

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: 2016 BPA/DNR Culvert Replacements

PP&A No.: 2227, 2230, 2231, 2232, 3326

Project Manager: Rick Ross, TELF-TPP-3

Location: Skagit, Snohomish, Jefferson, and King Counties, WA

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.3 Routine Maintenance

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA is proposing to replace existing culverts at ten access road stream crossings that present barriers to fish passage. These improvements will be made on BPA easement access roads within Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) owned and managed lands. BPA will make these improvements by installing new fish friendly culverts and/or bridges at each stream crossing. The current stream crossings do not meet DNR fish passage standards that went into effect in 2015. Five culverts will be replaced with fish friendly culverts, four culverts will be replaced with fish friendly bridges, and one ford will be permanently removed without replacement. Bridge construction may also include road regrading, road construction, and/or road decommissioning for best stream crossing. All streams will be regraded or reconstructed after culvert removal. All culverts and bridges are designed to meet the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) *Design of Road Culverts for Fish Passage* standards, as well as standards provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and were reviewed and approved by DNR engineers.

Waters in which culverts are proposed to be replaced do not contain Threatened or Endangered (T&E) fish species. Project work is covered under Washington State's Forest Practices Act and therefore does not require 404 or 401 permits. All stream crossings are located in mix-use temperate forests, on level or nearly level existing access roads. Each site is located on land managed by DNR for recreation, timber sales, and preservation. Three sites are located in Skagit County, five in Snohomish County, one in Jefferson County, and one in King County, Washington.

Culvert	Line Span	Stream Name	Description
NW-1	MONE-CUST 58/3-58/4	Unnamed Stream	Intermittent stream/river; tributary to Samish River
NW-2	MURY-CUST 33/5-34/1	Unnamed Stream	Perennial stream/river; tributary to Samish River
NW-4	MURY-CUST 22/1-22/2	Mundt Creek	Perennial stream/river; tributary to East Fork Nookachamps Creek
NW-5	MONE-CUST 13/2-13/3	Unnamed Stream	Intermittent stream/river; tributary to Little Pilchuck Creek
NW-6	CHJO-SNOH-3,4 113/1-113/2	Unnamed Stream	Intermittent stream/river; tributary to Wallace River

Culvert	Line Span	Stream Name	Description
NW-7	CHJO-SNOH-3,4 113/1-113/2	Unnamed Stream	Intermittent stream/river; tributary to Wallace River
NW-8	CHJO-SNOH-3,4 112/5-113/1	Unnamed Stream	Intermittent stream/river; tributary to Wallace River
NW-9	CHJO-SNOH-3,4 107/1-107/3	Unnamed Stream	Perennial stream/river; tributary to Skykomish River
OLY-5	SEHL-FAMT 47/6-47/7	Unnamed Stream	Perennial stream/river; tributary to Indian George Creek
SP-4	ECOL-MONE 1/1-1/2	Unnamed Stream	Perennial stream/river; tributary to Lake Creek

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/ Caitlin SH Colson
Caitlin SH Colson
Program Analyst

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason
Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: *February 1, 2016*

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: 2016 BPA/DNR Culvert Replacements

Project Site Description

All project sites are located in mix-use temperate forests, on level or nearly level existing access roads. Each site is located on land managed by DNR for recreation, timber sales, and preservation. Three sites are located in Skagit County, five in Snohomish County, one in Jefferson County, and one in King County, Washington.

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"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> A survey and Section 106 consultation was completed for the each of the ten culvert sites. No resources were identified in the vicinity of the work sites. DAHP concurrence on the Areas of Potential Affect was received on 5/6/2015; concurrence on the cultural report was received on 9/21/2015.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The proposed work will cause soil disturbance in the immediate work area. Construction and excavation will take place within 200 ft of the stream crossings. At two sites, new roads are being constructed to allow improved approach to replacement bridges. Excavated materials will be temporarily placed in a location where there will be low to no risk of direct sediment runoff into known drainage until they are hauled off for removal. Disturbed soils will be re-sloped / graded and will have seed and straw spread throughout once construction is complete.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No ESA- or special-status species are known to exist in the work areas.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No ESA- or special-status species are known to exist in the work areas. Five work sites (NW-6, NW-7, NW-8, NW-9, OLY-5) are listed as being in or on the periphery of critical habitat units for marbled murrelet and/or northern spotted owl. There are no documented nest sites within 1 mile of the work sites. Site work is limited to ground disturbance and will not require removal of potential habitat of either species.</p> <p>Work area isolation BMPs will be placed to prevent erosion and turbid waters from entering neighboring habitats.</p>		

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

Explanation: No ESA- or special-status species are known to exist in the work sites. Essential Fish Habitat for chinook, coho, and pink salmon occur in the project sites. One work site (NW-5) is on an intermittent stream approximately 250 feet upstream of Little Pilchuck Creek, which contains known populations of steelhead, bulltrout, and coho salmon. Work at NW-5 will be conducted during the in-water work windows, during the summer when the intermittent stream is expected to be dry, in order to minimize downstream impacts to salmon populations in the Little Pilchuck Creek.

Work area isolation BMPs will be placed to prevent erosion and turbid waters from entering neighboring waters. All construction within the limits of the average ordinary high water mark will take place during the in-stream work window (July 15th to September 15th). Each work site will be isolated and water from the stream will be pumped around the work site in a plastic or riprap lined diversion channel to reduce erosion and turbidity. Fish screens will be installed as necessary to avoid impacting resident fish species. Fish salvage will be conducted by an experienced biologist using methods approved by WDFW. Discharge from bridge decks to surface water is not permitted; bridge decks must be constructed such that no water can pass through or be allowed to flow directly into the surface waters or onto streambanks below (no scuppers, gutters, or downspouts).

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: There are no wetlands in the vicinity of the work sites.

Work area isolation BMPs will be in place to prevent erosion and turbid waters from entering neighboring waters.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: The proposed work is not located near any known aquifers.

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

Explanation: The work is on existing access roads and will not impact land use. At one site, a nearby trailhead parking lot will be reconstructed and the trailhead sign will be relocated within the parking lot.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: Proposed action is on existing access roads and will not alter or effect visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: Any fugitive dust or vehicle emissions generated during project implementation will be temporary and negligible. Cutting of concrete and other dust-prone materials will be accompanied by watering to minimize airborne particles.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: Construction noise will be temporary and localized.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: Proposed action is on existing access roads and will not impact human health or 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

Description: The project sites are located on BPA easement access roads within Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) owned and managed lands. All culverts and bridge designs were reviewed and approved by DNR engineers. BPA's responsibility to make these improvements is outlined in the *Memorandum of Agreement between the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and the Bonneville Power Administration, Department of Energy for Management Impacts to State Lands from BPA Transmission Line and Access Road Easements*, June 2014.

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

Signed: /s/ Caitlin SH Colson
Caitlin SH Colson, EPI-4

Date: February 1, 2016