

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Chenoweth Substation Temporary Transformer Addition

**Project Numbers:** L0388, LURR 20170001, and LURR 20160456

**Project Manager:** Amy Gardner - TEP-TPP-1

**Location:** Wasco County, OR

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B4.6 Additions and modifications to transmission facilities

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes install a temporary transformer, a short temporary powerline, and other equipment at its Chenoweth Substation in Wasco County, Oregon. The transformer and equipment would serve Northern Wasco County Public Utility District's (PUD) proposed Rivertrail Substation and help accommodate load growth in the area. Northern Wasco PUD intends to provide power to the nearby Taylor Lake Facility, a data center that is currently under construction.

Within the existing Chenoweth Substation yard, BPA would install metering, upgrade line protection relays, and replace disconnect switches and risers. Outside of the yard, BPA would install a temporary mobile transformer. The mobile transformer would sit on a 50-foot truck adjacent to the south of Chenoweth Substation on BPA property and the ground grid would be extended to accommodate it. Northern Wasco PUD would construct a temporary 13.8 kV feeder consisting of four utility poles with conductor, spanning from the mobile transformer to a dead end pole off of BPA right-of-way. The temporary 13.8 kV feeder and mobile transformer would be removed after the Rivertrail Substation is in operation.

In addition, BPA would install fiber optic cable to provide communication between Chenoweth Substation and the proposed Rivertrail Substation. A new fiber vault would be installed near the southeast property corner and would allow NWCPUD to install a new customer vault (CV) near it.

BPA will propose construction of a substation in the future to provide a permanent power source to NWCPUD and will conduct appropriate environmental review of any proposal.

**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  
Flux Resources, LLC

Reviewed by:

/s/ Gene Lynard

Gene Lynard  
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: December 12, 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 Chenoweth Substation is located on River Road in The Dalles, Oregon north of the city of The Dalles, between the Columbia River and I-84. A business park is currently under construction there by the Port of The Dalles. Project work would be within the existing Chenoweth Substation and outside of the substation adjacent to the south side of the substation yard in previously disturbed areas.

## Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
<b>1. Historic and Cultural Resources</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> BPA determined that the proposed activities have no potential to affect historic properties or cultural resources.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u> In the event any archaeological or historic materials are encountered during project activities, the following actions should be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead and the BPA archaeologist. Appropriate BPA project staff, interested Tribes, Oregon SHPO, and the appropriate county, state, and federal agencies should also be notified.</li><li>• Implement reasonable measures to protect the discovery site, including any appropriate stabilization or covering.</li><li>• Take reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the discovery site, including restricting access.</li></ul>		
<b>2. Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Minimal soil disturbance would occur in previously disturbed areas for the extension of the ground grid and for the installation of four utility poles and two fiber vaults.</p>		
<b>3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species are known to occur in the project area. All work would occur in previously disturbed areas.</p>		
<b>4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species are known to occur in the project area. All work would occur in previously disturbed areas.</p>		

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



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

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No wetlands are present in the project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No new wells or use of ground water is proposed.

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



Explanation: No change to land use is proposed. The project site is within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area; however, it is designated as an urban area that is exempt from the scenic area land-use conditions.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The mobile transformer and utility poles would be visually consistent with the existing area.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions would occur during construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: A temporary increase in noise would occur during construction and during operation of the mobile transformer

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No impact to human health and safety is anticipated.

### **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: The proposed work would take place on fee-owned ROW and no visual or other effects to adjacent landowners.

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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/ Elizabeth Siping  
Elizabeth Siping – ECT-4

Date: December 12, 2016