



# U.S. Department of Energy

## Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

Proposed Action Title: Transfer of the SSP-2A Parcel and Construction of an Electrical Substation (CX-ORR-25-001)

Program or Field Office: Office of Science - ORNL

Location(s) (City/County/State): Oak Ridge, Tennessee

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Proposed Action Description:

The United States Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing the transfer of approximately 15 acres, SSP-2A parcel, to the City of Oak Ridge. The SSP-2A parcel is adjacent to the Oak Ridge Turnpike/State Route 95, across from the Horizon Center, and is approximately half a mile north of the State Route 95-State Route 58 interchange. Upon transfer, the City of Oak Ridge would construct an electrical substation on the parcel as depicted in Figures 1 and 2. Power would be provided via transmission lines that would enter the Horizon Center at the intersection of the State Route 95 and Nevus Drive. Delivering electricity is a requisite for customers planning to develop the available parcels and would aid in realizing DOE's and local communities' original vision for the Horizon Center.

Construction activities will include clearing of trees and vegetation and grading but would not disturb the natural areas of the Horizon Center which are located across State Route 95. The proposed parcel includes the State Route 95, Old County Road, and the TVA 161-kV line Right-of-Ways, which are already cleared and/or maintained. The proposed action would result in gravel and impervious surfaces, including the development of access roads. Additionally, installed transmission lines off the Tennessee Valley Authority 161-kV line, located adjacent to the parcel, would extend to the proposed electrical substation and then along State Route 95 to the Nevus Drive intersection. The transmission line would be regularly maintained, and the vegetation underneath kept at reduced heights. The proposed electrical substation and transmission line would change the existing visual character of the affected area. However, the proposed action would be similar to that of the industrialized land use around the Carbon Fiber Technology Center, across the street from the proposed parcel, and ultimately represent a small portion of the visible vegetation along State Route 95.

A sensitive resource assessment was conducted that evaluated the sensitive flora and fauna, forest condition, and cultural and historical resources of the SSP-2A parcel. The study identified the presence of federal and state listed animal species and their habitat within and surrounding the project site, however it has been determined that the proposed action will not result in significant impacts upon those species or their habitat. Trees and vegetation would be cleared between November 15<sup>th</sup> and March 30<sup>th</sup> in accordance with Fish and Wildlife guidance on bat species and current DOE practices. No plant species listed for protection by state or federal government were observed. If economically viable, timber harvesting may occur prior to construction activities.

The proposed action would not take place within a floodplain of any surface water body. A wetland and wet-water conveyance were identified and delineated in the parcel. While both the wetland and wet-water conveyance are located within the proposed SSP-2A Parcel, planned construction activities are not anticipated to disturb or impact either of these surface waters. Additionally, transmission lines may need to transverse over an existing first order stream located in the northwestern portion of the parcel that has historically been recorded to contain state-listed Tennessee dace. Although not currently planned, any development plans that disturb the stream would require submittal of an Aquatic Resources Alteration Permit and possibly other mitigating actions. If changes to the proposed activity are made or incidental impacts are incurred, DOE would request the City of Oak Ridge to stop work so DOE can reevaluate applicable requirements. To protect the surface water bodies and associated riparian zones, it is recommended to maintain a maximum buffer wherever possible.

Some minor fugitive air emissions would result from heavy equipment exhaust and soil disturbances. Project waste would be general construction wastes. Construction planning should incorporate appropriate best management practices wherever ground-disturbing activities are planned to include stormwater controls. Appropriate storm water pollution controls should be installed and inspected prior to beginning excavation, soil removal, and other construction activities. Water spray would be utilized to control airborne dust emissions if needed and runoff would be monitored.

The *Evaluation of Previously Recorded and Inventoried Archeological Sites on the Oak Ridge Reservation, Anderson and Roane Counties, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, January 1996* documented two archaeological sites north of the proposed parcel. Pre-World War II aerial photographs show the proposed parcel consisted of vacant fields. DOE consulted with the Tennessee State Historic Preservation Office and concurred concur that no archaeological resources eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places would be affected by this undertaking. If archaeological resources are discovered during project construction, all activities would cease so that DOE could reevaluate National Historic Preservation Act responsibilities.

Various portions of the Parcel were subject to the DOE biosolid application program which were evaluated by DOE Environmental Assessments-1042 and Environmental Assessments-1779 determined that the potential dose should not preclude the land being available for release to the public. Furthermore, the *Environmental Baseline Survey Report for Parcels in the Vicinity of the ORNL and Y-12 National Security Complex, Oak Ridge, Tennessee* (DOE/OR/01-2568&D2) identified no evidence of unacceptable contamination at the proposed site from biosolid application and determined no further investigation is needed. There are no known hazardous waste or pre-existing environmental hazards in the area.



Figure 1: Boundary of the SSP-2A parcel and layout of the proposed electrical substation.

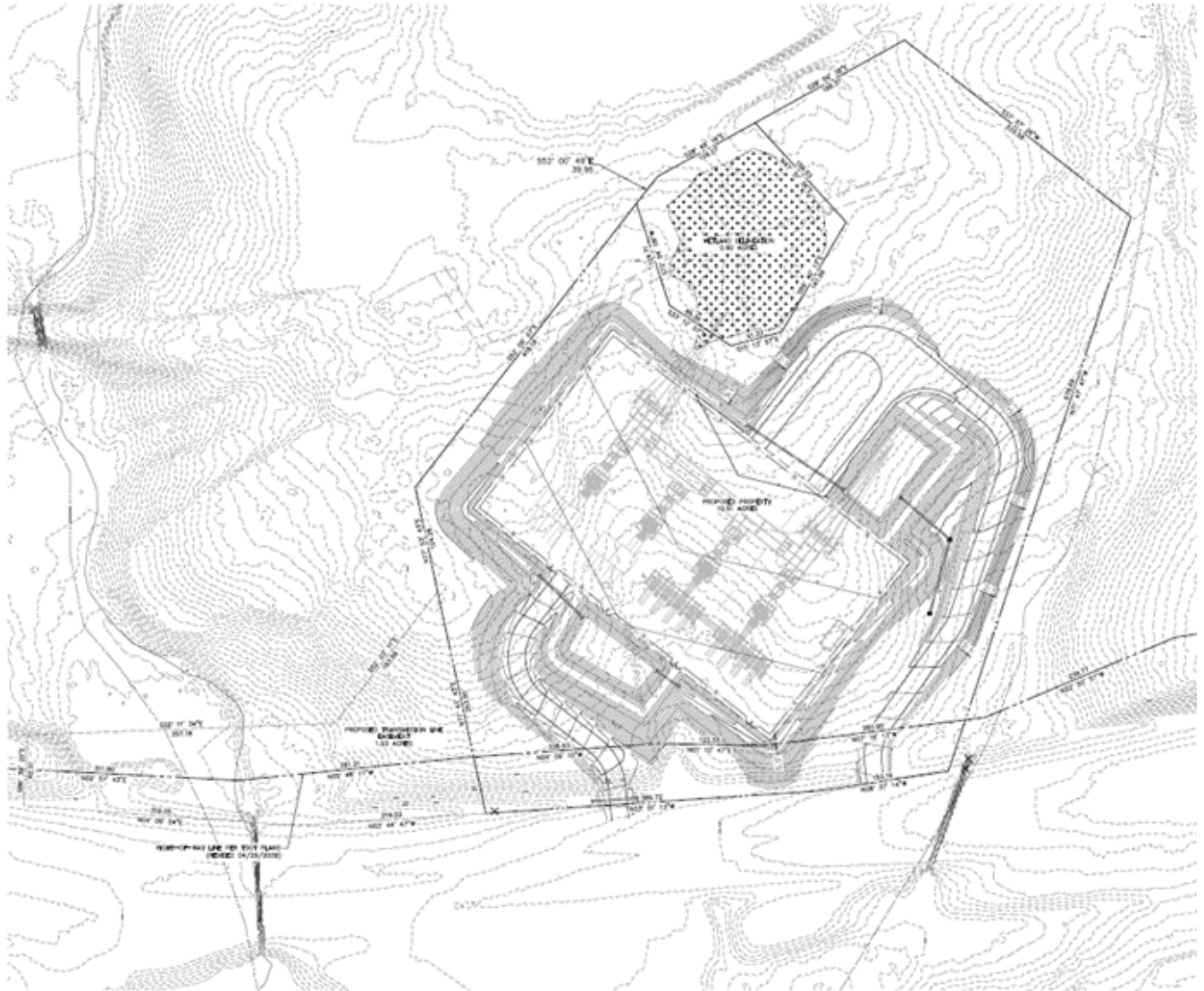


Figure 2: Boundary of the SSP-2A parcel and layout of the proposed electrical substation.



Figure 3: Grassy strip along the parcel frontage along the Oak Ridge Turnpike/State Route 95.



Figure 4: Unmaintained open area on SSP-2A parcel.



Figure 5: Dense pine stand with woody debris in center of the parcel.

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Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

B1.24 - Property transfers

B4.11 - Electric power substations and interconnection facilities

B4.12 - Construction of powerlines

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For the complete DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations regarding categorical exclusions, including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see Subpart D of [10 CFR Part 1021](#). Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410(b): (See full text in regulation)

The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D.

To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities; (3) 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; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph B(4) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B; (5) 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 listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. This proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)) and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

The above description accurately describes the proposed action, which reflects the requirements of the CX cited above. There fore, I recommend that the proposed action be categorically excluded from further NEPA review and documentation.

**Program Point of Contact:** John C. Shewairy  
John C. Shewairy, DOE-SC-OSO  
Reservation Management

11.29.22  
Date Determined

Based on my review of the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under DOE Policy 451.1B), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class(es) of action, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

**NEPA Compliance Officer:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Peter R. Siebach, DOE-SC-41.1  
DOE-SC-OSO NEPA Compliance Officer

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Date Determined