

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Lane Substation Fiber Separation

**Project Manager:** Bob Trisman—TEP-CSB-1

**Location:** Lane County, Oregon

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B4.7 Fiber optic cable

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to separate segments of the Keeler-Alvey fiber system at the Lane Substation. The Alvey-Lane fiber segment would be relocated away from the Eugene-Lane fiber segment to remove single points of failure, in support of Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC) reliability requirements.

Directional boring would be used to install underground conduit and fiber optic cable from a 10 ft. by 10 ft. by 5 ft. launch bore pit, beneath tower 14/4 of the Alvey-Lane No. 1 transmission line. The boring would terminate approximately 350 ft. north at another 10 ft. by 10 ft. by 5 ft. receiving pit, in which a new 4 ft. by 4 ft. by 4 ft. Bonneville vault would be located, on the south side of the substation. From there, the fiber would go through existing conduit around the east side of the substation, to the existing customer vault on the north side of the substation. The pits would be dug with a backhoe.

Directional boring would also be used to install underground conduit and fiber optic cable from the control house, approximately 500 ft. across the front lawn, to the customer vault on the northeast side of the substation. The boring entrance and exit points would be approximately 10 ft. by 10 ft. by 5 ft. each, and also dug with a backhoe.

The abandoned fiber optic cable, located in the substation switchyard, would be removed after the new fiber is installed. Staging of materials would occur at Alvey Maintenance Headquarters, which is approximately 10 miles from Lane 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, 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/ Beth Belanger

Beth Belanger  
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist  
Motus Staffing & Recruiting

Reviewed by:

/s/ Gene Lynard

Gene Lynard  
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: August 23, 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.

**Proposed Action:** Lane Substation Fiber Separation

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## Project Site Description

The project is located at the Lane Substation, approximately three miles west of Eugene in Township 17 South, Range 5 West, Section 36. The surrounding topography is relatively flat. Neighboring parcels are comprised of mostly agricultural fields and rural residential properties. There are herbaceous wetlands on the substation property.

## Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. <b>Historic and Cultural Resources</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> A Section 106 review concluded that there would be no adverse effects to historic or cultural resources. On July 15, 2016, the Section 106 report was sent to the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and the Klamath Tribes. Neither the SHPO, nor the tribes have responded within 30 days.</p> <p>In the event of an inadvertent archaeological discovery, all construction work would cease until the BPA archaeologist and other appropriate parties are notified and suitable action is taken.</p>		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Directional boring would be used to minimize soil disturbance; however, there would be approximately 40 cubic yards of ground disturbance at the boring entrance and exit points. The backfilling would use native soils, and the area would be re-seeded with an appropriate seed mix. Best management practices (BMPs) would be used to prevent soil erosion. The maximum depth of soil disturbance would be five feet.</p> <p>In the event of heavy rains prior to construction, BPA requests that the contractor use tracked-equipment to avoid compaction and deflection of soils. If rutting occurs, the soils will be restored to pre-construction conditions.</p>		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> A 2013 rare plant survey and a March 2016 site visit, determined that there were no special-status plants present at the site.</p>		
4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special-status wildlife species or habitat present at the site. The location is developed as an electrical substation, with an agricultural field to the south.</p>		

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



Explanation: The project area does not have any floodplains or listed fish species. A seasonally-flowing streambed surrounds the perimeter of the substation fence, along the eastern and southern sides. This channel was most likely constructed to convey storm water away from the substation yard. The project would occur outside of the streambed and therefore, the project would have no impacts to this water body.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: There are wetlands at the project location. Directional boring would be used to minimize impacts to wetlands. There would be no impacts to wetlands on the northern part of the property; however, the directional soil boring entrance location and vault placement adjacent to tower 14/4 of the Alvey-Lane No. 1 transmission line is assumed to be a wetland because it is within mapped hydric soils. This area has not been delineated and is pre-disturbed and currently in active agricultural production.

An estimated 37 cubic yards of ground disturbance would occur at the directional soil boring entrance and exit points. The majority of the backfilling would use native-soils, and the area would be re-seeded with a native seed mix. Best management practices (BMPs) would be used to prevent soil erosion.

The project qualifies for the US Army Corps Nationwide Permit 12 (utility line activities) and the Oregon Department of State Lands exemption for removal/fill of less than 50 cubic yards.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The project would not impact groundwater or aquifers, as maximum depth of disturbance would be 5 feet.

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



Explanation: There would be no permanent changes to the land use at this location. Disturbed areas would be returned to their present use.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The new fiber would be installed underground, and there would be no change to the visual quality of the area.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions would occur during construction; however, there would be no significant changes to air quality during or after construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: The nearest residence is approximately 600 feet from the project location. Construction noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours. Operational noise would not change.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No impact.

### **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 project would be occurring on BPA fee-owned property. There would be no significant visual changes 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: Beth Belanger

Beth Belanger, ECT-4  
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist  
Motus Staffing & Recruiting

Date: August 23, 2016