

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: LURR 20170016 Walla Walla

Project No.: LURR 20170016

Project Manager: Deborah Rodgers—TERR-TRICITIES RMHQ

Location: Walla Walla, WA

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.9 Multiple use of powerline rights-of-way

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to allow Columbia Rural Electric Association (Columbia REA) to install fiber optic lines within conduits at the Walla Walla Substation, in Walla Walla, WA. Columbia REA would trench approximately 185 feet from the NE edge of the substation yard (where Columbia REA currently has electrical equipment) to the BPA corridor, near tower 1/1 of the Walla Walla-Tucannon River line. From there, Columbia REA would directional bore approximately 210 feet north, to the edge of the BPA fee-owned property at the Walla Walla Substation. The directional boring drill and other materials may be temporarily stored on site, near the Columbia REA yard.

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/ Beth Belanger

Beth Belanger

Contract Environmental Protection Specialist

Motus Recruiting & Staffing

Reviewed by:

/s/ Gene Lynard

Gene Lynard

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: November 29, 2016

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.

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Project Site Description

The project location is at the Walla Walla Substation, in eastern Washington. Walla Walla Substation is located in Township 07 North, Range 35 East, Section 23. The site is on the northeastern side of the city of Walla Walla, approximately 5 miles north of the Washington-Oregon border and 25 miles east of the Columbia River. The substation is situated between Heritage Road and Highway 12.

The surrounding topography consists of undulating hills. The site is within the Lower Mill Creek watershed. Neighboring parcels are comprised of residential, agricultural, and commercial uses.

A review of the National Wetland Inventory, soil information, topography, and aerial photos did not reveal any wetlands or water bodies at the site.

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"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> BPA cultural staff determined that the project location has been previously surveyed for cultural and historical resources. Given the previous surveys and the extent of prior disturbance, cultural staff recommends that the project is unlikely to affect historical or cultural resources. Therefore, no further action is required.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Trenching for conduit installation would be to a maximum depth of 4 feet. Native soils would be used to backfill the trench. Soil boring would also be utilized, and therefore reduce ground disturbance. Best management practices (BMPs) would be used to prevent soil erosion.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No special-status plant species are present within the project area.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No special-status wildlife species are present within the project area.		

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



Explanation: No water bodies, floodplains, or fish are present within the project area.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No wetlands are present in the project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The maximum depth of disturbance would be 4-feet and would not impact groundwater or any aquifers.

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



Explanation: No land use changes. All work would occur at existing facilities.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The fiber installation would not alter the visual quality of the landscape.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: There may be a small amount of dust and vehicle emissions during construction; however, there would be no significant changes to air quality during or after construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Temporary noise may occur during the fiber installation but the impact would be non-significant.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No impact to human health or 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: Landowner notification or involvement would not be necessary for work at Walla Walla Substation because it is a BPA fee-owned property.

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

Signed: /s/ Beth Belanger
Beth Belanger—ECT-4
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Motus Recruiting & Staffing

Date: November 29, 2016