

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Rocky Reach-Maple Valley 112-118 Access Road Improvement Project

**PP&A No.:** 4787

**Project Manager:** Donna Martin, TELF-TPP-3

**Location:** King County, WA

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

**Description of the Proposed Action:** The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) plans to perform road maintenance to improve and construct access roads and install new landings for the Rocky Reach-Maple Valley No. 1 transmission line between miles 112 and 118 in King County, Washington.

Access road work would include: performing minor blading, shaping, grading and adding rock (improvements) to approx. 15,000 feet of existing serviceable access and structure spur roads and constructing approx. 1,000 feet of new road. In addition, four landings would be constructed. 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, 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/ Chad Browning*  
Chad Browning  
Environmental Scientist

Concur:

*/s/ Katey Grange*  
Katey C. Grange                      Date: February 15, 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:** Rocky Reach-Maple Valley 112-118 Access Road Improvement Project

## **Project Site Description**

Proposed maintenance activities are located within access roads and transmission line right-of-way for the Rocky Reach-Maple Valley No. 1 transmission line, between miles 112 and 118, southwest of Snoqualmie, WA. Elevation (above mean sea level) within the project area ranges from approximately 700 to 1800 feet. The project area is privately owned timber land and Washington State Dept. of Natural Resources land with BPA ROW easements for transmission lines and access roads. Land use in the surrounding area includes timber production and rural development.

## **Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources**

### **1. Historic and Cultural Resources**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A survey of the project area was completed in May of 2021 by a BPA archaeologist and a report was sent to the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and affected Tribes. No cultural resources were identified during the survey. DAHP concurred with BPA's no adverse effect to historic properties determination on August 5, 2021. No Tribal response was received.

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; interested tribes; DAHP; and the appropriate local, state and Federal agencies. Implement reasonable measures to protect the discovery site, including any appropriate stabilization or covering. Take reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the discovery site, including restricting access.

### **2. Geology and Soils**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Access road construction would disturb approximately 16,000 linear feet at a width of 16 feet. BMPs would be used to prevent erosion and disturbed areas would be reseeded. No prime or unique farmlands would be affected.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Vegetation removal would be limited to those within the immediate road bed. No Federal or state special-status plant species are recorded in the project area. Any disturbed areas outside the road bed would be reseeded.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Wildlife in the area (small mammals, birds, etc.) may be disturbed by construction activities; however, the disturbance would be temporary and the surrounding landscape provides ample habitat and cover. No terrestrial federal or state special status wildlife species or habitats are recorded in the project area.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: Water bodies containing populations of bull trout, anadromous fish, or their critical habitat are located within the project area, however no in-water work is included as part of this project and buffer zones around water crossings would be established.

Additionally, construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be implemented throughout the project to ensure localized soil disturbance does not cause sedimentation issues for any waterway.

#### **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No work would be conducted in wetland areas

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed work is not anticipated to impact groundwater.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No change in land use and no specially designated areas identified.

#### **9. Visual Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The new access roads would maintain a historical route of access. No substantial vegetation clearing would be required and would not visually change the character of the area.

## 10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Any fugitive dust or similar air quality impacts during project implementation are expected to be temporary and minimal.

## 11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Construction noise from typical utility line equipment would be temporary and localized.

## 12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project activities would not impact human health or safety. In fact, the proposed action would help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power 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: Notification letters would be sent by the BPA Realty Specialist in April 2022 notifying all landowners that work would commence September of 2022.

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

Signed: /s/ Chad Browning  
Chad Browning, EPR-COVINGTON  
Environmental Scientist

Date: February 15, 2022