

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** North Bonneville-Ross Transmission Line Corridor Fence and Gate Installation

**LURR No.:** 20170410

**Project Manager:** Dawneen Dostert TERR-3

**Location:** Skamania County, Washington

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B.4.9 Multiple use of powerline rights-of-way

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville Power Administration proposes to allow a landowner to install a section of fence, with a solar-powered gate, across BPA fee-owned right-of-way and the access road between the North Bonneville-Ross No. 1 and North Bonneville-Troutdale No. 1 transmission lines, in Skamania County, WA.

The legal description of the project is Township 2N Range 5E Section 26. The project proposes to install a solar-powered gate and a 300-foot (ft)/91-meter(m) fence within the BPA right-of-way across Kellett Road. The fence would span north to south between the North Bonneville-Ross No. 1 and North Bonneville-Troutdale No. 1 lines at least 50 feet east of tower structure 10/3 of the North Bonneville-Ross-1 and structure 10/3 of the North Bonneville-Troutdale No. 1 line. The purpose of the fence installation would be to prevent vehicles from driving around the installed gate. An existing road provides access to the project area, and roadwork would not be necessary for the project.

The fence would be 4" x 4" square fencing, 4' to 5' tall with metal "T" posts spaced about every 8 feet of fence. A 16-foot solar-powered gate would be installed in the fence across Kellett Road. The location is about 10 miles west of the town of North Bonneville, WA. The fencing and gate would help nearby landowners prevent trespassing hunters and 4-wheelers from accessing their properties.

**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/ Christopher H. Furey  
Christopher H. Furey  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel  
Sarah T. Biegel  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: March 14, 2018

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:** North Bonneville-Ross Transmission Line Corridor Fence and Gate Installation

### Project Site Description

The fence and gate installation would be on maintained BPA right-of-way and access roads. The project area consists of the access road and the right-of-way land dominated with sagebrush and Scotch broom. The surrounding topography consists of sloping hills with neighboring parcels comprised of forested areas, livestock pastures, and semi-rural homesites. A review of the National Wetland Inventory, soil information, topography, and aerial photos did not reveal any wetlands or waterbodies at the site. McCloskey Creek is approximately 2,000 feet to the north, Canyon Creek is over 2,000 feet to the south, and the Washougal River is approximately 4,600 feet west of the project location.

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. <b>Historic and Cultural Resources</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> BPA archaeologist reviewed proposed activities and determined that these activities at the project area for the installation of the fencing and gate do not have potential to cause effects to historic or cultural resources.		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There would be minimal soil disturbance for installation of the fencing and gates. Some digging is expected to establish posts. All work is occurring in the established BPA right-of-way.		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project would be occurring in the BPA right-of-way that is currently managed for low-growing vegetation. There are no listed or special-status species present. Some sagebrush and Scotch broom would be expected to be cut and removed for the fence installation.		
4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The work would be in established BPA right-of-way located approximately 500 feet to the south of a broad area identified as critical habitat for the northern spotted owl. No trees would be removed, and the site is not identified to provide northern spotted owl habitat or nesting sites. Construction of the fence and gate is expected to occur during daytime hours with limited to no effect to any listed or special-status species.		

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



Explanation: The nearest water body is McCloskey Creek, which is located over 2,000 feet north of the project location and is habitat for coastal cutthroat trout. Canyon Creek is located over 2,000 feet south of the project location, and the Washougal River is located approximately 4,600 feet east of the project location and provides habitat for salmon and trout. There would be no in-water work occurring and project activities would not be near McCloskey Creek, Canyon Creek, or the Washougal River.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No wetlands are present.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The project would not impact groundwater or aquifers.

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



Explanation: The fencing and gates would help prevent trespassing by hunters and four-wheeled vehicles. The fencing and gates would be outside of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area that is located south of the project area.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: There would be limited visual changes to the project area or surrounding environment.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions would occur during installation.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Temporary construction noise would occur during daylight hours. No ongoing noise increase is expected.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No direct impact. Installation of fence and gates may reduce trespassing by hunters and four-wheeled vehicles.

### 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:

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### **Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description: BPA Realty is in coordination with landowners with easement.

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

Signed: /s/ Christopher H. Furey  
Christopher H. Furey, ECT-4

Date: March 14, 2018