

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** WindWave Fiber Installation at Big Eddy Substation

**LURR No:** 20160065

**Project Manager:** Miroslava Rivera - TERR-3

**Location:** Wasco County, OR

**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) is proposing to allow WindWave Technologies, Inc. (WindWave) to directionally drill an underground fiber route from a new customer vault to an existing BPA customer vault on BPA fee-owned right-of-way (ROW). The fiber would be placed inside four-inch conduit, which would run for approximately 150-feet at a depth of 36 inches. The proposed fiber installation would be located just outside of NoaNet's regeneration hut that is west of Big Eddy Substation. WindWave would install the new underground vault, which would be 7 foot by 7 foot, under BPA's Big Eddy-Chenoweth No. 2 line near Columbia View Drive. Equipment for the installation would be staged just north of the new vault along Columbia View Drive.

**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/ Elizabeth Siping*

Elizabeth Siping

Contract Environmental Protection Specialist

Adecco Engineering & Technical

Reviewed by:

/s/ Gene Lynard

Gene Lynard

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Date: February 25, 2016

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachments: 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

The project would be on BPA fee-owned ROW under the Big Eddy-Chenoweth No. 1 transmission line, west of Big Eddy Substation in Wasco County, OR. The underground fiber route would commence near an existing utility pole and end near NoaNet's regeneration hut (total distance of approximately 120 feet). The project area is mostly vegetated with grass and sage shrubs, and has previously been disturbed. Staging would occur next to Columbia View Drive near the new vault. The surrounding area is mostly undeveloped and agricultural land; there are some residences to northwest and southwest.

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. <b>Historic and Cultural Resources</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The proposed activities do not have the potential to affect historic or cultural resources. The project area has been inventoried for two separate projects; no cultural resources were found. Consulting parties were notified of those projects and none had any concerns with proposed work in the same location.		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Minimal soil disturbance would occur. The conduit would be installed by directional drilling. The 7 foot by 7 foot vault would be installed underground at a depth of 8 feet.		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Minimal disturbance to existing vegetation would occur. No federally listed or state special status plant species were documented or observed on the site.		
4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project area is not suitable for wildlife habitat.		

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



Explanation: No water bodies, floodplains, or fish are present.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No wetlands are present.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No new wells or use of groundwater proposed.

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



Explanation: No change to land use proposed.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: No change to the project site.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Small amount of dust and vehicle emissions anticipated during construction activities.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Temporary, intermittent noise during construction.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No impact.

### **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:

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#### **Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description: WindWave has coordinated work with Wasco County due to their ROW on Columbia View Drive. All work would occur on BPA fee-owned ROW.

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

Signed: /s/ Elizabeth Siping  
Elizabeth Siping – ECT-4

Date: February 25, 2016