

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Gold Beach Substation Expansion Project

PP&A No.: 4795

Project Manager: Cynthia Rounds TEP-TPP-1

Location: Coos 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 (BPA) proposes to replace a disconnect switch and several wood pole structures within the substation yard and reconfigure the switching yard to meet operational needs as part of the Gold Beach Substation Upgrade Project. As part of this project, BPA proposes to construct a shoo-fly and install a temporary mobile transformer within the substation yard. In addition, BPA would move the operator shack within the yard, remove a fence between the switch yard and an adjacent pole yard to the east that was recently acquired by BPA, grade about 1,000 feet of the ground between the two yards to allow vehicle traffic between the two, and install a ground grid within the pole yard.

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/ Jonah Reenders

Jonah Reenders

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange

Katey C. Grange Date: April 22, 2022

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: Gold Beach Substation Expansion Project

Project Site Description

The project site is located entirely on BPA fee-owned property at BPA's Gold Beach Substation in Gold Beach, Coos County, Oregon (Section 1, Township 37 South, Range 15 West). The fenced substation yard is covered in crushed rock with little to no vegetation. The pole yard consists of a paved surface with little to no vegetation and the land in between the substation and pole yard consists of a graveled surface with little to no vegetation. Land use in the surrounding area is primarily commercial and residential properties within the city limits of Gold Beach, Oregon. According to the National Hydrography Dataset, National Wetland Inventory, and U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps, there are no wetlands or waterbodies within 0.50 mile of the project site.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A concurrence letter was sent to BPA from the Oregon SHPO on January 7, 2022. It was determined that **no historic properties are affected** in association with this project. Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2(c) the consulting parties for this project includes: The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, the Coquille Indian Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua & Siuslaw Indians, the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation, and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All ground-disturbing activities proposed as part of this project would take place within the previously disturbed substation yard and surrounding commercial area. The proposed work would not substantially impact geology and soils.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ESA-listed or other special-status plant species or habitat present at the project site. The disturbance area would be within a previously-developed area that contains little too few plants.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ESA-listed or other special-status species or habitat present at the project site. Work at Gold Beach Substation would be limited to existing developed areas where no habitat is present. The expansion at Gold Beach Substation would have a minimal impact on habitat as the expansion area is developed in a commercial and residential area.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No waterbodies, floodplains or fish are present at the Gold Beach Substation or within 0.50 miles of the surrounding project area.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands are present at Gold Beach Substation or within 0.50 miles of the surrounding project area.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project is unlikely to impact groundwater or aquifers because the proposed project is contained within a pre disturbed area. Spill prevention measures would be utilized during construction activities at all sites.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no change to land use in the project areas and there are no specially-designated areas near Gold Beach Substation.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would have little impact to visual quality. Visual quality changes include the removal of a fence between the switch yard and an adjacent pole yard to the east and grading between the two yards to allow vehicle traffic between the two. As well as the installation of a ground grid within the pole yard. All of these changes would be consistent with the existing commercial and substation development in the area.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

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

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Noise generated would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: During project activities, all standard safety protocols would be followed. Project activities would not impact 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: 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 or coordination would be necessary at Gold Beach Substation because BPA owns the site.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Reenders', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Signed:

Jonah Reenders EPI-4

Date: April 22, 2022