

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Switch Stand B-838 Counterpoise Installation

Project No. (if applicable): 3435

Project Manager: Scott Nosal

Location: Douglas County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.6 Additions or Modifications

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to install aluminum counterpoise at the steel switch stand (B-838) located adjacent to structure 33/8 of the Grand Coulee-Foster Creek No. 1 transmission line. A 200-foot long by 1-foot wide by 2-foot deep trench will be dug using a backhoe to install the counterpoise. The counterpoise will be placed in the trench and one end will be attached to the switch stand. Ground rods will be driven 20 feet deep in 20 foot intervals along the counterpoise until a resistance of less than 40 ohms is reached. The trench will then be backfilled with the excavated material. The project location is identified in the table below.

Transmission Line	TRS Info	County, State
Grand Coulee-Foster Creek No. 1	T29N R25E SEC23	Douglas, WA

The proposed action will reduce the switch stand resistance to a safe level for personnel performing switching operations. All work will be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA standards.

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/ Michael A. Rosales

Michael A. Rosales

Physical Scientist - Environment

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: May 23, 2016

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: Switch Stand B-838 Counterpoise Installation

Project Site Description

Proposed counterpoise installation will be performed at switch stand B-838 located adjacent to structure 33/8 of the Grand Coulee-Foster Creek No. 1 transmission line. The proposed activity will be performed in the existing transmission line right of way and is located in a rural, non-developed area.

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></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After an internal cultural review of the project, it was determined that this location was previously surveyed for the Chief Joseph Fiber Optic project. No cultural resources were found at that time. The BPA archaeologist recommended the counterpoise installation project could proceed as planned and no additional Section 106 consultation would be required. Crews and equipment are to use existing access roads to and from the work site. In the event that archaeological or historical materials are discovered during project activities, work in the immediate vicinity must stop; the area secured; and the WA DAHP, BPA archaeologist, and the environmental project lead will be notified. 		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Localized soil disturbance would occur during counterpoise installation activities. Standard construction erosion control measures will be utilized as necessary.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No federal/state special-status plants present.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No federal/state special-status species and habitats present.</p>		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Listed fish species may inhabit streams that are within ½-mile of the project location. Project activities are not planned near water resources containing listed fish species; therefore, there will be “No Effect”</p>		

to listed fish species or aquatic habitat.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No wetlands are present.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No use of groundwater proposed. Maximum depth of disturbance would be about two feet below ground surface.

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



Explanation: No change in land use. No specially designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: All work will be performed within existing transmission line right-of-way. No change in visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Small amount of dust and vehicle emission from construction activity.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Temporary construction noise during daylight hours. Operational noise of the transmission line would not change.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: The proposed action will allow safe and timely access to the transmission line which will help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region.

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: The project is located on BPA fee-owned property.

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

Signed: /s/ Michael A. Rosales
Michael A. Rosales, EPR-Bell-1
Physical Scientist - Environment

Date: May 23, 2016