

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Keeler-Oregon City No. 2 Transmission Line Right-of-Way Fiber Line Installation

LURR No.: 20200348

Project Manager: Jerry Schneider, TERR-Chemawa

Location: Washington County, Oregon

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

Description of the Proposed Action: The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow Portland General Electric (PGE) Company to install an underground fiber optic conduit on BPA fee-owned property in Washington County, Oregon. The purpose of this proposal is to accommodate a portion of PGE's communication upgrade project between their Murray Hill and St Mary's substations. PGE has highlighted a need to replace a section of fiber optic cable that is currently routed aerially between their existing steel pole (PL-49) and the existing PGE-owned St Mary's substation to the east.

The proposed project, conducted by PGE, would install a new underground HDPE fiber optic conduit measuring approximately 763 feet in length, 100 feet of which occurs on BPA fee-owned land. PGE would route and install the 4-inch diameter conduit approximately 4 feet subgrade via a directional bore. The entry and exit points for the horizontal boring route would occur off BPA fee-owned land, to the east and west, respectively. Equipment used would be a horizontal boring apparatus, pickup trucks, and hand tools as needed.

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, Jul. 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/ Nicholas Johnson

Nicholas Johnson
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

September 28, 2021

Date

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.

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Project Site Description

The project site is located in Washington County, Oregon, Township 1 South, Range 1 West, and Section 32. The proposed project transitions from west to east across BPA's fee-owned property associated with the Keeler-Oregon City No. 2 transmission line corridor, between structures 14/9 and 14/10 and the Oregon City-Stub transmission line structures 15/9 and 15/10. The portion of the project that occurs on BPA fee-owned land is directly to the west of PGE's St. Mary's substation. The portion of the project that coincides with BPA fee-owned land is also intersected by the 11-foot-wide multi-use path which is maintained by the Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation department. The BPA corridor is primarily comprised of grasses and low-growing vegetation.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA Archaeologist filed a report on 8/23/2021 with the findings that the proposed undertaking would result in no historic properties affected. The Oregon SHPO concurred on 9/22/2021.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Soil disturbance would occur during the installation of the underground fiber optic conduit. The maximum depth of disturbance would be approximately 4 feet subgrade.

3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No vegetation would be removed within BPA right-of-way as a result of this project, and there are no special-status species or designated habitat present. Originating and exit bore pits for the installation of the conduit would be located outside of BPA property.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No special-status species or designated habitat present within or near the project site. The project could briefly impact local wildlife during construction activities, which would be a relatively short two-day construction window.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No water bodies, floodplains, or fish present within a quarter mile of project area. There would be no impact to these resources as a result of this project.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No known wetlands are present within the vicinity of the project area.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No new wells or use of groundwater proposed; maximum depth of disturbance would be about 4 feet, which is above the current water table.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no change in land use and no specially-designated areas are present. Brief periods of interruption upon the public's use of the municipal path within the project area may occur during construction activities and would be in short duration. The underground conduit would not change the existing multi-use path or the recreational use of the area post project completion.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The new fiber optic line would be installed underground and would not alter visual quality to the site.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A small amount of dust and emissions from equipment and vehicles would occur during construction activities. This would occur within a relatively short duration.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary construction noise would occur during daylight hours. The operational noise post completion would not change.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Crews would follow all applicable health and safety protocols during construction. PGE would work with Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation department to control the site and reroute public traffic on the path as needed during construction activities.

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: N/A

Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation: N/A

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: N/A

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: N/A

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: PGE would coordinate with the Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation department in order to make notifications to the general public in the event that the municipal path needs to be closed during construction. PGE and the Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation department would conduct notifications to adjacent landowners as needed.

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

Signed: /s/ Nicholas Johnson
Nicholas Johnson ECT-4
Environmental Protection Specialist

September 28, 2021
Date