

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Fords Prairie Tap to Chehalis-Centralia No. 2 Project

Project Manager: Michael Wellner, TEP-TPP-1

Location: Lewis County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.6 Additions and modifications to transmission facilities

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to reconfigure the Fords Prairie Tap line, including the sectionalizing switches, near Chehalis, Lewis County, Washington. BPA would complete this work to improve reliability to multiple customers in Lewis County, reduce the need for maintenance based outages, install equipment with limited maintenance needs, and increase the system to sustain future customer loads.

BPA would change the sectionalizing switches from a vertical to a horizontal configuration on structures 12/11 and 12/13 of its Chehalis-Centralia No. 2 transmission line. Two, 3-pole structures to hold the sectionalizing switches would be installed within the right-of-way. After switch reconfiguration, structure 12/12 of the line would no longer be needed and would be removed. Based on the new switch configuration, structure 1/1 of the Fords Prairie Tap line to Chehalis-Centralia No. 2 line would need to be replaced with a taller, wood monopole structure. To facilitate installation, a shoo-fly consisting of two, three-pole structures would be temporarily installed within the BPA right-of-way to maintain power supply to Lewis County PUD's Fords Prairie substation while structure 1/1 is replaced. All work is proposed to occur within the existing BPA ROW.

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/ Katey Grange

Katey Grange

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: February 22, 2019

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: Fords Prairie Tap to Chehalis-Centralia No. 2 Project

Project Site Description

The project area is located among a railroad track, a light industrial development, and an existing substation. Pastures and scattered rural development, both light industrial and residential, extend beyond the adjacent land uses. The Chehalis River is about 0.75 miles to the west of the site and there are no wetlands, waterbodies, or hydric soils present in the project area as confirmed via desktop resources (soil survey, National Hydrologic Database, topo and aerial image review) and a site visit. The dominant vegetation community in the project area consists of mowed grass and herbaceous vegetation within the maintained right-of-way. Soils are a gravelly loam.

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> Based on a cultural resources survey of the APE, BPA determined that the project would have no adverse effect on cultural or historic resources. The BPA determination was submitted to the consulting parties on December 28, 2018. DAHP concurred with BPA’s determination on December 31, 2018. No tribal response was received within 30 days.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> Treat potential discoveries of archeological materials with the ‘inadvertent discovery’ guidelines: Stop work, contact BPA ECT and ECP leads and BPA ECC archeologist for further notifications, and ensure integrity of site and materials until further instructions.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Soils would be disturbed by structure removal and installation locations within the right-of-way.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Low-growing grasses that are currently maintained as right-of-way would be disturbed at the structure installation and removal sites. No sensitive or ESA-listed plants are present within the project area.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> Temporary disturbance areas would be reseeded with a grass seed mix as soon as possible during the appropriate seeding window. Use weed-free mulch and straw as needed for site stabilization.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Wildlife may be temporarily disturbed by noise generated by construction equipment and increased human presence during construction. Noise, human presence, and equipment activity would be consistent with activities currently occurring at adjacent land uses. No sensitive or ESA-listed wildlife or habitats are present within the project area.</p>		

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



Explanation: No waterbodies are located within or adjacent to the project area.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No wetlands are located within or adjacent to the project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No new wells or groundwater use is proposed.

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



Explanation: No specially-designated land uses are present in the area. The project activities would be consistent and compatible with land uses within and adjacent to the project area.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: While the taller, wood monopole structure and two structures associated with the sectionalizing switches would appear differently than the existing structure configuration, the project structures would remain consistent and compatible with the visual quality associated with the land uses in and near the project area.

10. **Air Quality**



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

11. **Noise**



Explanation: A temporary increase in noise would occur during construction.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No impact to human health and safety is anticipated.

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 is the underlying landowner.

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

Signed: /s/ Katey Grange
Katey Grange, ECT-4

Date: February 22, 2019