

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Rogue Substation Upgrades

**PP&A No.:** 3,503 & 4,043

**Project Manager:** Rasha Kroonen – TEP-TPP-1; Rudiger Krohn – TEF-CSB-2

**Location:** Curry County, Oregon

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B4.11 Electric Power Substations and interconnection facilities

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville Power Administration is proposing to upgrade aged electrical equipment and install a secondary oil containment structure at Rogue Substation in Curry County, Oregon.

BPA would retire the existing capacitor bank, three current transformers, four power circuit breakers, motor operated disconnects, disconnect switches, and associated bus work. Select concrete footings of the electrical equipment would also be demolished. Three new current limiting reactors would be installed, along with new power circuit breakers, disconnect switches, three capacitor voltage transformers, new bus, surge arrestors, a light pole, associated concrete footings, and a new fence. The new fence would be installed around the new current limiting reactors and capacitor voltage transformers, replacing the existing fence that encloses the existing cap group. Ground disturbance would be primarily limited to the capacitor bank area in the southeast section of the yard; approximately 5000 square ft. All of the electrical upgrade work would be conducted within the existing substation fence. The proposed upgrades are necessary to maintain safe and reliable transmission infrastructure.

The new secondary oil containment structure would provide secondary containment in the event that oil-filled electrical equipment fails and leaks and would help ensure BPA compliance with the Clean Water Act. The structure would be approximately 30 ft. x 36 ft. and 16 ft. tall, roofed, with an overhead door. The concrete would be graded to drain to the secondary containment trench, which would extend approximately 2 ft. below grade. The structure would be located on the north side of the substation, outside the substation fence, in a cleared, graded area currently used for parking.

**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/ Aaron Siemers

Aaron Siemers

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: September 24, 2018

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:** Rogue Substation Upgrades

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## Project Site Description

The Rogue Substation Capacitor Group & Relay Replacement Project is located at the Rogue Substation, in Curry County, southwestern Oregon. The Rogue Substation was built in the early 1980's and contains high voltage 115 kV and 230 kV electrical equipment that serves the southwest Oregon coast communities. The substation is located in a rural area, near cleared timber lands and coastal forests, approximately 1.5 miles from the town of Nesika Beach, and 5.5 miles from Gold Beach. The substation is located approximately 2 miles from the Rogue River, and approximately 1 mile from the Pacific Ocean.

The work area is located in the Coast Range ecoregion, in the coastal uplands; the low mountains and headlands surrounding the coastal lowlands of the Oregon coast. The ecoregion is characterized by a marine-influenced climate, relatively mild temperatures, and long, wet winters. Douglas fir is predominant, and often managed for timber harvest.

The legal description of the project site is T22 N, R21W, SEC 11, SW ¼.

## Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

<b>Environmental Resource Impacts</b>	<b>No Potential for Significance</b>	<b>No Potential for Significance, with Conditions</b>
<b>1. Historic and Cultural Resources</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Explanation: BPA archaeologists have reviewed the project scope and previous cultural surveys within the area of potential effect (APE). There are no previously recorded cultural sites within the APE. The APE both within and directly adjacent to substation's fence is within an area that has been completely modified and artificially leveled during construction. The proposed project (action) is an undertaking, but no historic properties would be affected. No further action is needed per the NHPA.

<b>2. Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Explanation: The project would be conducted in and near an electrical substation yard. The yard was been leveled and modified with cuts and engineered fills during the development of the substation. While some minor excavations are planned for the project (< 7 ft. in depth) for the new concrete footings, the excavation would have a relatively limited footprint, and would be in previously disturbed soils and fills. The project has no potential for significant impacts to geology and soils. Approximately 60 cubic yards of excess soils would be generated during the project. The excess soils would be sampled, analyzed, and disposed at a location approved by the BPA environmental lead.

3. **Plants** (including federal/state special-status species)



Explanation: No special status or endangered plants are present in or within the immediate vicinity of the substation. The project would be conducted primarily within a developed electrical substation yard that is periodically sprayed to keep weeds and plants from impacting the transmission system. Western Lily is the only endangered plant listed in Curry County. Western lily prefers low, wet boggy habitat. There is no suitable habitat for Western Lily in the project area, and the project would have “no effect” on Western Lily. The project has no potential for significant impacts to plants.

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



Explanation: BPA obtained an official species list from U.S. Fish & Wildlife on August 10, 2018. Marbled murrelet, Northern spotted owl, and Western snowy plover, are listed as endangered species in Curry County, OR. However, the project would be conducted in a developed electrical substation yard. There is no suitable habitat for Marbled murrelet, Northern spotted owl, and Western snowy plover, and there are no documented sitings of these endangered species within the project area. The project does not involve clearing trees, building roads, or removing any pre-existing habitat. The project would have “no effect” on endangered wildlife species. The project has no potential for significant impacts to wildlife.

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



Explanation: The Rogue River and the Pacific Ocean are within 2 miles of the project area. Seasonal drainages are present near the Substation. However, all ground disturbance would be within the rockered substation yard. Stormwater control best-management-practices would be implemented during construction to ensure that there is no release of sediment to any nearby waterways associated with the construction project. The secondary containment structure planned for the substation would provide additional water quality protection at the facility, and potentially prevent oil releases to surface water. The project has no potential for significant impacts to water bodies, floodplains, and fish.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: All the work would be conducted in the substation yard and the immediate vicinity of the substation yard. There are no wetlands present in the project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The work would not involve new groundwater wells or ground disturbance that would impact aquifers.

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



Explanation: The oil containment structure would change a BPA parking area into an oil-containment site, but would not change or alter surrounding land uses. Upgrading the existing electrical equipment would not change or alter land use. There are no specially designated areas in the project area.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The proposed work would be conducted in a pre-existing developed electrical substation yard. While some minor alterations to the yard are planned, the project would not significantly alter the current landscape, or impact visual quality in any meaningful way.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: The project would create temporary dust and vehicle emission due to construction; however, no significant impacts would occur.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: The project would create temporary noise due to construction; however, no significant impacts would occur.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: During project activity, all standard safety protocols would be followed. The project would not have significant impacts on 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, if necessary: 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, if necessary: 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, if necessary: 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, if necessary: N/A

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**Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description: The project is located on Bonneville Power Administration fee-owned property with no adjacent homes or structures. There would be no significant visual or other effects to adjacent landowners and no landowner involvement or coordination is needed.

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

Signed: /s/ Aaron Siemers

Aaron Siemers

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: September 24, 2018