

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Drummond-Macks Inn Transmission Line Access Road Construction

PP&A Project No.: 3480

Project Manager: Micah Bandurraga – TELF-TPP-3

Location: Fremont County, ID; Bonneville Power Administration's Idaho Falls District.

Transmission Line/ROW	Structure #	Township	Range	Section	County, State	Ownership
Access Road to Drummond-Macks Inn	10/7-11/4	9N	44E	7	Fremont, ID	USFS/Forest

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.13 Pathways, short access roads, and rail lines.

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to reroute an existing access road to the BPA's Drummond-Macks Inn transmission line to maintain access to structures 10/4 to 11/1. Existing access to these structures has been blocked by a private landowner. The work involves the construction of a new road on Targhee National Forest Service property that is approximately 720 feet in length, 14 feet wide with a total vegetation clearance width of 20 feet. The portion of the private road that BPA will no longer use will remain intact since it is under private ownership and the owner does not expect removal.

No construction activities will occur in any water body including streams, ponds, or wetlands. Road construction will include rocking, blading, shaping, and construction of waterbars and drain dips. Approximately 56 trees will be removed. Equipment needed to perform the work would include a bulldozer, grader, and dump trucks.

The proposed action will help provide safe access and reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region. All work will be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA standards.

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/ Fred Walasavage

Fred Walasavage

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: August 5, 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.

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Project Site Description

The road work will be conducted on USFS-Targhee National Forest property. The project area is mostly flat and vegetation consists of pine trees and steppe shrubs.

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"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BPA archeological approval and Idaho SHPO concurrence on no adverse effect determination on July 15, 2016. Shoshone Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation and the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation were consulted—no response. Inadvertent discovery form will be provided and explained to the road contractor. In the event of an inadvertent discovery, work will immediately cease and the SHPO and BPA archaeologist will be notified. 		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No prime or unique farmlands will be affected. Any disturbed soils outside of the road prism will be reseeded with a U.S. Forest Service approved seed mix to stabilize any disturbed vegetative areas.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species present. The 56 trees that will require removal are mostly pine and are typical to the area.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species present due to lack of suitable habitat.</p>		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> None present in project area.</p>		

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: None present in project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: The proposed work is in an upland area; maximum depth of disturbance would be about 1 foot below ground surface.

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

Explanation: No change in land use and no specially designated areas identified.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: The finished access road will be similar in appearance to other roads in the area. The road will be gated.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: Any fugitive dust or similar during project implementation is expected to be temporary and minimal.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: Construction noise will be temporary and localized.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: Project activities 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: Notification to the USFS-Targhee National Forest has been ongoing. The Categorical Exclusion document will be provided to the USFS prior to work.

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

Signed: /s/ Fred Walasavage
Fred Walasavage

Date: August 5, 2016