

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: US Gypsum Land Use Review Request 20190351

Project Manager: Bryant Cheong

Location: Clark County, WA

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: BPA proposes to allow US Gypsum to install ground wire along an existing 8" gas pipeline on BPA fee-owned right-of-way (ROW) in Columbia County, OR that parallels BPA's Paul-Allston No. 1 transmission line (operated as Napavine-Allston No. 1). US Gypsum would use a small trencher or cable plow to install the ground wire, and a small excavator to expose the gas pipe for attachment of the wire to the pipe.

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/ Douglas F. Corkran

Douglas F. Corkran
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: May 26, 2020

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 project is located in northwestern Oregon, in Columbia County, five miles west of the city of Rainier and approximately 0.3 miles north of Allston Substation. The area is a gently rolling rural landscape with scattered residences, the nearest of which is approximately 500 feet from the project area. The project area is currently used for hay production and contains no trees.

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> The project is located in a disturbed, mowed ROW. After reviewing the cultural resource surveys, BPA's cultural resource department has determined that no historic properties would be affected. The Oregon SHPO agreed with BPA's finding of no effect on May 19, 2020.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Ground-disturbing work would take place to install the grounding cable within the project area. All excavated soils would be returned to the holes. Impacts to soils within the work area would be minimal and surrounding soils and geology would not be affected by the project.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The area of disturbance is located within a hayfield and is mowed and maintained. No rare plants would be affected by the project.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The area of disturbance is located within a hayfield. Wildlife habitat is very low quality in the project area and project activities would have only very minor noise-related impacts to common wildlife species during construction. No sensitive or listed wildlife species are documented in or adjacent to the project area. Wildlife species would not be adversely affected by the project.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The area of disturbance is located within a disturbed ROW in an upland area. No streams, rivers, lakes, or other waterbodies are nearby. No water bodies, floodplains, or fish would be affected by the project.		
6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The area of disturbance is located within a disturbed ROW, with no wetlands in or near the project area. No wetlands would be affected by the project.		

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The area of disturbance is located within a disturbed ROW on a bluff approximately 600 feet above the Columbia River floodplain. There is no evidence of shallow groundwater. Any spills of gas, diesel, or hydraulic fluid would be cleaned up immediately and would not be expected to reach groundwater or aquifers.

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



Explanation: The project would not change the general land use of the area (agricultural and transmission line ROW); it would continue to be used as transmission line ROW and hay field.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The excavation area to bury the groundwire would be visible until the following hay growing season, but would not be visible from nearby residences or roads. There would be no adverse impacts to visual quality as a result of the project.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Some minor fugitive dust and vehicle and equipment emissions would be produced during construction of the project. No long-term or permanent impacts to air quality would result from the project.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Minor construction-related noise would be produced during installation of the ground wire. The nearest residence is approximately 500 feet away and may be temporarily affected during construction, otherwise no noise-related impacts are expected from the project.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No new health or safety risks would be caused by the project. The type of work in the ROW and the vegetation planted would not surpass the minimum distance for safe operation of the transmission line. The project would have no adverse impacts to health and 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: None proposed.

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

Signed: /s/ Douglas F. Corkran
Douglas F. Corkran - ECT-4

Date: May 26, 2020