Proposed Action: Avista Retermination to Bell Substation

PP&A No.: LURR 20210125

Project Manager: Michael Henjum – TEPS-TPP-1

Location: Spokane 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) proposes to allow Avista Utilities (Avista) to replace two wood poles structures and install one new structure on fee-owned land to the west of Bell Substation. The conductor would then be replaced across these structures. The purpose of this work is to upgrade Avista’s transmission line that terminates at BPA’s Bell Substation.

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/ Emma Reinemann  
Emma Reinemann  
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel  
Sarah T. Biegel  
NEPA Compliance Officer  

Date: June 23, 2021

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.

**Proposed Action:** LURR 20210125

**Project Site Description**

The project would occur on BPA fee-owned land to the west of Bell Substation. The area where work would occur is the right-of-way for multiple transmission lines and is located in between Bell Substation and BPA Munro Control Center.

**Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources**

1. **Historic and Cultural Resources**

   Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

   **Explanation:** BPA initiated consultation with the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and the Spokane Tribe of Indians on March 3, 2021. Both parties concurred with the area of potential effect (APE) on March 3, 2021. The project area was analyzed by a BPA archaeologist and a determination letter which stated no historic properties would be affected by project activities was distributed to consulting parties on May 24, 2021. DAHP concurred with BPA’s determination on May 24, 2021, with the stipulation that an inadvertent discovery plan be implemented during construction. The Spokane Tribe of Indians concurred with BPA’s determination on June 1, 2021, and concurred with the implementation of an inadvertent discovery plan.

   **Notes:**
   - An inadvertent discovery plan must be implemented during construction of this project.

2. **Geology and Soils**

   Potential for Significance: No

   **Explanation:** Localized soil disturbance would occur during construction. Standard erosion control measures would be implemented to prevent sediment migration off site. Any excess spoils generated during project activities would be redistributed on-site and stabilized.

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

   Potential for Significance: No

   **Explanation:** There would be some impacts to plants where new poles would be located; however, these areas would be revegetated upon project completion. There are no Federal or state special-status species or habitats in the project area.

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

   Potential for Significance: No
Explanation: There are no Federal or state special-status species known to inhabit the project area. Project activities would temporarily disturb local wildlife during construction, but the disturbance would be limited to the area immediately adjacent to the substation where wildlife would already be habituated to operational noise.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No in-water work is proposed for this project. Standard construction erosion control measures would be utilized to ensure sediment and other contaminants do not enter bodies of water; therefore, water bodies, floodplains, and fish would not be affected by the proposed project activities.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no wetlands located in the vicinity of the project area.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project activities are not expected to impact groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Land use would not change as a result of this project. No specially-designated areas are located within the project area.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The visual quality of the right-of-way would not change as a result of the proposed activities. Although one new structure would be installed, it would be consistent with the surrounding visual quality of the area.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Exhaust and dust from utility and construction equipment may temporarily reduce air quality in the immediate project area.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary noise would occur during construction. There would be no change to the operational noise of the substation or transmission line.
12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

**Explanation:** The project would not have an impact on human health and 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:** 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:** All project activities would occur on BPA fee-owned land.
Based on the foregoing, this proposed project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts to any environmentally sensitive resource.

Signed: /s/ Emma Reinemann  Date: June 23, 2021
Emma Reinemann – EPR-4
Physical Scientist (Environmental)