

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: St. Helens-Allston No. 1 (23/3-23/6) Access Road Maintenance

PP&A No.: 3499

Project Manager: Richard Ross – Civil Design – TELF-TPP-3

Location: Columbia County, Oregon

Township	Range	Section	County, State	Ownership
07N	03W	14	Columbia, OR	PRIVATE

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

B1.3 Routine Maintenance

Description of the Proposed Action:

BPA proposes to perform routine road maintenance along the access road for the St. Helens-Allston No. 1 transmission line, between structures 23/3 and 23/6. Access road work would include adding six waterbars, one approach, performing minor blading, shaping, grading, and adding rock (improvements) to approximately 2,550 feet of existing serviceable access and structure spur roads. General equipment used for this type of project includes graders, rollers, excavators, and dump trucks.

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/ Kevin George

Kevin George

Environmental Protection Specialist – EPI-4

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: September 27, 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

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Proposed access road maintenance activities are located in a segment of BPA’s right-of-way that is approximately 2.5 miles west southwest of the Lewis and Clark Bridge, near Rainier, OR, and 8.5 miles east of Clatskanie, OR. There are no National Wetland Inventory features that intersect the project site. The nearest wetland is approximately 1,200 ft northeast of the project site and is not connected by any drainages. Elevation (above mean sea level) within the project site ranges from approximately 517 feet to 624 feet with an average elevation of 588 feet. Land use in the surrounding area consists of privately owned industrial forest with scattered rural development.

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"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> A cultural resources review was conducted by Historical Research Associates July 19, 2016; OR SHPO concurrence on no adverse effect determination September 14, 2016. The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians were consulted – no response.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Minimal soil disturbance; improvements would not affect soils below existing road fill.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No mapped special-status species present. No vegetation disturbance beyond the existing road prism is expected.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species or designated habitat present; existing road prism and surrounding area under transmission line is low-quality habitat.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There are no National Wetland Inventory wetlands or waterbodies that intersect the project site; the nearest waterbodies or floodplains are approximately 0.02 mile north of the project (Beaver Creek) and 0.2 mile west of the project (South Fork Beaver Creek).		

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: There are no National Wetland Inventory wetlands that overlap with the project. The closest wetlands are located 0.25 mile north and west of the project and are associated with Beaver Creek and South Fork Beaver Creek, respectively. Improvements are on existing serviceable roads and would not impact wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: Groundwater would not be affected by proposed road improvement activities; no new groundwater wells or use of ground water proposed; maximum depth of disturbance would not exceed existing road fill.

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

Explanation: All proposed road improvements would occur within the footprints of the existing roads or transmission line and are consistent with existing land use; no specially designated areas are located within the project site.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: All improvements would be at ground level and are limited to existing road prisms and the area immediately surrounding the transmission lines.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions is expected for a short duration due to construction.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: Temporary noise is expected for a short duration from road improvement activities during daylight hours.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: No known soil contamination or hazardous conditions are known. No changes to electric and magnetic fields would result from the project.

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 is located entirely on private land. No public land agencies were contacted. Notification letters that construction will occur would be sent to all landowners 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/ Kevin George

Kevin George

Environmental Protection Specialist – EPI-4

Date: September 27, 2016