

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Fiber Installing, Splicing, and Leasing at Existing BPA Facilities – 2020 through 2024

Project Manager: Multiple

Location: Multiple locations in California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.7 Fiber optic cable

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to install new fiber optic cables in existing conduit, splice existing fiber optic cables in or on existing structures, and allow customers to lease excess conduit space or operational fiber on existing BPA fiber optic cables at BPA-owned facilities throughout the BPA service territory in 2020 through 2024. BPA would allow customers to gain access to leased fiber cables by splicing into cables or installing new fiber cables in existing conduit located on existing structures or in existing vaults, including Bonneville Vaults (BVs) and/or Customer Vaults (CVs).

Ground disturbance (i.e., excavation) would not be permitted. Each project would be reviewed by the BPA NEPA lead to ensure that the activities fall within the range of those described in this Categorical Exclusion prior to initiating work. Customers would be responsible for complying with applicable local, state, and Federal laws and regulations for their actions, including any work that may be required off of BPA-owned property.

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 Corkran

Douglas Corkran

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel
Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 01/02/2020

Attachment: 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: Fiber Installing, Splicing and Leasing at Existing BPA Facilities – 2020 through 2024

Project Site Description

Work would occur on existing BPA transmission line structures, fiber vaults, or conduit typically adjacent to or within BPA electric substations or maintenance headquarters. These facilities are located in BPA’s service territory including California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, 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> BPA archaeologists and historians reviewed the proposed activities and determined that these types of activities do not have the potential to cause effects to historic properties.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance would occur. Vehicles would travel on existing roads as much as possible.</p>		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Minimal disturbance to vegetation would occur. Work would occur on existing structures, in existing vaults, or in existing conduit. Activities would not occur in areas with known populations of listed plant species.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Minimal disturbance to wildlife would occur. Work would occur at existing facilities, would be minimal and temporary, and would be consistent with activities occurring in the area. Activities would not occur in areas with known populations of listed wildlife species.</p>		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No disturbance to water bodies, floodplains, or fish would occur. Work would occur on existing structures, in existing vaults, or in existing conduit.</p>		

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| 6. Wetlands | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> No to minimal disturbance to wetlands would occur. Work would occur on existing structures, in existing vaults, or in in existing conduit. Any equipment/vehicle use in wetlands could cause minimal, temporary impacts to soils or vegetation, but would not impact wetland functions or values. | | |
| 7. Groundwater and Aquifers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> No ground or groundwater disturbance would occur. | | |
| 8. Land Use and Specially Designated Areas | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> No change in land use would occur. | | |
| 9. Visual Quality | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> No change in visual quality would occur. | | |
| 10. Air Quality | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> Minor, temporary emissions associated with construction traffic would occur. | | |
| 11. Noise | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> Minor, temporary noise associated with work activities would occur. | | |
| 12. Human Health and Safety | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> No impact to 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

Description: Coordination with underlying or surrounding landowners would be completed by BPA or the customer prior to work starting.

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

Signed: /s/ Douglas Corkran
Douglas Corkran – ECT-4

Date: 01/02/2020