

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: 2020 Olympia-Grand Coulee No. 1 Gate Replacement Project

PP&A No.: 4379

Project Manager: Matthew Harvey, TFCF-COVINGTON

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) proposes to replace a steel access gate along the Olympia-Grand Coulee No. 1 287-kV transmission line. Access gate would be replaced in the same location as the one removed. Project work includes minor vegetation removal around existing structure and minor excavation activities to allow placement of new gate. All work would occur within BPA's ROW on existing access roads and landings. General equipment used for this type of project includes 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 A. Browning
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange

Katey Grange
NEPA Compliance Office

Date: *March 4, 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.

Proposed Action: 2020 Olympia-Grand Coulee Access Gate Replacement Project

Project Site Description

Proposed maintenance activities would be located in a segment of access road near structure 55/4 on the Olympia-Grand Coulee No. 1 transmission line, approximately 3.75 miles to the southeast of Buckley, WA. Current land use within the project area consists of utility line corridor right-of-way and includes gravel access roads, steel lattice transmission towers, and associated electrical lines. Adjacent land use consists of Tacoma Watershed, Army Corp of Engineers (USACE), and U.S. Forest Service undeveloped forest. Topography within the project area is generally flat with an elevation above mean sea level (AMSL) approximately 1,292 feet.

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Gate is located on existing access road and would be replaced in the same location. USACE, Seattle District, Planning, Environmental, and Cultural Resources Branch has reviewed the proposed action and conducted an analysis in accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA (16 U.S.C. 470f). Review of the proposed undertaking finds that the activity would have no potential to cause effects on historic properties (36 C.F.R. 800.3(a)(1)). No further archaeological work is recommended.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> In the event any archaeological material is encountered during project activities, BPA would stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead, archaeologist, and project manager; interested tribes; Washington Department of Archeological and Historic Preservation (DAHP); and the appropriate local, state and Federal agencies. BPA would implement reasonable measures to protect the discovery site, including any appropriate stabilization or covering, and take reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the discovery site, including restricting access.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Minor soil disturbance would occur within the existing road prism where to gate is to be replaced. Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be used to prevent erosion and disturbed areas would be reseeded. No prime or unique farmlands would be affected.</p>		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Minor vegetation removal would be limited to those areas within the immediate disturbance footprint of the gate replacement. No Federal or state special-status plant species are mapped within the project area.</p>		

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



Explanation: No suitable habitat is present in the project area for listed or sensitive wildlife species. Habitat disturbance would be minor in footprint and disturbance from elevated noise and human presence would be limited to no more than 2 days.

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



Explanation: Work in this area would not encroach closer than 1,500 feet to the nearest waterway (White River). In addition, erosion control measures would be implemented to prevent soil loss and downstream sedimentation.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: Gate replacement would occur within existing access road. No work would occur within any wetland.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: Groundwater would not be affected by proposed gate replacement activities; no new groundwater wells or use of ground water proposed.

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



Explanation: No land use changes are proposed; no specially-designated areas have been identified.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: All new construction would be replacement in kind and the new gate would visually match existing infrastructure and be limited to the existing road prism.

10. **Air Quality**



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

11. **Noise**



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

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: Project activities would not impact human health or 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: The project area is located on USACE land, which BPA holds an easement on. USACE and BPA personnel have coordinated the proposed gate replacement project.

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: March 4, 2020