

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: ALLCOM/Century Link Backup Generator Installation at South Tacoma Substation

Project No.: LURRPAK 20180011

Project Manager: Charlene Belt

Location: South Tacoma Substation, Pierce County, WA

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.9. Multiple Uses of Powerline Rights of Way.

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA is proposing to allow ALLCOM/Century Link to add a backup generator to its existing communication facility located on BPA property at BPA's South Tacoma Substation. ALLCOM/Century Link would expand an existing concrete pad by approximately two feet in length and three feet in width and install an approximate nine-foot by 10-foot by nine-foot tall steel cabinet to hold the generator and multiple compressed hydrogen cylinders. The generator will be a small fuel cell engine that will use hydrogen to provide emergency power for ALLCOM/Century Link's communication equipment that is currently located in an existing building on leased space at BPA's 19.5-acre South Tacoma Substation facility.

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/ Douglas F. Corkran

Douglas F. Corkran
Senior Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: January 31, 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.

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Project Site Description

Inside the South Tacoma Substation property on an existing gravel pad. Substation is adjacent to industrial and rural residential properties.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. Historic and Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Project site is located inside an existing substation property, and the only ground disturbance would be to the existing gravel pad. Cultural resource staff have reviewed the project and determined that there is no potential to affect historic properties.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Project site is located inside an existing substation property, and the only ground disturbance would be to the existing gravel pad.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No plants are present.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No wildlife is present in the substation facility. The area surrounding the project area does not support high quality wildlife habitat. No nearby wildlife would be disturbed.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There are no water bodies present.		
6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No wetlands exist in the project area.		
7. Groundwater and Aquifers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Any spills of hazardous materials would be contained on the concrete pad, and the fuel source (hydrogen) would not affect groundwater.		

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

Explanation: The project is a modification of an existing use, and does not change land use.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: The hydrogen cabinet will be visible but will be of similar character to the surrounding buildings and the nearby substation equipment, and will not look out of place or be highly noticeable.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: The hydrogen generator will only run periodically if the power goes out. Hydrogen burns very cleanly and will not contribute to air pollution or otherwise degrade air quality.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: The hydrogen generator will only run periodically if the power goes out. The motor is small, and housed within the cabinet, and will thus make minimal noise when running.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: Hydrogen is explosive, but it is contained within the cabinet and similar units have functioned safely for years. The nearest residence is over 100 meters away.

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:

- 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:

- 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:

- 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:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: BPA owns the land the project is located on and surrounding landowners would not be impacted.

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

Signed: /s/ Douglas F. Corkran
Douglas F. Corkran, ECT-4

Date: January 31, 2018