

Record of Categorical Exclusion
for
Georgia Power Company's
Anthony Shoals Substation STATCOM Project
Loan Application #EIR0045

Description of Categorically Excluded Action

The United States Department of Energy (DOE), Loan Programs Office (LPO) may provide loan guarantees for energy infrastructure projects under section 1706 of Title XVII of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Energy Policy Act), as amended by the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (42 U.S.C. 16517) (the EIR Program). The purpose of the EIR Program is to finance projects and facilities in the U.S. that retool, repower, repurpose, or replace energy infrastructure that has ceased operations or enable operating energy infrastructure to avoid, reduce, utilize, or sequester air pollutants or anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases (42 U.S.C. 16517(a)(2)).

LPO is considering whether to issue a loan guarantee of a funding facility to the Georgia Power Company (GPC) pursuant to its authority under the EIR Program. In its application, GPC has identified the Anthony Shoals substation expansion and Status Synchronous Compensator (STATCOM) project (Anthony Shoals Project or Project), in Elbert County, Georgia, for inclusion in the funding facility that is the subject of DOE's loan guarantee. GPC may request inclusion of multiple individual projects with independent utility in the funding facility that is the subject of the DOE loan guarantee; accordingly, DOE will complete an environmental review pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for these projects prior to their inclusion in the funding facility that is the subject of DOE's loan guarantee.

The Project is needed to maintain efficient and dependable power flow on the grid and will reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from reduced system losses by 107 metric tons in the first and each subsequent operational year. Accordingly, the Proposed Action considered in this record of categorical exclusion is LPO's issuance of Federal financial support for the Anthony Shoals Project.

Project Description

GPC proposes expansion of the existing Anthony Shoals substation and the installation of a new Status Synchronous Compensator (STATCOM) at the existing facility. To accommodate the new STATCOM, the substation yard was expanded by approximately 2.8 acres to the south and west of the existing facility. This area was cleared and graded by GPC prior to DOE's involvement. Additionally, two stormwater and oil containment basins (0.18 acres and 0.10 acres, respectively) were constructed prior to DOE's involvement adjacent to the substation facility in previously disturbed areas. Therefore, GPC's prior site development activities and the associated costs are not included as part of the potential LPO loan guarantee (LPO's Proposed Action).

No ground disturbing actions will be included in LPO's Proposed Action. LPO's Proposed Action is limited to 1) the purchase and installation of the new STATCOM in the previously expanded substation area and 2) relocation and re-termination of the existing Anthony Shoals-Russell Dam 230kV transmission line. The existing transmission line currently terminates at the Anthony Shoals substation and would be relocated and re-terminated on the new substation frame within the existing substation area. No additional right-of-way would be needed for the re-termination; the line would be moved approximately 80 feet to the west to align with the new bay.

The STATCOM installation and re-termination of the transmission line will include one equipment laydown area, totaling 0.54 acres, that will be located on the southeastern side of the substation within the existing, maintained transmission line right-of-way. The facility will use the existing site access road, which will remain in place and will not be re-routed. No new ground disturbance outside of the existing substation and previously disturbed areas is planned. Areas not covered with substation gravel or permanent foundations will be stabilized with permanent vegetation suitable for this area of the State of Georgia and the time of year when planting will occur.

STATCOM installation and transmission line relocation activities are anticipated to begin in July 2025 and would be completed in September 2026. The substation is expected to operate an additional 40 years.

In accordance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA), LPO's review of the Project found that there would be *no effect* to federally listed species because there would be no ground-disturbing activities as part of LPO's Proposed Action and because the project site does not support habitat required by these species. LPO and Georgia Ecological Services Office discussed the Project and LPO's approach to ESA Section 7; USFWS confirmed on April 22, 2025, that no further documentation was needed for LPO's *no effect* determination. No critical habitat has been designated within the project area.

In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), LPO consulted with the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Based on the *Phase I Cultural Resources Survey for the Anthony Shoals Substation, Elbert County, Georgia* and desktop research, the Georgia SHPO concurred with LPO's finding of no historic properties affected for this project on May 12, 2025. DOE identified and contacted twelve (12) federally recognized Native American Indian Tribes (Tribes) that may have an interest in the Project area (Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town; Cherokee Nation; Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana; Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians; Kialegee Tribal Town; Miccosukee Tribe of Indians; Muscogee (Creek) Nation; Poarch Band of Creek Indians; Seminole Nation of Oklahoma; Seminole Tribe of Florida; Thlopthlocco Tribal Town; and United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma). DOE received a response from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Tribe confirming that they do not have concerns with the Project and concurs with the determination of no effect to historic properties. No other responses were received.

There is one ephemeral stream on the property and a non-jurisdictional drainage feature that would not be affected, and the applicant will install double-row type C silt fencing at the top of the stream banks. As such, no impacts are anticipated on potentially jurisdictional wetlands or waters of the

U.S., and no permitting is required under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The project area is located outside of 100- and 500-year floodplains.

GPC will obtain coverage under the following permit prior to initiating construction of the Project:

- State of Georgia National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activity for Infrastructure Construction Projects (Permit No. GAR100002; 2023); issued by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division

Number and Title of Categorical Exclusion(s)

The actions being considered under the Proposed Action are consistent with and covered by DOE categorical exclusions in 10 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1021, Appendix B4, Categorical Exclusions Applicable to Electric Power and Transmission, respectively. This Project is covered by DOE Categorical Exclusions B4.6 and B4.11.

B4.6 Additions and modifications to transmission facilities

Additions or modifications to electric power transmission facilities within a previously disturbed or developed facility area. Covered activities include, but are not limited to, switchyard rock grounding upgrades, secondary containment projects, paving projects, seismic upgrading, tower modifications, load shaping projects (such as the installation and use of flywheels and battery arrays), changing insulators, and replacement of poles, circuit breakers, conductors, transformers, and crossarms.

B4.11 Electric power substations and interconnection facilities

Construction or modification of electric power substations or interconnection facilities (including, but not limited to, switching stations and support facilities).

Regulatory Requirements Defined in 10 CFR § 1021.410(b)

The Proposed Action was subjected to an environmental due diligence review by DOE LPO staff to ensure it is consistent with the specific category of actions (categorical exclusion) contained in Appendix B of 10 CFR Part 1021 and the conditions for applying categorical exclusions specified in Section 410 of Part 1021. To ensure the requirements of Appendix B were met, LPO staff reviewed project-related documents obtained between January 2025 and May 2025 and participated in conference calls with GPC staff to ensure a complete understanding of the activities associated with the project.

The environmental due diligence review determined that there is no controversy regarding the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Action, and that the activities associated with the Federal financial support would not adversely affect any physical, biological, or socio-cultural resources associated with the deployment of the project. The environmental due diligence review determined the Proposed Action has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

The Comment section below is provided for any necessary clarifications concerning the findings listed above. Signature by GPC's designated representative in the Corporate Validation section is an indication of GPC's concurrence with the findings and determinations presented above.

Comment(s)

Corporate Validation

Jennifer McNelly
Vice-President, Environmental Affairs
Georgia Power Company

Determination

Based on my review of information conveyed to me and in my possession concerning the actions associated with the proposed 1706 loan guarantee described above, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as prescribed in DOE Policy Directive 451.1), I have determined that the actions involve no extraordinary circumstances and fit within the specified category of actions in Appendix B of 10 CFR Part 1021 described above, and are hereby categorically excluded from further review under the National Environmental Policy Act (42 United States Code 4321, as amended).

Signature and Date

Todd Stribley
NEPA Compliance Officer
Loan Programs Office