

Categorical Exclusion Determination
Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Harney Substation Gate Installation and Entrance Road Development

PP&A No.: 4834

Project Manager: Aaron McNutt – TEPS-TPP-1

Location: Harney County, Oregon

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.3 Routine Maintenance

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to install a 20-foot gate on the existing fence at the NW Corner of the BPA Harney Substation. An entrance road would be constructed commencing from the existing substation access road to the substation fence. The entrance road would be 41 feet in length and 40 feet wide. The purpose of the proposed action is to provide necessary access in support of an existing substation improvement project.

General equipment used for this type of roadwork includes: graders, rollers, bull-dozers, 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, 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/ Frederick Walasavage
Frederick Walasavage
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah Biegel
Sarah Biegel Date: July 12, 2022
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: Harney Substation Gate Installation and Entrance Road Development

Project Site Description: The site is located on the BPA Harney Substation fee-owned property in Harney County, Oregon. Nearby land uses include open range and recreation. Vegetation consists of primarily sage and other rangeland species.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: According to a BPA archaeologist, a previous cultural resources survey with negative results was found to have been conducted at the project area. No cultural resources were identified. The level of impact from the current proposed project is consistent with the former project. The previous survey was used as the basis for consultation with tribes and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. No response was received. Therefore, BPA archaeologists have concluded that project activities would not have an effect on historical or cultural activities.

Note: In the event any archaeological material is encountered during project activities, stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead, archaeologist, and project manager. Take reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the discovery site, including restricting access.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Localized soil disturbance would occur during entrance road construction. Standard construction erosion control measures would be utilized as necessary to prevent soils from migrating off site.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No Federal/state special-status plants are present. Project activities would not substantially alter existing plant communities.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No Federal/state special-status species were identified within the project area. Project activities would temporarily disturb local wildlife during construction, but the disturbance would be limited and would not substantially alter the long-term footprint. Therefore, wildlife and associated habitat would not be affected in the long term.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No in-water work is proposed for this project. Standard construction erosion control measures would be utilized to ensure sediment and other contaminants do not enter bodies of water; therefore, water bodies, floodplains, and fish would not be affected by the proposed project activities.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: None present in the project area.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project activities are not expected to impact groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would not result in permanent changes or impacts to land use.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would be performed immediately adjacent to the existing substation and would be consistent with the existing view shed.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Exhaust and dust from utility and construction equipment may temporarily reduce air quality in the immediate project area.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Construction noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA personnel would develop a site-specific health and safety plan to address any hazards during the proposed work. The proposed work is necessary to ensure ongoing

safe and reliable operation of the transmission system and to maintain power delivery in the region.

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

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: BPA Ownership

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

Signed: /s/ Frederick Walasavage Date: July 12, 2022
Frederick Walasavage
Environmental Protection Specialist