

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Coordinated Transmission Agreement with California Independent System Operator

Project Manager: Todd Miller, Senior Project Manager – L-7

Location: Vancouver, Washington and Folsom, California

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.8 – Electricity transmission agreements

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to enter into a coordinated transmission agreement with the California Independent System Operator (CAISO) that would formalize existing practices and data exchanges between BPA and CAISO, as well as improve the management of energy-imbalance-market flows on our interconnected transmission systems. The agreement provides for coordinated operations between BPA and CAISO to ensure system reliability when adjacent balancing-authority areas utilize BPA's transmission system to make real-time power transfers while participating in CAISO's Energy Imbalance Market. To meet this objective, the agreement establishes a coordination committee, data-sharing practices, and procedures to manage power flows on BPA's system.

The agreement would not involve new generation projects or changes to the physical transmission system. If, at some point in the future during the course of implementing the agreement, BPA nonetheless identifies previously unforeseen physical changes to the transmission system that are necessary to implement the agreement, BPA will conduct the appropriate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review for any such changes prior to implementation.

Findings: In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) of the Department of Energy's (DOE) 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/ Jeffrey J. Maslow

Jeffrey J. Maslow

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: January 3, 2017

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: Coordinated Transmission Agreement with California Independent System Operator

Project Site Description

BPA owns and operates 15,000 miles of high-voltage transmission lines across the Pacific Northwest that provide transmission paths to California's system over the Southern Intertie—jointly operated by BPA and the California Independent System Operator—and includes the existing transmission facilities of the alternating-current California-Oregon Intertie and direct-current Pacific Direct Current Intertie.

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"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Because the undertaking does not involve a type of activity with the potential to cause effects on historic properties, there would be no effect on historic and cultural resources.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Because the agreement does not involve activities with the potential to affect geology and soils, there would be no effect on geology and soils.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Because the agreement does not involve activities with the potential to affect plants, there would be no effect on plants.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Because the agreement does not involve activities with the potential to affect wildlife, there would be no effect on wildlife.		

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



Explanation:

Because the agreement does not involve activities with the potential to affect water-dependent resources, there would be no effect on waterbodies, floodplains, and fish.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation:

Because the agreement does not involve activities with the potential to affect water-dependent resources, there would be no effect on wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation:

Because the agreement does not involve activities with the potential to affect water-dependent resources, there would be no effect on groundwater and aquifers.

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



Explanation:

Because the agreement does not involve activities with the potential to affect land use and specially designated areas, there would be no effect on land use and specially designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation:

Because the agreement does not involve activities with the potential to affect visual quality, there would be no effect on visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation:

Because the agreement would not involve new generation, and all generating projects are expected to remain within normal operating limits under the agreement, there would be no change in effect on air quality.

11. **Noise**



Explanation:

Because the agreement does not involve activities with the potential to affect noise levels, there would be no effect on noise levels.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation:

Because the agreement does not involve activities with the potential to affect human health and safety, there would be no effect 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, 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

No landowner notification, involvement, or coordination will be conducted because the agreement does not involve activities with potential to result in physical changes in the transmission system beyond previously disturbed or developed facility areas.

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

Signed: /s/ Jeffrey J. Maslow
Jeffrey J. Maslow

Date: January 3, 2017