifications to Transmission Facilities, B1.7 Electronic Equipment

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to upgrade equipment at the following substations: Calpine, Coyote Springs, McNary, McNary Powerhouse, Pendleton, Ross, Roundup, Slatt, and Walla Walla. The proposed upgrades are necessary to maintain safe and reliable transmission infrastructure. This CX has been updated to reflect that a new HVAC system would be installed at Ross Substation.

Electronic equipment would be upgraded inside control houses at the Calpine Substation, Coyote Springs Substation, McNary Power House, Ross Substation, Slatt Substation, Walla Walla Substation. Equipment upgrades would include new switches and relays. New racks would be installed to accommodate the new electronic equipment. Small wall penetrations, such as drilling of holes to facilitate installation, may be required to accommodate the new equipment and racks. Additionally, a new HVAC system and concrete pad (3 feet by 4 feet) would be installed at Ross Substation. BPA would retire electronic equipment in the Roundup Substation control house.

Outside of the control houses, BPA would replace disconnect switches, risers, rod gaps, and install seismic risers and surge arrestors at McNary and Walla Walla Substations. BPA would also remove unused footings inside the Walla Walla substation yard by excavating the area around the footings, pulling the concrete from the ground, and backfilling with the hole with fill soil and substation rock as needed. Excavation would not exceed a depth of approximately 10 feet.

At the Pendleton Substation, BPA would expand the substation yard by approximately 4,000 square feet to accommodate a new control house. The old control house would be demolished. BPA would also construct a new entrance from the public road to the facility. In the yard, BPA would remove and replace a 69 kV circuit breaker, and associated current transformer equipment. Additionally, BPA would upgrade footings within the substation yard to meet current design standards for seismic criteria. BPA would also upgrade the electronic equipment inside the new substation control house.

Equipment used to perform this work may include a combination of the following: dump trucks, bulldozers, backhoes, excavators, and work trucks. All disturbed areas would be restored at the end of 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/ Michelle Colletti
Michelle Colletti
Physical Scientist

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange
Katey C. Grange Date: November 5, 2021
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.

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Project Site Description

The project would take place within the previously disturbed substation yards at Calpine, Coyote Springs, McNary, McNary Powerhouse, Ross, Roundup, Slatt, and Walla Walla. The proposed work at Pendleton Substation would occur within the boundaries of BPA's property and would occur in the previously disturbed parking area that was previously graveled.

The surrounding land use for the Calpine, Coyote Springs, McNary, the McNary Powerhouse, Ross, and Walla Walla substations is industrial. The surrounding land use for Roundup and Slatt is agricultural. There are no wetlands or waterbodies in or near project work areas.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The Calpine, Coyote Springs, and Slatt Substations are not eligible historic resources as they are constructed out of period. The Pendleton Substation is historic, but was evaluated and determined not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) due to alterations and loss of integrity in 2018 and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office concurred with the determination. The McNary Powerhouse and the McNary, Roundup, Walla Walla Substations are eligible contributing historic resources but the proposed activities would have no potential to effect. The 1958 Ross Control House was determined eligible; however, HVAC project modifications would not alter any character defining features of the resource and under the BPA Multiple Property Document and Manual for Built Resources guidelines does not require Section 106 consultation. BPA Historian and BPA Archaeologist have reviewed the proposed project and determined that these activities do not have potential to cause effects to historic or cultural resources.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All ground-disturbing activities proposed as part of this project would take place within the previously disturbed substation yard and parking area. The proposed work would not substantially impact geology and soils.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would not impact any vegetation, including Federally-listed or special-status plant species.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The work is occurring at substation facilities and would not impact wildlife, including sensitive or federally-listed species.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project areas do not have any water bodies, floodplains, or listed fish species; therefore, there would be no impacts to these resources.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project areas do not contain wetlands; therefore, there would be no impacts to wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Ground excavation would not be to a depth that would intersect ground water. Best management practices would be used during construction to prevent sediment from migrating off site during ground disturbing activities and to keep concrete washout in designated areas. The project would not affect groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no change to land use at the project locations. Additionally, there are no specially designated areas near the project sites.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The addition of new equipment and removal of old equipment would not appreciably change the appearance of the substations. The substation expansion at Pendleton would not change the visual quality of the area as it is located in an industrial area, and would occur within the existing parking area.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

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

Potential for Significance: No

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

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: During project activity all standard safety protocols would be followed. A site-specific health and safety plan would be prepared and implemented to address any hazards during the proposed work. 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: 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: All proposed work would occur on BPA fee owned land.

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

Signed: /s/ Michelle Colletti
Michelle Colletti
Physical Scientist

Date: November 5, 2021