

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Reedsport Substation Outfall Redesign

**Project No.:** P01127

**Project Manager:** Janice Grounds, TEP-CSB-2

**Location:** Reedsport, Douglas County, OR

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B1.6 Tanks and equipment to control runoff and spills

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to decommission two of three existing outfalls at the Reedsport Substation and route all runoff to the remaining outfall location at the easternmost edge of the site. The need for the project was precipitated by ponding on a neighbor's property that was exacerbated by the original outfall configuration.

For the outfall reconfiguration, three new catch basins would be installed downstream from three existing catch basins, all of which would be within the substation yard. The new units would be 3-foot by 3-foot and 4-foot deep. Associated 6-inch and 8-inch sections of polyethylene piping at a total length of 167 feet would be installed to connect the new catch basins to route runoff to the new consolidated outfall point. The existing sections of piping from the positions at the new catch basins to the original three outfalls would be removed at a total length of 67 feet (the majority of which would be outside the substation fence), their trenches backfilled, and the piping disposed of at a BPA-approved facility.

At the consolidated outfall, the 6-inch inlet pipe would be replaced by an 8-inch pipe, and a rock (riprap aggregate) apron and berm would be installed outside the yard fence to dissipate the increased volumes and energy expected at the single point. Sheet flow would be promoted by the berm and the runoff would be unlikely to induce gully erosion. The total area of the new apron and berm would be no more than 110 square feet. Geotextile fabric would be laid under the extent of the riprap apron.

A land acquisition was completed through an easement for a 0.08-acre block adjacent to the new outfall. BPA determined that this parcel would provide an infiltration area for the newly controlled runoff and that it would alleviate the ponding concern for the neighbor. The runoff management would preserve the integrity of the steep slope at the edge of the new parcel, and would prevent uncontrolled flow and sediment transport to the wetland at the base of the slope.

**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 J. O'Connell  
Michael J. O'Connell  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason  
Stacy L. Mason  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: July 11, 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:** Reedsport Substation Outfall Redesign

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### Project Site Description

The Reedsport substation is on the west side of the town of Reedsport that is split by Schofield Creek, a tributary of the Umpqua River. Downslope of the station is a strip of forested wetland and its associated perennial stream that drains into Providence Creek, a critical habitat for coho salmon. The wooded strip totals about 15 acres; is a park (Bicentennial Park) administered by the City of Reedsport; and is bounded by roads, residential housing, and businesses.

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

<b>Environmental Resource Impacts</b>	<b>No Potential for Significance</b>	<b>No Potential for Significance, with Conditions</b>
<p><b>1. Historic and Cultural Resources</b></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> During initiation of consultation, the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurred with the BPA archeologist’s Area of Potential Effect (APE) and the Coquille Tribe stated they had no concerns with the project. BPA determined there would be no potential to affect historic properties, and the SHPO and all four tribes (Coquille, Grand Ronde, Siletz, and Coos) did not respond to the BPA determination of effect letters.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Treat potential discoveries of archeological materials with the ‘inadvertent discovery’ guidelines: Stop work, contact BPA ECT lead and BPA ECC archeologist for further notifications, and ensure integrity of site and materials until further instructions.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>2. Geology and Soils</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Soils would be temporarily disturbed by installation and removal of the outfall piping and catch basin installation. About 216 square feet would be disturbed within the substation gravel yard fence, and about 72 square feet would be disturbed in vegetated ground outside the fence. Installation of the riprap apron and berm structure at the outfall daylight would require permanent disturbance of no more than 110 square feet, and temporary disturbance of approximately 250 square feet. The project would be expected to have a long-term beneficial effect on soil erosion as the flow energy to the receiving land is dissipated by the treatment of runoff by the apron and berm structure. The apron and berm installation would prevent soil erosion on the receiving slope, and the reroute of runoff from the ponded area would allow for greater stabilization of the topsoil there.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Perform the work during the dry season (July 2016-September 2016) and use best management practices (BMPs) to limit water-, wind- or gravity-induced soil movement.</li> <li>✓ Develop and implement an erosion control plan approved by BPA.</li> </ul>		

3. **Plants** (including federal/state special-status species)

Explanation: There are no special-status species in the project's area of potential disturbance. Common native and non-native species would be disturbed by the work outside the substation, and where needed a BPA-approved seed mix would be applied to stabilize disturbed areas. A small myrtle tree (less than six inches diameter) and associated brush would be removed to accommodate the outfall apron and berm.

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

Explanation: The federally-listed threatened species that could occur within the impact zone of the project are not documented as occurring closer than 5 miles to the site. There is a 14-acre park adjacent to the project area that does have some suitable nesting trees for the threatened northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet. A field visit on May 24, 2016 did not yield habitat occupancy data, however. These species typically require forest stands of more advanced age and structure, and with less edge and surrounding development than the adjacent strip of forest. The proposed-threatened fisher requires similar habitat to that for the northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet, and the forest present is in a highly developed area making it unlikely to harbor fishers. The western snowy plover inhabits beaches or other flat, open areas near bodies of water and would not be found in the wooded wetland adjacent to the substation. The species-of-concern white-footed vole is found in a variety of wooded areas, however it would not be impacted by the project as the substation runoff to the adjacent woods would continue to be managed by the outfall redesign and the last documented sighting of the vole in the vicinity of the town of Reedsport was in 1972.

Mitigation:

- ✓ Do not remove any trees, other than the small myrtle

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

Explanation: There is a steelhead trout winter run spawning and rearing stream (Providence Creek winter run, not federally-listed) 0.6 miles downstream from the work, and Coho (federally-listed threatened) critical habitat 0.5 miles distant in Schofield Creek. Schofield Creek and coho would not be impacted because flow from the work site would be directed to the current outfalls' and then the new outfall's points of daylight that are just upstream of the wetland that drains to Providence Creek. Providence Creek and its associated steelhead population would not be affected because disturbed soil would be contained on site by BMP's. In the event of a severe thunderstorm during construction and the increased potential for incidental off-site transport, sedimentation would be mitigated by the wetland's filtration capacities and would be unlikely to affect the creek downstream.

After construction, there would be an expected overall benefit to water bodies, floodplains, and fish. The routing of substation runoff to an apron and berm structure to dissipate runoff energy and promote sheet flow over land would reduce erosion potential of the site.

Mitigation:

- ✓ Perform work during the dry season (July 2016-September 2016) using best management practices (BMPs) to limit potential water-, wind- or gravity-induced soil movement.

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: Project design and soil disturbance BMP's would provide protection to the downstream wetland. Runoff that could occur during construction would be managed by BMP's and project timing as previously described. After construction, the riprap apron and berm would dissipate runoff energy from the substation to the wetland below.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The project would not adversely impact groundwater and aquifers. On a high spot above a wetland, all runoff would continue to drain to the wetland below. Where it had ponded and infiltrated over a longer period than may occur with the controlled outfall, the overall volume would not change and the energy to the receiving basin would be sufficiently diminished by the outfall.

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



Explanation: The project would not impact the adjacent park in which the receiving basin lies. Recreational quality of the park's trail would be unaffected, and the quality of the wetland unchanged.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: There would be minimal clearing of small stature vegetation adjacent to the substation and installation of a ground-level riprap structure to manage runoff. The changes would not be visible to the general public.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: There could be short term decrease in air quality in the immediate vicinity with machinery exhaust during construction. As the location is adjacent to a busy local road and is less than 500 feet from US Highway 101, there would be no change to average air quality.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: There would be only short term increases in noise with construction that would be localized to the substation and its immediate vicinity.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: Workers on the project would be required to follow all applicable state and/or federal safety standards for work on energized facilities. There would be no impacts to public safety: the work would occur inside a locked facility or immediately adjacent on private property.

### 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: An adjacent landowner on whose property BPA has reserved by easement an infiltration area for the substation runoff is aware of, and favors the project.

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

Signed: /s/ Michael J. O'Connell  
Michael J. O'Connell, ECT-4

Date: July 11, 2016