

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Longview Security and Fence Upgrades

Project No.: P04964

Project Manager: Micaiah Watkins, TEPF-CSB-2

Location: Cowlitz County, WA

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.11 Fencing and B2.2 Building and equipment installation.

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to replace existing perimeter fences and install new medium security fencing at both the primary Longview Substation and annex adjacent to the primary substation, gate and gate cameras, physical access control system, and all associated infrastructure. The Longview Substation is in Cowlitz County, WA in the BPA Longview District. A total of about 3,800 feet of fencing and ten swing gates would be replaced. The existing 7-foot-tall fences would be removed from in-ground concrete curbing or would be removed along with individual post foundations where there is no curbing. Eight-foot-tall cut- and climb-resistant steel-mesh security fences topped with razor wire would be installed around the perimeter of the site. In addition to the increased height, security would be enhanced by a near 40% reduction in visibility through the fence. The new security fences would be in the same location as the existing fence around the perimeter of the substations with minor exceptions where improved design or added features require small alterations of existing fence location (i.e., new equipment, elimination of unused gates, or variations in layout for improved camera coverage). Large boulders would be placed in selective areas to prevent vehicle access around existing gates. The disturbance for expansion construction would be limited to the BPA transmission facility boundaries in which vegetation growth is regularly managed by mechanical and chemical means.

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/ Christopher H. Furey
Christopher H. Furey
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

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: Longview Security and Fence Upgrades

Project Site Description

The Longview project site is at the BPA Longview Substation and Annex in Cowlitz County, WA. The site is located near Township 8 North, Range 3 West, Section 25. The site is approximately 0.7 miles southwest of the Longview Maintenance Headquarters. The Columbia River is over 1,600 feet east of the Longview Substation. The surrounding area along the Columbia River is mostly highly industrial development including paper manufacturing, and some undeveloped green spaces and residential development are in the broader area.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The BPA archaeologist reviewed the proposed activities and determined that these activities at the project area do not have potential to cause effects to historic or cultural resources.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No with conditions

Explanation: There would be minimal soil disturbance for installation of the fencing and gates at the Longview substation and annex. Some digging would be necessary for the project.

All work is occurring at the established Longview substation property and annex with disturbance limited to existing perimeter of the substations, and for short distances inside and outside the substation yards.

Notes:

- Use Best Management Practices (BMPs) to limit soil transport by wind and water during construction.

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

Potential for Significance: No with conditions

Explanation: The project would be occurring in the BPA Longview substation perimeter areas that are currently managed for low-growing or no vegetation. Some brush may be cleared where needed for construction.

Notes:

- Re-seed any cleared areas with a BPA-approved seed mix where necessary.

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

Potential for Significance: No with conditions

Explanation: The work would be at an established BPA substation in an industrial area of Longview. No large trees would be removed, and the sites are not identified to provide spotted owl habitat or nesting sites. Construction of the fences and gates is expected to occur during daytime hours at the substation with no effect expected to any listed or special-status species.

Notes:

- Utilize appropriate BMPs and fugitive dust plan to limit wind and water erosion of soils to water bodies.

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

Potential for Significance: No with conditions

Explanation: The Columbia River is over 1,600 feet east of the Longview Substation property. An unnamed intermittent stream is located about 4,000 feet north of the substation.

Notes:

- Utilize appropriate BMPs and fugitive dust plan to limit wind and water erosion of soils to water bodies.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No with conditions

Explanation: Some wetland areas are nearby but project work would avoid those areas. Work would be limited to the substation fence perimeter and the area immediately adjacent to the perimeter.

Notes:

- Utilize appropriate BMPs and fugitive dust plan to limit wind and water erosion of soils to wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would not impact groundwater or aquifers. Infiltration to groundwater and aquifers would not be adversely impacted by the construction as runoff and erosion at the site would be controlled.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would take place on substation property consistent with activities at large substations without impact to any specially designated areas.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be limited visual changes to the project area or surrounding environment. The completed work with the new fence and security enhancements may be noticeable but would constitute a small overall change to the current visual state.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No with conditions

Explanation: A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions would occur during installation. There would be small, sporadic increases in machine exhaust during periods of active work during construction.

Notes:

- Keep dust to a minimum in adhering to BMPs for ground-disturbing actions as also noted in the Water Bodies and Wetlands section above.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary construction noise would occur during daylight hours. No ongoing noise increased expected.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Workers on the project would be required to follow all applicable state and/or Federal safety standards as much of the work would occur from inside the substation grounds, and if work occurs outside, access to the active work sites would be controlled and monitored.

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: Longview Substation is a BPA-owned substation and the project site is accessed by paved road. BPA project manager will coordinate with neighboring landowners to avoid conflicts during construction.

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

Signed: /s/ Christopher Furey
Christopher Furey
Environmental Protection Specialist

2/6/2024
Date