

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Western Pacific Timber LURR

**Project No.:** LURR 20200224

**Project Manager:** Keith D. Kistler

**Location:** Klickitat, Washington

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B4.9 Multiple use of powerline rights-of-way

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Western Pacific Timber is seeking a land use request to utilize the current access road route on BPA fee-owned Right-Of-Way located on the North Bonneville - Midway No 1 230kVA corridor, mile 74, between structures 4 and 5. Currently, Western Timber does not have a viable access point to their parcel that is located west of the corridor. The proposed use of BPA access road would interconnect Western Pacific Timber's parcel to the ski lodge road that provides access to US Highway 97. Western Pacific would level out and re-gravel approximately 268 feet of the existing ROW access road. Additionally, there would be a new road grade constructed that is approximately 82 feet in length, and would be covered with gravel. The new road grade would interconnect into Western Pacific's planned road route on their parcel and the current access road route. In conjunction with the land use request, Western Pacific has agreed to allow access for BPA transmission line maintenance crews to utilize their new road network located on their parcel, which would provide reliable access to the south.

**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, Jul. 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/ Nicholas W. Johnson  
Nicholas W. Johnson  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

<u>/s/ Sarah T. Biegel</u>	<u>November 23, 2020</u>
Sarah T. Biegel	Date
NEPA Compliance Officer	

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: Western Pacific Timber LURR

### Project Site Description

The project is located in Klickitat County, 13 miles northeast of Goldendale, Washington. The existing access road serves as an interconnection from the North Bonneville – Midway No 1. 230kVA corridor and the gravel ski lodge road that is located off US Highway 97. The initial point of access to this parcel is located within the Yakama Indian Reservation. To the south of the project area is a private residence with a construction equipment storage area that borders the southeastern border of the ROW. The remainder of the ROW is located throughout a dry forest that is endemic east of the Cascade Mountains. The topography of the project area varies between 5 to 30 percent slopes. The soils within the project area are a mixture of well drained Mollisols and Alfisols, which are characterized by gravelly ashy loam.

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

#### 1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA archaeologist completed a review of the proposed project area along with field surveys. From the studies, it was determined that the planned ground disturbance associated with the road construction does not have the potential to adversely affect historic or cultural resources. WA SHPO concurrence on no adverse effect determination was received on October 7, 2020. Yakama Nation was consulted with no response within 30 days.

Notes:

- Should any cultural resources be discovered during project activities, then all project work must stop, and the EC environmental lead should be notified immediately.

#### 2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: There would be planned ground disturbance associated with road construction and resurfacing existing roads.

Notes:

- Erosion control measures would need to be in place during construction via the use of silt fencing and covering exposed earth with either free straw or using a native seed mix.
- No piles of exposed fill dirt or gravel can be placed inside the ROW during and/or post construction.
- Post construction completion, all disturbed areas not covered with gravel must be re-graded to match nearby topography and reseeded with a native seed mix.

### **3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No listed plant species or habitats occur in the project location.

Notes:

- All fill dirt and gravel are to be secured from certified weed-free facilities. Erosion control measures in the form of straw or other media must be certified weed-free.

### **4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No listed wildlife species occur in the project location.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project area is not located inside or near water resources.

### **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands are located near or inside the project area.

### **7. Groundwater and Aquifers**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Ground disturbance would be limited to surface grading and would not impact groundwater resources.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project does not change the main current use of the high voltage power line Rights-Of-Way.

### **9. Visual Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project is located in a previously disturbed and cleared area. The proposed use would not alter the visual aspect of the corridor.

### **10. Air Quality**

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: No sustained impacts to air quality would occur post construction of road improvements. Dust mitigation during construction would occur to limit aggregate dust drift.

Notes:

- Active dust mitigation during construction activities would need to be in place to limit fugitive dust.

## 11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No sustained noise impacts would occur. Intermittent noise is associated with the construction activities for road improvements and brief vehicle noise when traveling the road post-completion.

## 12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Proposed project actions do not adversely impact human health and safety. Construction activities would follow applicable health and safety standards.

### 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: N/A.

**Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.**

Explanation: N/A.

**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: N/A.

**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: N/A. Construction crews would source fill dirt and rock from certified weed-free sources.

**Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description: Western Pacific Timber would coordinate with the Yakama Reservation pertaining access through their small parcel that borders the gravel ski lodge road.

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

Signed: /s/ Nicholas W. Johnson November 23, 2020  
Nicholas W. Johnson, ECT-4 Date  
Environmental Protection Specialist