

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: McNary-John Day Transmission Line Mile 34-38 Access Road Repair Project

PP&A No.: 2,664

Project Manager: Todd Wehner, (CONTR) - TEP-TPP-1

Location: Klickitat County, Washington

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 repair approximately 3.2 miles of access road between miles 35 and 38 along the McNary-John Day No. 2 500 kV Transmission line that were damaged during a storm event. Project work includes but is not limited to; grading and shaping of roads, installation of geo-textile material, placing rock, compacting road surfacing, and installation and cleaning of drainage structure. This is necessary in order to access this part of the transmission line and to allow for proper and safe access to the transmission line. In addition to the work described above, a portion of an existing access road where constant wash out and failure occurs would be abandon. The wash out area would be left in its present condition and would be made inaccessible to vehicle traffic by building earthen berms and placing boulders at predetermined locations to the west and east of the abandoned portion. The proposed project is located on private range land.

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/ Laura Roberts

Laura Roberts

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: February 9, 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: McNary-John Day Transmission Line Mile 34-38 Access Road Repair Project

Project Site Description

The McNary-John Day No. 2 500kV Transmission Line Mile 34 and 39 Access Road Repair Project is located in the following Township, Range, Sections listed below within Klickitat County, Washington. The project area is located amongst the moderately sloping rolling hills of the Columbia River Gorge on private range land.

Township		Range		Sections
4	N	23	E	8, 9, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24
4	N	22	E	13

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
<p>1. Historic and Cultural Resources</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> WA SHPO, Nez Perce, Umatilla, Yakama Nation and the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs of Oregon did not respond to BPA’s Letter of Determination that no historic properties would be affected by the project during the stipulated 30 day waiting period. Therefore, according to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR Part 800, BPAs consultation requirements have been fulfilled. Several sensitive sites would be monitored during the project.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>2. Geology and Soils</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> Minimal soil disturbance; most areas would be rocked and erosion control measures would be used.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species present. Work is to be conducted in an existing transmission line right-of-way (ROW). There is no anticipated vegetation removal as part of the project. Any un-rocked disturbed areas would be seeded with a geographic and climate appropriate seed mix.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species or designated habitat present. Work to be performed in existing road prism, no new habitat typical of the area would be disturbed.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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



Project would not be in a floodplain. Some work would occur in dry drainages that exhibit only ephemeral flow. Typical erosion control BMPs will be implemented and no riparian habitat will be affected.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation:

None present

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation:

No new wells or use of ground water proposed; maximum depth of disturbance would be about 2 feet; spill prevention measures would be present.

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



Explanation:

Existing land use would not be affected as work to be completed in existing access road prism. No specially designated areas present.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation:

All work to be completed within the existing access road prism and would not impact the visual quality of the surrounding environment.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation:

Temporary dust and vehicle emission due to construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation:

Temporary noise due to road improvement and conductor replacement equipment.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation:

The project would 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: Carry out ongoing consultation with NOAA Fisheries and US Fish and Wildlife Service for potential impacts to Threatened fish species and Critical Habitat.

- 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: A qualified contractor certified in lead and asbestos abatement and building demolition would be used. Demolition debris would be handled and disposed of according to all applicable hazardous waste laws.

- 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 proposed project is located on private range land. BPA would continue ongoing coordination with the landowners.

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

Signed: /s/ Laura Robert
Laura Roberts
Environmental Protection Specialist

Date: February 9, 2016