

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Moxee Control House HVAC Replacement

Project Manager: Gerri Colburn—TEPF-CSB-2

Location: Yakima County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.4 Air Conditioning Systems for Existing Equipment

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to install a new heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system for the control house at Moxee Substation. A window unit air conditioner and wall mounted heat pump would be removed from the two north-facing windows of the control house, and a wall louver would also be removed from the east-facing side of the control house. Most of the internal ductwork would be abandoned in place, while an exhaust fan would be removed and replaced. Two 53-inch-long by 42-inch-wide by 13-inch-tall condensing units would be installed outdoors on separate 56-inch-long by 50-inch-wide by 3-inch-tall pre-manufactured equipment pads, immediately adjacent to the exterior walls of the control house on the north and west sides. New refrigerant piping would be installed to connect the outdoor to the indoor HVAC equipment. Any wall openings would be patched to match the existing conditions. Ceiling tiles around the new exhaust fan would be replaced, as needed. Two new 43-inch-wide by 82-inch-long aluminum windows would be installed in the window frames that formerly housed the window unit air conditioner and heat pump.

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 August 25, 2020

Sarah T. Biegel Date
NEPA Compliance Officer

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.

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Project Site Description

The project site is located at the Moxee Substation in Yakima County, Washington. The site is in Section 24, Township 13 North, Range 19 East. The project area is paved and devoid of vegetation. The surrounding area consists mostly of agricultural land. An unnamed intermittent stream is located approximately 500 feet east of the project location, which drains into the Roza Canal, located 0.75 miles south of the project location. Another irrigation canal is located approximately 0.20 miles south of the project location.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The BPA historian has reviewed the undertaking and determined that the activity would have no potential to cause effects to historic properties.

Some minor soil excavation work would occur in an area immediately adjacent to the control house. This area has had extensive prior disturbance during the original construction of the control house; therefore, a BPA archaeologist has determined that there is no potential to affect cultural resources.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed project involves minimal ground disturbance to install the equipment pads on ground, which has been previously graded and graveled. Best management practices (BMPs) would be utilized to avoid spills and leaks from construction equipment, and to prevent erosion of soils.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The ground-disturbing activities are in an area that is graveled and devoid of vegetation; therefore, there would be no impact to plants.

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

Potential for Significance: No with conditions

Explanation: The proposed project would occur within a fenced facility which does not have good quality habitat; however, in previous years an active raptor nest had been observed in a tree on the south side of the control house, which is outside of the fenced area. BPA staff visited the site in May and June of 2020, and determined that there was no active nesting activity this year. Furthermore, the project is scheduled to begin in September of 2020, and would be outside of the critical nesting time period. There would be no effects to wildlife.

Notes:

- If construction is rescheduled to occur between March 1 and August 15, confirmation must be obtained that there are no active nests in the vicinity of the project area.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no water bodies, floodplains, or fish in, or near, the project area.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no wetlands in, or near, the project area.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no impact to groundwater or aquifers because the maximum depth of excavation would be less than 2-feet-deep.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The Moxee Substation and control house are not within a specially-designated area. The project would have no change to land use.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The new equipment would not impact visual quality.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

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

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary noise would occur during the installation of the outdoor equipment but the impact would be negligible.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No with conditions

Explanation: No impact to human health and safety. The building is known to have lead and asbestos in the construction materials.

Notes:

- For protection of human health, workers would be required to comply with relevant Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards. Asbestos and lead-containing construction materials would be disposed of at a BPA-approved landfill, in accordance with federal and local regulations.

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: The facility is a BPA fee-owned property. There are no adjacent landowners that would be affected by this project; therefore, landowner notification would not be required.

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 August 25, 2020
Beth Belanger, ECT-4 date
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Flux Resources, LLC