

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Walla Walla Service Lighting Upgrade Project

Project No.: P04627

Project Manager: David McAfee, TEPF-CSB-2

Location: Walla Walla County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B5.1 Actions to conserve energy or water; B1.3 Routine maintenance

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to replace aged lighting fixtures and circuits at the Walla Walla Substation in Walla Walla, Walla Walla County, Washington. The lighting system including cables has failed and is eligible for replacement with LED lights through the energy efficiency incentive program. The project would remove existing old lighting circuit cable and install new outdoor lighting panel and associated conduit, lighting circuit cables, ten lights in the 69kV yard, eight lights in the 115kV yard, and three-phase 240VAC 100 amp outlets in the 69 kV yard and 115kV yard. The project would also replace aged conduits in 10 locations. Conduit would be replaced in six locations in the 69kV yard (approximately 10 feet at each location) and in four locations in the 115kV yard (approximately 25 feet at each location). Conduit trenching would be approximately two feet wide and 30-40 inches deep. The total estimated ground disturbance would be approximately 500 square feet but may increase to no more than 1,000 square feet depending on the potential for additional conduit replacement at the time of installation.

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.

Jeremy Doschka
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Sarah T. Biegel
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 proposed project is located within BPA's Walla Walla Substation in the city of Walla Walla, Walla Walla County, Washington in Township 7N, Range 35E, Section 23. The project would occur within a graveled substation yard.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed project activities make minor alterations to switchyard lighting and these replacements are considered part of functionality and appropriate maintenance. They will not impact the integrity of setting, materials, location, workmanship, design, feeling, or association for the historic switchyard. All ground disturbance would occur within the footprint of the Walla Walla Substation in a previously-disturbed area. A BPA historian reviewed the proposed project actions and determined that the project has no potential to cause effects to historic resources in a memorandum dated March 14, 2024.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All ground-disturbing activities associated with conduit installation work would occur within the graveled yard of the Walla Walla Substation. Conduit replacement work would include a two-foot-wide trench approximately 30-40 inches deep in 10 different locations within the substation yard. Total ground disturbance would be between 500 and 1,000 square feet. The proposed work would not impact geology and soils.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project is located in a graveled substation yard with no plants present. No impacts to plants would occur.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project is located in a graveled substation yard with no wildlife present. No impacts to wildlife would occur.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project is located in a graveled substation yard with no water bodies present. Stormwater within the yard is controlled and managed. No releases of hazardous materials are expected from this project. No impacts to water bodies, floodplains, or fish are expected.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project is located in a graveled substation yard with no wetlands present. Stormwater within the yard is controlled and managed. No releases of hazardous materials to any nearby wetlands are expected from the project. No impacts to wetlands are expected.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project is located in a graveled substation yard. Stormwater within the yard is controlled and managed. No releases of hazardous materials to groundwater are expected from the project. No impact to groundwater is expected.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would not result in a change to land use and the substation is not located in or near a specially-designated area.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would not result in a change to the visual characteristics of the substation; therefore, no impacts to visual quality are expected.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Some minor releases of fugitive dust and vehicle emissions would occur during project construction. Overall, no long-term impacts to air quality would result from the project.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Some minor construction equipment-related noise would occur during construction but would be similar in nature to other noise-producing activities at the substation. No long-term impacts from noise are expected.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

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: 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 is the underlying landowner; no notification is required.

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

Signed:

Jeremy Doschka
Environmental Protection Specialist