

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Proposed Open Access Transmission Tariff (TC-20)

Project Manager: Rachel Dibble, Supervisory Public Utility Specialist – TSPQ-TPP-2

Location: Portland, Oregon

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.4, Power marketing services and activities; and B4.8 Electric transmission agreements

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to adopt the Open Access Transmission Tariff, commonly known as Tariff or OATT, proposed in the TC-20 rate case. The Tariff would go into effect on October 1, 2019, which is the beginning of rate period FY 2020-21. The Tariff includes the terms and conditions of general applicability for all transmission products and services provided by Bonneville over the Federal Columbia River Transmission System (FCRTS). More specifically, these terms and conditions relate to: (1) point-to point transmission service (PTP service); (2) network integration transmission service (NT service); (3) ancillary services; and (4) generator interconnection procedures and requirements. With the adoption of the Tariff, all existing customer agreements and any future customer agreements will be converted to the new Tariff beginning in rate period FY 2020-21.

By adopting the Tariff, BPA would better align its products and services with FERC's pro forma tariff, as well as the industry standards. Additionally, adoption of the Tariff would lead to a more optimal fit with BPA's 2018-2023 strategic plan and the transmission business model.

BPA has reached consensus with its transmission customers on the terms and conditions related to the Tariff through its TC-20 settlement strategy discussions. Among other things, these discussions resulted in a TC-20 Settlement Agreement, which settled the TC-20 Tariff terms and the conditions and the Tariff that Bonneville would propose during the TC-20 proceeding.

The Tariff continues the existing transmission products and services offerings currently provided by Bonneville, with few changes from the previous years. The few changes to transmission products that would occur are generally administrative and financial in nature. These changes in the Tariff are not expected to result in any physical changes in Bonneville's transmission system beyond previously disturbed or developed facilities or to cause the development of any new generation resources. Furthermore, all existing generation projects would be expected to continue to operate within normal operating limits and consistently with applicable environmental laws and regulations, including compliance with National Marine Fisheries Service Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinions, and related court orders.

Further information on the proposed tariff can be found in the TC-20 Rate Proceeding, Administrators Record of Decision, March 1 2019, located at <https://www.bpa.gov/news/pubs/Pages/RODs.aspx>.

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/ Usha Mohan

Usha Mohan
EC Environmental Lead

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Office

Date: February 27, 2019

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

BPA markets wholesale electrical power from 31 hydroelectric power projects in the Northwest, one non-federal nuclear plant, and several small nonfederal power plants. BPA also operates and maintains about three fourths of the high-voltage transmission in its service territory that spans Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Western Montana, and small parts of eastern Montana, California, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming.

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"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The proposed action involves administrative and strategic activities intended to better align BPA's product and service offerings to be consistent with the industry standards and with the FERC Pro forma tariff. The updated transmission tariff offerings would not result in any ground disturbing activities or changes to any existing structures of landscapes. In addition, all generation projects would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, the adjustments would not affect historic and cultural resources.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The proposed action involves administrative and strategic activities intended to better align BPA's product and service offerings to be consistent with the industry standards and with the FERC Pro forma tariff. The updated transmission tariff offerings would not result in any ground disturbing activities or have any potential for erosion, landslides, or other related impacts. In addition, all generation projects would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, the tariff adjustments would not affect geology and soils.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The proposed action involves administrative and strategic activities intended to better align BPA's product and service offerings to be consistent with the industry standards and with the FERC Pro forma tariff. The updated transmission tariff offerings would not result in any ground disturbing activities or vegetation removal or alteration. In addition, all generation projects would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, the tariff adjustments would not affect plants.</p>		

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



Explanation: The proposed action involves administrative and strategic activities intended to better align BPA's product and service offerings to be consistent with the industry standards and with the FERC Pro forma tariff. The updated transmission tariff offerings would not result in any ground-disturbing activities or potential to cause impacts to special-status species and habitats. In addition, all generation projects would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, the tariff adjustments would not affect wildlife.

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



Explanation: The proposed action involves administrative and strategic activities intended to better align BPA's product and service offerings to be consistent with the industry standards and with the FERC Pro forma tariff. The updated transmission tariff offerings would not result in any ground-disturbing activities or potential to cause impacts to water bodies, floodplains, and fish, including federal/state special-status species and ESUs. In addition, all generation projects would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, the tariff adjustments would not affect water bodies, floodplains, and fish, including federal/state special-status species and ESUs.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: The proposed action involves administrative and strategic activities intended to better align BPA's product and service offerings to be consistent with the industry standards and with the FERC Pro forma tariff. The updated transmission tariff offerings would not result in any ground-disturbing activities or potential to cause impacts to wetlands. In addition, all generation projects would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, the tariff adjustments would not affect wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The proposed action involves administrative and strategic activities intended to better align BPA's product and service offerings to be consistent with the industry standards and with the FERC Pro forma tariff. The updated transmission tariff offerings would not result in any ground-disturbing activities or potential to cause impacts to groundwater and aquifers. In addition, all generation projects would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, the tariff adjustments would not affect groundwater and aquifers.

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



Explanation: The proposed action involves administrative and strategic activities intended to better align BPA's product and service offerings to be consistent with the industry standards and with the FERC Pro forma tariff. The updated transmission tariff offerings would not result in any ground-disturbing activities or potential to cause impacts to land use and specially designated areas. In addition, all generation projects would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, the tariff adjustments would not affect land use and specially designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The proposed action involves administrative and strategic activities intended to better align BPA's product and service offerings to be consistent with the industry standards and with the FERC Pro forma tariff. The updated transmission tariff offerings would not result in any ground-disturbing activities or potential to cause impacts to visual quality. In addition, all generation projects would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, the tariff adjustments would not affect visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: The proposed action involves administrative and strategic activities intended to better align BPA's product and service offerings to be consistent with the industry standards and with the FERC Pro forma tariff. The updated transmission tariff offerings would not result in any ground-disturbing activities or potential to cause impacts to air quality. In addition, all generation projects would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, the tariff adjustments would not affect air quality.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: The proposed action involves administrative and strategic activities intended to better align BPA's product and service offerings to be consistent with the industry standards and with the FERC Pro forma tariff. The updated transmission tariff offerings would not result in any ground-disturbing activities or potential to cause impacts to noise. In addition, all generation projects would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, the tariff adjustments would not affect noise.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: The proposed action involves administrative and strategic activities intended to better align BPA's product and service offerings to be consistent with the industry standards and with the FERC Pro forma tariff. The updated transmission tariff offerings would not result in any ground-disturbing activities or potential to cause impacts to human health and safety. In addition, all generation projects would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, the tariff adjustments would not 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, 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

Explanation: Because the proposed action does not involve activities directly or indirectly affecting any particular real property, notification and involvement of any specific land owner is not required. However, BPA conducted the BP-20 rate proceedings consistent with procedures under the Northwest Power Act, which included notifying the public through the Federal Register of the rate adjustment proposal, allowing public comment on the proposal, and involving potentially affected parties during the development of the final rates proposal.

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

Signed: /s/ Usha Mohan

Usha Mohan

EC Environmental Lead

Date: February 27, 2019