

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Colville and Addy Substation Transfer Trip Upgrade Project

Project No.: P04254 - N0758; LURR 20230040 & LURR 20230213

Project Manager: Ryan Everett, TEPF-CSB-2; Amanda Raymond, TERR-Bell-1

Location: Stevens County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.11 Electrical power substations and interconnection facilities; B4.9 Multiple use of powerline rights-of-way

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to replace aging transfer trip equipment at its Colville and Addy substations. Further, BPA proposes to allow Avista to conduct work on BPA's fee-owned land at BPA's Colville Substation to upgrade Avista's transfer trip equipment connecting to their Kettle Falls Substation under Land Use Review Requests (LURR) 20230040 and 20230213. The proposed project would upgrade analogue components with digital and modernize transfer trip operations between BPA and Avista.

BPA's proposed work at Colville Substation would consist of removal and replacement of several racks of electronic equipment including Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) and relays within the control house. Additionally, BPA would run fiber overhead or underground from the control house through the substation yard to a newly installed four-foot square fiber vault located south of the substation outside the substation fence. The new fiber would then be connected to a patch panel in the new Avista communications hut (as described further below) providing transfer trip functionality. The proposed work at Colville Substation would not require major exterior building modification.

Avista's proposed work on BPA fee-owned land would include upgrades to their existing 50-foot by 50-foot wireless communication site just south of BPA's Colville Substation (LURR 20230040). The existing structures on the site, a 20-foot three-legged metal tower, multiple radio antennas, a prefabricated 6-foot by 8-foot communication hut, and a 10-foot by 8-foot temporary prefabricated building, would be replaced. The new facilities would include an up to 60-foot steel mono-pole, multiple radio antennas, and a 12-foot by 26-foot prefabricated communication hut. Avista also plans to install additional underground conduit to the newly proposed BPA vault to the west of the current Avista communication site. Additionally, Avista proposes to trench a new underground three-phase power line along the north and west side of the BPA Colville Substation access road to the new Avista pad vault outside the new communications hut (LURR 20230213). The new underground power line would consist of two three-inch conduit requiring an approximately 15-foot wide by three-foot deep trench.

BPA's proposed work at Addy Substation would consist of removal and replacement of several racks of electronic equipment including SCADA and relays within the control house. Also within

the control house, BPA would replace batteries, battery charger, and install a new hydrogen detector with fan. The proposed work at Addy Substation would not require major exterior building modification.

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/ Laura Roberts

Laura Roberts
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Katey C. Grange
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: Colville and Addy Substation Transfer Trip Upgrade Project

Project Site Description

The proposed Colville and Addy Substation Transfer Trip Upgrade Project would occur at BPA's Colville Substation, and adjacent BPA fee-owned land, and Addy Substation, in Stevens County, Washington. The project is located in Township 35N, Range 39E, and Section 11 and Township 33N, Range 39E, and Section 14. The project would occur in existing substation control houses, a rocked substation yard, on previously disturbed and rocked areas surrounding a substation and along an existing rocked roadway. Agricultural and industrial lands occur in the general vicinity of the proposed project.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA conducted background research followed by an intensive pedestrian survey and subsurface testing of the area of potential effect for BPA's portion of work for the Colville and Addy Substation Transfer Trip Upgrade Project and Avista's LURR 20230040. No cultural resources were identified as a result of the pedestrian survey and subsurface testing. Final consultation with a determination of "no historic properties" was sent out on June 21st, 2023. The Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) concurred with the determination on June 22nd, 2023, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation concurred with the determination on June 22nd, 2023, and the Spokane Tribe of Indians concurred with the determination on July 5th, 2023.

BPA conducted background research and a site visit in relation to Avista's LURR 20230113. BPA determined that the existing disturbance as well as the steep slopes would result in "no historic properties affected" as a result of the project. An initiation/determination letter was sent out on July 7th, 2023. The Washington DAHP concurred with the determination on July 14th, 2023. The Spokane Tribe of Indians concurred with the determination on July 10th, 2023.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Approximately on-half acre of new soil disturbance is anticipated from Avista's trenching and power line conduit installation. Remaining ground-disturbing activities would occur on or adjacent to the existing communication site. Best Management Practices would be used to implement site specific erosion and sediment control. Disturbed areas would be rocked or stabilized and seeded.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary vegetation disturbance, consisting of approximately one-half acre, would result from Avista's trenching and power line conduit installation. There are no Federal/state special-status plant species or habitats present in the project area. Following construction, un-rocked areas of soil disturbance would be stabilized and seeded.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project may have temporary noise and disturbance impacts to local wildlife species related to construction equipment noise and human presence. There are no Federal/state special-status wildlife species or habitats present in the project area.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no water bodies, floodplains, or fish within the general vicinity of the proposed project. The proposed project would not impact these resources.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no wetlands within the vicinity of the proposed project. The proposed project would not impact these resources.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No impacts to groundwater or aquifers are anticipated as the proposed project ground disturbance would not be deep enough to penetrate groundwater.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no change in land use or specially-designated areas as a result of the project.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Visual impacts from the project would occur within Avista's existing 50-foot by 50-foot communication site. The existing 20-foot three-legged metal tower would be replaced with an up to 60-foot steel mono-pole. The two existing buildings would be replaced with a single 12-foot by 26-foot prefabricated communication hut. Visual quality following the project would be similar to the existing communication site and would remain consistent with the existing surroundings of the Colville Substation and associated high-voltage transmission lines.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A small amount of equipment emissions and dust may occur temporarily during construction.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary construction noise would occur during daylight hours as a result of the proposed project. No ongoing noise increase is expected as a result of this project.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No impacts to human health and safety are anticipated to result from the project.

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: BPA Realty is in coordination with Avista, the applicant.

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

Signed: /s/ Laura Roberts August 15, 2023
Laura Roberts Date
Environmental Protection Specialist