

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Eugene Substation GPS Antenna Relocation

Project Manager: Donald Jones – TFEV-ALVEY

Location: Lane County, Oregon

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.7 Electronic equipment.

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to relocate a GPS antenna from a wooden utility pole to the south elevation of the Eugene Substation control house. The GPS antenna is approximately 18 inches tall and would be installed with a metal bracket to the side of the control house. Cables and conduit would be painted to match the building, and an existing penetration would be used to route the new cable into the building.

The Federal Columbia River Transmission System Act directs BPA to construct, acquire, operate, maintain, repair, relocate, and replace the transmission system, including facilities and structures appurtenant thereto. (16 United States Code [U.S.C] § 838i(b)). The Administrator is further charged with maintaining electrical stability and reliability, selling transmission and interconnection services, and providing service to BPA's customers. (16 U.S.C § 838b(b-d)). The Administrator is also authorized to conduct electrical research, development, experimentation, tests, and investigation related to construction, operation, and maintenance of transmission systems and facilities. (16 U.S.C § 838i(b)(3)).

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. ¹

Justin Olmsted
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Katey C. Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

¹ BPA is aware of the November 12, 2024, decision in *Marin Audubon Society v. Federal Aviation Administration*, No. 23-1067 (D.C. Cir. Nov. 12, 2024). To the extent that a court may conclude that the Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing NEPA are not judicially enforceable or binding on this agency action, BPA has nonetheless elected to follow those regulations at 40 Code Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) §§ 1500– 1508, in addition to the US Department of Energy’s NEPA implementing procedures at 10 C.F.R. Part § 1021, to meet the agency’s obligations under NEPA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 *et seq.*

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: Eugene Substation GPS Antenna Relocation

Project Site Description

The proposed action area includes the control house at the BPA-owned Eugene Substation in Lane County, Oregon (T17S R4W). Project activities would be carried out on the southeast side of the control house and at the existing wooden utility pole located within the substation yard. The area outside the substation is characterized as light industrial building complexes with some residential. A railyard and a privately-owned substation exist to the east of the Eugene Substation. There are no fish-bearing bodies of water nearby, however there is a small privately-owned pond approximately 100 feet to the southeast of the substation. Soils at the substation are characterized by Malabon, which is not a soil type considered to be hydric.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: Pursuant to its responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and implementing regulations 36 CFR 800, BPA initiated consultation with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, and Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians on November 4, 2024. BPA has previously determined that the Eugene Substation is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places with Oregon SHPO concurrence. The Eugene Control House is a contributing resource and individually eligible under Criterion C.

The Oregon SHPO concurred with the Area of Potential Effect and the finding of no adverse effect to historic properties on November 6, 2024. The Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians responded on November 21, 2024, that the project is outside their area of interest. No other responses were received within 30 days.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: Project activities are not expected to impact soils or geology due to lack of ground-disturbing activities.

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

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: No ground disturbance is anticipated. There are no documented occurrences of any special-status plant species, or plant species protected under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) occurring at the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would result in No Effect to protected plant species.

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

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: There are no documented occurrences of special-status wildlife species or suitable habitat present in the project area. Minor and temporary disturbance of common wildlife species could occur from elevated noise during construction. Because the work would be occurring adjacent to a currently operating substation, any wildlife present is likely used to human presence and noise.

Therefore, the proposed project may have a temporary impact on general wildlife species during construction activities, but the proposed action would not have a permanent impact or an effect on special-status wildlife species or habitats.

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

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: The project site is not located near any surface waters or fish bearing streams and is not located within a floodplain.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: The project action area is not within or near a wetland.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: Project actions would not disturb soil or include any other activities that could impact aquifers and groundwater.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: There would be no change in land use or specially designated areas as a result of this project.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: Moving the existing antenna from the utility pole to the control house is expected to be a minor alteration to visual quality and would remain consistent with the overall visual character of the site.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: Depending on the vehicles and equipment used, temporary and minor dust and vehicle emissions could increase in the local area during project implementation. There would be no long-term impact to air quality following completion of the project.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: Temporary construction noise would occur during daylight hours. No ongoing noise increase is expected for this area as a result of this project.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: The project would not generate or use hazardous materials and would not create conditions that would increase risk to human health and safety. No impact to human health and safety is expected as a result of project 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: The project site is on BPA fee-owned property. There are no other landowners that would need to be notified, involved or coordinated with.

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

Signed:

Justin Olmsted
Environmental Protection Specialist