

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Columbia County Property Transfer

Project Manager: Wendy Jansen – TERR-Olympia

Location: Columbia County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.24 Property Transfers

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA would acquire a 640-acre parcel located in Columbia County, Washington from the Washington Department of Natural Resources as mitigation for encumbering this parcel with three transmission line easements. Use of the land under an existing grazing lease would continue.

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/ Tish Eaton

Tish Eaton

Environmental Protection Specialist

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: April 23, 2019

Attachment: 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 640-acre parcel is located in the Palouse region of Washington just south of the Columbia River. The region is characterized by dune topography with narrow ravines. Vegetation is grass and other low growing shrub-steppe species. Three BPA 500-kV transmission lines with access roads cross the parcel from east to west. Private land used for grazing and wheat border the parcel.

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> BPA has determined that no historic properties would be affected as a result of the property transfer. Section 106 consultation is not required. However, any future actions on the parcel (including moving a cattle trough, maintaining fences, installing infrastructure, etc.) would require Section 106 review.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance proposed.		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No disturbance proposed.		
4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No disturbance proposed.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No water bodies, floodplains, or fish are present on the parcel.		
6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No wetlands are present.		
7. Groundwater and Aquifers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No impact.		
8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No changes would occur to the existing land uses (grazing and transmission line right-of-way).		

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: No impact.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: No impact.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: No impact.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: No impact.

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: None required.

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

Signed: /s/ Tish Eaton
Tish Eaton, ECT-4
Environmental Protection Specialist

Date: April 23, 2019