

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Hot Springs Substation Cathodic Protection

**PP&A No.:** 4483

**Project Manager:** Mike Zrembski – TFKE-KALISPELL

**Location:** Sanders County, Montana

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B1.3 Routine Maintenance

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to install cathodic protection for the water well to combat corrosion (i.e., rust) which has formed on the existing buried steel water well casement at its Hot Springs Substation in Sanders County, Montana. If the corrosion is not addressed, it will affect water quality and water flow rates. To mitigate the corrosion, BPA would install two magnesium anodes which would be connected to the casement via an electrical conductor (i.e., 12 or 10 awg wire). The function of the conductor and anodes is to create an environmentally friendly pathway for corrosion to move away from the active base metal (well casement) to stop any further corrosion. Ground disturbance would include installing the conductor and anodes buried at perpendicular angles roughly 110 feet from the well and to a depth of 4 feet. The project is proposed to be conducted during July to August 2020.

**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/ Adrienne Wojtasz*

Adrienne Wojtasz

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

*/s/ Sarah T. Biegel*      Date: July 22, 2020

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.

**Proposed Action:** Hot Springs Substation Cathodic Protection

## **Project Site Description**

The proposed project area is located in northwestern Montana within the Flathead Indian Reservation and includes work adjacent to the Hot Springs Substation. The project would take place on BPA fee-owned property around the Hot Springs Substation in Sanders County, Montana. The site consists of the rocked substation yard, transmission lines and associated structures, and graveled areas for vehicle access and equipment storage. The substation perimeter is relatively flat terrain and is comprised of regularity mowed grasses and forbs.

## **Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources**

### **1. Historic and Cultural Resources**

Potential for Significance: No

**Explanation:** A cultural survey of the Hot Springs Substation which covers the entire Hot Springs Substation right-of-way was previously conducted in 2017 by AECOM and included members of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe's (CSKT) preservation staff. The Hot Springs Substation was determined to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. No other cultural resources were identified. The proposed undertaking for the Cathodic Protection project, is not associated with the substation and the well is outside of the substation's fenced yard. The CSKT THPO concurred with BPA's determination of no historic properties affected on July 2, 2020.

**Notes:**

- In the event that archaeological or historical materials are discovered during project activities, work in the immediate vicinity must stop, the area secured, and the SHPO and the environmental project lead would be notified.

### **2. Geology and Soils**

Potential for Significance: No

**Explanation:** Localized soil disturbance would occur during cathode installation. Standard construction erosion control measures would be utilized as necessary.

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

Potential for Significance: No

**Explanation:** Minimal disturbance to vegetation is anticipated. There would be no effect to ESA-listed plant species impacted. No impacts to state or federally-sensitive species are

anticipated. Project activities would be limited to the already impacted substation perimeter and would not substantially alter existing plant communities.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: In general, the project would have a small impact to wildlife and habitat related to temporary disturbance associated with elevated equipment noise and human presence. The project would have no impacts to state or federally-listed sensitive species.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project area is not located within a floodplain and there are no nearby water bodies that support resident, anadromous, or ESA-listed fish. Erosion control best management practices would be used to ensure sedimentation into any water body does not occur.

#### **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands are within the project area.

#### **7. Groundwater and Aquifers**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No use of groundwater proposed. Maximum depth of disturbance would only be about 4 feet below ground surface.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No change in land use. No specially-designated areas.

#### **9. Visual Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Installation of underground cathode and wire would not change visual quality.

#### **10. Air Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would have a temporary impact on air quality from a small amount of vehicle emissions and dust generated during construction.

## 11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be temporary construction noise.

## 12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would protect the water quality from corrosion due to environmental contact.

### 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: No landowner notification is needed since the project would take place entirely on BPA-owned property.

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

Signed: /s/ Adrienne Wojtasz  
Adrienne Wojtasz, EPR-Bell-1  
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: July 22, 2020