

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Horn Rapids Tap Disconnect Additions

Project Manager: Marlis Pebles

Location: Benton County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.11 Electric power substations and interconnection facilities

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to install two disconnect switches on two wood pole structures at the Horn Rapids Tap, which is owned and operated by Benton Rural Electric Association (Benton REA). The disconnect additions are needed to reduce outage durations for planned and unplanned maintenance. These disconnects would be owned by BPA and located on BPA right-of-way, outside of the Horn Rapids Tap fence, on the Red Mountain-White Bluffs No. 1 line. Benton REA plans to relocate their transmission lines from BPA's structures 5/1, 4/15, and 4/14 to underground feeders, which they will own and maintain.

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

Adecco Engineering & Technical

Reviewed by:

/s/ Gene Lynard

Gene Lynard

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: June 17, 2015

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.

Proposed Action: Horn Rapids Tap Disconnect Additions

Project Site Description

The proposed action would occur at Horn Rapids Tap in Benton County, Washington. Horn Rapids Tap, which is owned by Benton Rural Electric Association (Benton REA), is located in a rural, agricultural area adjacent to the McWhorter Canal. The proposed action would occur adjacent to the tap, on Benton REA property and on BPA right-of-way (ROW) in an area that has previously been disturbed and is only accessible with owner permission.

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"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> WA SHPO concurrence on no adverse effect determination 4/23/15. Confederated Tribes and Bands of Yakama Nation and Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation consulted – no response.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u></p> <p>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">• Stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead and the BPA archaeologist, Shelby Day. Appropriate BPA project staff, interested Tribes, WA SHPO, and the appropriate county, state, and federal agencies should also be notified.• Implement reasonable measures to protect the discovery site, including any appropriate stabilization or covering.• Take reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the discovery site, including restricting access.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The project would impact approximately 0.3 acres of previously disturbed soil.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special status species present. Minimal vegetation to be impacted has previously been disturbed.</p>		

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



Explanation: No special status species present. All work would occur in previously disturbed areas.

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



Explanation: McWhorter Canal is located near the BPA ROW. Proposed work would not impact the canal.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No wetlands present.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No new wells or use of groundwater proposed.

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



Explanation: The project area is currently ROW. There are no specially designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: Project would result in two new poles, which is consistent with the existing use. The project area is in a rural location that can only be accessed with owner permission.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Extremely small amount of dust and vehicle emissions anticipated during construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Temporary construction noise during daylight hours.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No known soil contamination or hazardous conditions.

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: The landowner has been notified of the project.

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

Signed: /s/ Elizabeth Siping
Elizabeth Siping – KEC-4

Date: June 17, 2015