

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Acquisition of Salmon River Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SREC) Equipment at Round Valley Substation

Project No.: P06311

Project Manager: Jim Smith, TPCF-MEAD-GOB

Location: Custer County, Idaho

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.24 Property transfers

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to purchase Salmon River Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SREC) equipment located in the switchyard of BPA's Round Valley Substation in Custer County, Idaho. Round Valley Substation is owned and operated by BPA and SREC. BPA currently owns most of the equipment in the substation, but does not currently own the disconnect switches on either side of the BPA-owned L281 circuit breaker. SREC owns all six 69 kV disconnect switches as well as the L303 power circuit breaker. The equipment to be purchased would include the six 69 kV disconnect switches and the L303 power circuit breaker. Upon BPA's purchase of the SREC equipment, the Round Valley Substation equipment would be owned and operated entirely by BPA. SREC would no longer own or operate any equipment at Round Valley Substation.

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.

Jeremy Doschka
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

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.

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Project Site Description

The substation equipment is located within Round Valley Substation, which is graveled and fenced, near Challis, Custer County, Idaho (Township 13 N, Range 20 E, Section 19). The proposed project would not require any on-the-ground work at the project site.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The BPA historian reviewed the project and concluded that the purchase of equipment would have no potential to cause effect to historic properties.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing work is associated with the change in asset ownership. Therefore, the proposed asset purchase would have no impact on geology and soils.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing work is associated with the change in asset ownership and the area is graveled with no vegetation. Therefore, the proposed asset purchase would have no effect on protected plant species or habitats.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing or noise-generating work is associated with the change in asset ownership. Therefore, the proposed asset purchase would have no effect on protected wildlife species or habitats.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing work is associated with the change in asset ownership. Therefore, the proposed asset purchase would have no impact on water bodies and floodplains and would have no effect on protected fish species or habitats.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing work is associated with the change in asset ownership. Therefore, the proposed asset purchase would have no impact on wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing work is associated with the change in asset ownership, and no new wells or other uses of groundwater or aquifers are proposed. Therefore, the proposed asset purchase would have no impact on groundwater and aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Use and operation of substation equipment would remain essentially the same following the change in asset ownership. Therefore, the proposed asset purchase would not require a change in land use and would have no impact on any specially-designated areas.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Use and operation of substation equipment would remain essentially the same following the change in asset ownership. Therefore, the proposed asset purchase would not change visual quality.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Use and operation of the substation equipment would remain essentially the same following the change in asset ownership. Therefore, the proposed asset purchase would not change air quality.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Use and operation of the substation equipment would remain essentially the same following the change in asset ownership. Therefore, the proposed asset purchase would not change ambient noise.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed asset purchase would not adversely affect human health and 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: The Round Valley Substation is located on land owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). BLM has issued land use permits to BPA for the entire footprint of the Round Valley Substation. No landowner notification, involvement, or coordination would be required.

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

Signed:

Jeremy Doschka
Environmental Protection Specialist