

TVA Categorical Exclusions

Appendix A to Subpart C of Part 1318 -- Categorical Exclusions

TVA has established the following classes of actions as categorical exclusions. Individual actions must be reviewed to determine whether extraordinary circumstances are present (see §1318.201). If an extraordinary circumstance cannot be addressed sufficiently to render the action's impacts not significant, an EA or an EIS must be prepared.

1. Educational or informational activities undertaken by TVA alone or in conjunction with other agencies, public and private entities, or the general public.
2. Technical and planning assistance provided to State, local and private organizations and entities.
3. Personnel actions.
4. Procurement actions.
5. Accounting, auditing, financial reports and disbursement of funds.
6. Contracts or agreements for the sale, purchase, or interchange of electricity.
7. Administrative actions consisting solely of paperwork.
8. Communication, transportation, computer service and office services.
9. Property protection activities that do not physically alter facilities or grounds, law enforcement and other legal activities.
10. Emergency preparedness actions not involving the modification of existing facilities or grounds.
11. Minor actions to address threats to public health and safety, including, but not limited to, temporary prohibition of existing uses of TVA land or property, short-term closures of sites, and selective removal of trees that pose a hazard.
12. Site characterization, data collection, inventory preparation, planning, monitoring, and other similar activities that have little to no physical impact.
13. Engineering and environmental studies that involve minor physical impacts, including but not limited to, geotechnical borings, dye-testing, installation of monitoring stations and groundwater test wells, and minor actions to facilitate access to a site.
14. Conducting or funding minor research, development and demonstration projects and programs.
15. Reserved.
16. Construction of new transmission line infrastructure, including electric transmission lines generally no more than 10 miles in length and that require no more than 125 acres of new developed rights-of-way and no more than 1 mile of new access road construction outside the right-of-way; and/or construction of electric power substations or interconnection facilities,

including switching stations, phase or voltage conversions, and support facilities that generally require the physical disturbance of no more than 10 acres.

17. Routine modification, repair, and maintenance of, and minor upgrade of and addition to, existing transmission infrastructure, including the addition, retirement, and/or replacement of breakers, transformers, bushings, and relays; transmission line uprate, modification, reconductoring, and clearance resolution; and limited pole replacement. This exclusion also applies to improvements of existing access roads and construction of new access roads outside of the right-of-way that are generally no more than 1 mile in length.

18. Construction, modification and operation of communication facilities and/or equipment, including power line carriers, insulated overhead ground wires/fiber optic cables, devices for electricity transmission control and monitoring, VHF radios, and microwaves and support towers.

19. Removal of conductors and structures, and/or the cessation of right-of-way vegetation management, when existing transmissions lines are retired; or the rebuilding of transmission lines within or contiguous to existing rights-of-way involving generally no more than 25 miles in length and no more than 125 acres of expansion of the existing right-of-way.

20. Purchase, conveyance, exchange, lease, license, and/or disposal of existing substations, substation equipment, switchyards, and/or transmission lines and rights-of-way and associated equipment between TVA and other utilities and/or customers.

21. Purchase or lease and subsequent operation of existing combustion turbine or combined-cycle plants for which there is existing adequate transmission and interconnection to the TVA transmission system and whose planned operation by TVA is within the normal operating levels of the purchased or leased facility.

22. Development of dispersed recreation sites (generally not to exceed 10 acres in size) to support activities such as hunting, fishing, primitive camping, wildlife observation, hiking, and mountain biking. Actions include, but are not limited to, installation of guardrails, gates and signage, hardening and stabilization of sites, trail construction, and access improvements/controls.

23. Development of public use areas that generally result in the physical disturbance of no more than 10 acres, including, but not limited to, construction of parking areas, campgrounds, stream access points, and day use areas.

24. Minor actions conducted by non-TVA entities on TVA property to be authorized under contract, license, permit, or covenant agreements, including those for utility crossings, agricultural uses, recreational uses, rental of structures, and sales of miscellaneous structures and materials from TVA land.

25. Transfer, lease, or disposal (sale, abandonment or exchange) of (a) minor tracts of land, mineral rights, and landrights, and (b) minor rights in ownership of permanent structures.

26. Approvals under Section 26a of the TVA Act of minor structures, boat docks and ramps, and shoreline facilities.

27. Installation of minor shoreline structures or facilities, boat docks and ramps, and actions to stabilize shoreline (generally up to 1/2 mile in length) by TVA.
28. Minor modifications to land use allocations outside of a normal land planning cycle to: rectify administrative errors; incorporate new information that is consistent with a previously approved decision included in the land use plan; or implement TVA's shoreline or land management policies affecting no more than 10 acres.
29. Actions to restore and enhance wetlands, riparian, and aquatic ecosystems that generally involve physical disturbance of no more than 10 acres, including, but not limited to, construction of small water control structures; revegetation actions using native materials; construction of small berms, dikes, and fish attractors; removal of debris and sediment following natural or human-caused disturbance events; installation of silt fences; construction of limited access routes for purposes of routine maintenance and management; and reintroduction or supplementation of native, formerly native, or established species into suitable habitat within their historic or established range.
30. Actions to maintain, restore, or enhance terrestrial ecosystems that generally involve physical disturbance of no more than 125 acres, including, but not limited to, establishment and maintenance of non-invasive vegetation; bush hogging; prescribed fires; installation of nesting and roosting structures, fencing, and cave gates; and reintroduction or supplementation of native, formerly native, or established species into suitable habitat within their historic or established range.
31. The following forest management activities:
- a. Actions to manipulate species composition and age class, including, but not limited to, harvesting or thinning of live trees and other timber stand improvement actions (e.g., prescribed burns, non-commercial removal, chemical control), generally covering up to 125 acres and requiring no more than 1 mile of temporary or seasonal permanent road construction;
 - b. Actions to salvage dead and/or dying trees including, but not limited to, harvesting of trees to control insects or disease or address storm damage (including removal of affected trees and adjacent live, unaffected trees as determined necessary to control the spread of insects or disease), generally covering up to 250 acres and requiring no more than 1 mile of temporary or seasonal permanent road construction; and
 - c. Actions to regenerate forest stands, including, but not limited to, planting of native tree species upon site preparation, generally covering up to 125 acres and requiring no more than 1 mile of temporary or seasonal permanent road construction.
32. Actions to manage invasive plants including, but not limited to, chemical applications, mechanical removal, and manual treatments that generally do not physically disturb more than 125 acres of land.

33. Actions to protect cultural resources including, but not limited to, fencing, gating, signing, and bank stabilization (generally up to 1/2 mile in length when along stream banks or reservoir shoreline).

34. Reburial of human remains and funerary objects under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act that are inadvertently discovered or intentionally excavated on TVA land.

35. Installation or modification (but not expansion) of low-volume groundwater withdrawal wells (provided that there would be no drawdown other than in the immediate vicinity of the pumping well and that there is no potential for long-term decline of the water table or degradation of the aquifer), or plugging of groundwater or other wells at the end of their operating life. Site characterization must verify a low potential for seismicity, subsidence, and contamination of freshwater aquifers.

36. Routine operation, repair or in-kind replacement, and maintenance actions for existing buildings, infrastructure systems, facility grounds, public use areas, recreation sites, and operating equipment at or within the immediate vicinity of TVA's generation and other facilities. Covered actions are those that are required to maintain and preserve assets in their current location and in a condition suitable for use for its designated purpose. Such actions will not result in a change in the design capacity, function, or operation. (Routine actions that include replacement or changes to major components of buildings, facilities, infrastructure systems, or facility grounds, and actions requiring new permits or changes to an existing permit(s) are addressed in CE 37). Such actions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Regular servicing of in-plant and on-site equipment (including during routine outages) such as gear boxes, generators, turbines and bearings, duct work, conveyers, and air preheaters; fuel supply systems; unloading and handling equipment for fuel; handling equipment for ash, gypsum or other by-products or waste; hydropower, navigation and flood control equipment; water quality and air emissions control or reduction equipment; and other operating system or ancillary components that do not increase emissions or discharges beyond current permitted levels;
- b. Regular servicing of power equipment and structures within existing transmission substations and switching stations;
- c. Routine testing and calibration of facility components, subsystems, or portable equipment (such as control valves, in-core monitoring devices, transformers, capacitors, monitoring wells, weather stations, and flumes);
- d. Routine cleaning and decontamination, including to surfaces of equipment, rooms, and building systems (including HVAC, septic systems, and tanks);
- e. Repair or replacement of plumbing, electrical equipment, small HVAC systems, sewerage, pipes, and telephone and other communication service;
- f. Repair or replacement of doors, windows, walls, ceilings, roofs, floors and lighting fixtures in structures less than 50 years old;

- g. Painting and paint removal at structures less than 50 years old, including actions taken to contain, remove, or dispose of lead-based paint when in accordance with applicable requirements;
- h. Recycling and/or removal of materials, debris, and solid waste from facilities, in accordance with applicable requirements;
- i. Groundskeeping actions, including mowing and landscaping, snow and ice removal, application of fertilizer, erosion control and soil stabilization measures (such as reseeding and revegetation), removal of dead or undesirable vegetation with a diameter of less than 3 inches (at breast height), and leaf and litter collection and removal;
- j. Repair or replacement of gates and fences;
- k. Maintenance of hazard buoys;
- l. Maintenance of groundwater wells, discharge structures, pipes and diffusers;
- m. Maintenance and repair of process, wastewater, and stormwater ponds and associated piping, pumping, and treatment systems;
- n. Maintenance and repair of subimpoundments and associated piping and water control structures;
- o. Debris removal and maintenance of intake structures and constructed intake channels including sediment removal to return them to the originally-constructed configuration; and
- p. Clean up of minor spills as part of routine operations.

37. Modifications, upgrades, uprates, and other actions that alter existing buildings, infrastructure systems, facility grounds, and plant equipment, or their function, performance, and operation. Such actions, which generally will not physically disturb more than 10 acres, include but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Replacement or changes to major components of existing buildings, facilities, infrastructure systems, facility grounds, and equipment that are like-kind in nature;
- b. Modifications, improvements, or operational changes to in-plant and on-site equipment that do not substantially alter emissions or discharges beyond current permitted limits. Examples of equipment include, but are not limited to: gear boxes, generators, turbines and bearings, duct work, conveyers, superheaters, economizers, air preheaters, unloading and handling equipment for fuel; handling equipment for ash, gypsum or other by-products or waste; hydropower, navigation and flood control equipment; air and water quality control equipment; control, storage, and treatment systems (e.g. automation, alarms, fire suppression, ash ponds, gypsum storage, and ammonia storage and handling systems); and other operating system or ancillary components;
- c. Installation of new sidewalks, fencing, and parking areas at an existing facility;
- d. Installation or upgrades of large HVAC systems;

- e. Modifications to water intake and outflow structures provided that intake velocities and volumes and water effluent quality and volumes are consistent with existing permit limits;
- f. Repair or replacement of doors, windows, walls, ceilings, roofs, floors and lighting fixtures in structures greater than 50 years old; and
- g. Painting and paint removal at structures greater than 50 years old, including actions taken to contain, remove and dispose of lead-based paint when in accordance with applicable requirements.

38. Siting, construction, and use of buildings and associated infrastructure (e.g., utility lines serving the building), physically disturbing generally no more than 10 acres of land not previously disturbed by human activity or 25 acres of land so disturbed.

39. Siting and temporary placement and operation of trailers, prefabricated and modular buildings, or tanks on previously disturbed sites at an existing TVA facility.

40. Demolition and disposal of structures, buildings, equipment and associated infrastructure and subsequent site reclamation, subject to applicable review for historical value, on sites generally less than 10 acres in size.

41. Actions to maintain roads, trails, and parking areas (including resurfacing, cleaning, asphalt repairs, and placing gravel) that do not involve new ground disturbance (i.e., no grading).

42. Improvements to existing roads, trails, and parking areas, including, but not limited to, scraping and regrading; regrading of embankments; installation or replacement of culverts; and other such minor expansions.

43. Actions to enhance and control access to TVA property including, but not limited to, construction of new access roads and parking areas (generally no greater than 1 mile in length and physically disturbing no more than 10 acres of land not previously disturbed by human activity or 25 acres of land so disturbed) and installation of control measures such as gates, fences, or post and cable.

44. Small-scale, non-emergency cleanup of solid waste or hazardous waste (other than high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel) to reduce risk to human health or the environment. Actions include collection and treatment (such as incineration, encapsulation, physical or chemical separation, and compaction), recovery, storage, or disposal of wastes at existing facilities currently handling the type of waste involved in the action.

45. Installation, modification, and operation of the following types of renewable or waste-heat recovery energy projects which increase generating capacity at an existing TVA facility, generally comprising of physical disturbance to no more than 10 acres of land not previously disturbed by human activity or 25 acres of land so disturbed:

- a. Combined heat and power or cogeneration systems at existing buildings or sites; and

- b. Solar photovoltaic systems mounted on the ground, an existing building or other structure (such as a rooftop, parking lot or facility and mounted to signage lighting, gates or fences).
46. Transactions (contracts or agreements) for purchase of electricity from new methane gas electric generating systems using commercially available technology and installed within an area previously developed or disturbed by human activity.
47. Modifications to the TVA rate structure (i.e., rate change) that result in no predicted increase in overall TVA-system electricity consumption.
48. Financial and technical assistance for programs conducted by non-TVA entities to promote energy efficiency or water conservation, including, but not limited to, assistance for installation or replacement of energy efficient appliances, insulation, HVAC systems, plumbing fixtures, and water heating systems.
49. Financial assistance including, but not limited to, approving and administering grants, loans and rebates for the renovation or minor upgrading of existing facilities, established or developing industrial parks, or existing infrastructure; the extension of infrastructure; geotechnical boring; and construction of commercial and light industrial buildings. Generally, such assistance supports actions that physically disturb no more than 10 acres of land not previously disturbed by human activity or no more than 25 acres of land so disturbed.
50. Financial assistance for the following actions: approving and administering grants, loans and rebates for continued operations or purchase of existing facilities and infrastructure for uses substantially the same as the current use; purchasing, installing, and replacing equipment or machinery at existing facilities; and completing engineering designs, architectural drawings, surveys, and site assessments (except when tree clearing, geotechnical boring, or other land disturbance would occur).