

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Slatt Station Service Upgrade Project

PP&A No.: 4376 (P03947)

Project Manager: Michael Henjum – TEPS-TPP-1

Location: Gilliam County, Oregon

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

Description of the Proposed Action: The recent installation of Series caps at Slatt Substation has left only one source of station service power from the tertiary of the 500 kV transformers. As a result, anytime there is transformer maintenance work or a failure, it will result on the Series Caps being offline. To mitigate this risk, another source of station service needs be added to panel PDP 1 which feeds panels MHP and MEP and provide station power to the 230 kV and 500 kV yard breakers.

One new pad-mounted station service transformer with feeder would be installed approximately 10 feet from the fenceline of the northeast side of the substation and one new station service transformer would be installed within the substation yard, along with associated conduit for both transformers. General equipment used for this type of work would include excavators, bulldozers, dump trucks, and substation maintenance vehicles.

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/ Emma Reinemann

Emma Reinemann

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Date: April 9, 2021

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: Slatt Station Service Upgrade Project

Project Site Description

The proposed project would take place at Slatt Substation approximately 2.5 miles southeast of the town of Arlington, Oregon. The surrounding area includes farmland and rangeland that consists of undeveloped terrain surrounded by grassland and shrub-steppe habitat.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project area was previously surveyed for historic and cultural resources at least two times. Additionally, the area where the transformer would be installed was previously disturbed during a prior expansion and installation of a stormwater facility. As a result of the previous work done, no cultural surveys were required and it was determined that the project has no potential to affect historic properties.

Notes:

- In the event any archaeological material is encountered during project activities, stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead, archaeologist, and project manager; interested tribes; DAHP; and the appropriate local, state, and Federal agencies. Implement reasonable measures to protect the discovery site, including any appropriate stabilization or covering. Take reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the discovery site, including restricting access.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Localized soil disturbance would occur during construction. Standard erosion control measures would be implemented to prevent sediment migration off site. Any excess spoils generated during project activities would be disposed of off-site.

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

Potential for Significance: No with conditions

Explanation: The project would result in some minor permanent impacts to vegetation where the new transformer pad outside the fence would be installed. There are no Federal or state special-status species or habitats in the project area. The work occurring inside the rockered substation would have no effect on plants.

Notes:

- All disturbed areas would be rockered or re-vegetated at the conclusion of the project.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no Federal or state special-status species known to inhabit the project area. Project activities would temporarily disturb local wildlife during construction, but the disturbance would be limited to the area immediately adjacent to the substation where wildlife would already be habituated to operational noise.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No in-water work is proposed for this project. Standard construction erosion control measures would be utilized to ensure sediment and other contaminants do not enter bodies of water; therefore, water bodies, floodplains, and fish would not be affected by the proposed project activities.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no wetlands located in the vicinity of the project area.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project activities are not expected to impact groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project is not located within any specially-designated areas. Land use would not change as a result of project activities.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Substation improvement and expansion would be consistent with the character of surrounding land use.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Exhaust and dust from utility and construction equipment may temporarily reduce air quality in the immediate project area.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary noise would occur during construction. There would be no change to the operational noise of the substation or transmission line.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A health and safety plan would be prepared by the contractor prior to construction and reviewed by the BPA safety office. The contractor would adhere to this safety plan during project activities.

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: All project activities would occur on BPA fee-owned land.

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

Signed: /s/ Emma Reinemann

Date: April 9, 2021

Emma Reinemann – EPR-4
Physical Scientist (Environmental)