

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Olympia-Grand Coulee No. 1 Transmission Line Insulator Replacement Project, Phase III Miles 70 to 100 - Additional Access Road Improvement

PP&A No.: 4228

Project Manager: Mark Korsness, TEP-TPP-1

Location: Kittitas County, Washington

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 improve approximately one mile of access road adjacent to mile 99 of the Olympia-Grand Coulee No. 1 Transmission Line. The proposed project, located on private land in Kittitas County, is scheduled for November 2020 and is expected to last one week.

In February 2020, BPA analyzed and completed a categorical exclusion (dated 2/13/20) to replace insulators, improve/reconstruct access roads, and install fall protection along the Olympia-Grand Coulee No. 1 transmission line together between miles 70 and 100. The proposed project, the third phase of a total of four phases of proposed work along the transmission line, would occur within King and Kittitas, counties, Washington.

During the course of construction in summer 2020, it was discovered that an acquisition agreement for easement rights, allowing for BPA to utilize an existing off right-of-way access road, included BPA's improvement of the subject road (Filbert Road). In order to fulfill BPA's obligations within the agreement for easement rights, BPA proposes to conduct the access road improvements. Specifically, proposed road work would include blading, shaping, grading, brushing, and placing surface rock within the existing road prism. General equipment used for this type of work includes: graders, rollers, bull-dozers, brush hogs, 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/ Laura Roberts
Laura Roberts
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey C. Grange October 28, 2020
Katey C. Grange Date
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: Olympia-Grand Coulee No. 1 Transmission Line Insulator Replacement Project, Phase III Miles 70 to 100 - Additional Access Road Improvement

Project Site Description

The proposed access road improvement project is located on private land in central Washington's Kittitas County. The project occurs in Township 20N, Range 14E, and Sections 20 and 29. Nearby land use is rural residential of both forested and agricultural land cover types. A Bureau of Recreation canal is located in the general vicinity of the proposed project.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Access road improvement requires the use of heavy equipment which would have the potential to disturb cultural resources. The site has had a completed cultural survey and consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act with the Department of Archaeological and Historic Preservation (DAHP) Office, Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation. The survey identified two historic resources, Kittitas Division Main Canal, which was determined to be outside of the APE and the Olympia – Grand Coulee No. 1 Transmission Line which would not be effected by the proposed work. The consultation concluded with a concurrence letter from the DAHP on September 29, 2020 stating that no historic properties would be affected by this action.

Notes: The following minimization measures would be implemented.

- Any necessary additional work sites outside of previously-consulted upon areas would obtain Section 106 Concurrence prior to use.
- All work would be conducted within the existing access road prism.
- During construction, protocols would be in place to stop construction and notify BPA for applicable consultation if cultural resources are discovered.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A small amount of soil disturbance would occur within the existing road prism and then subsequently rocked.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Minimal ground disturbance occurring within the existing road prism is anticipated. There would be no effect to Federal/state special-status plant species or habitats.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: In general, the project would have temporary noise and disturbance impacts to wildlife related to elevated equipment noise and human presence. There would be no effect to Federal/state special-status wildlife species or habitats.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The nearest water body, a Bureau of Recreation canal, occurs within the general vicinity of the project. No work would occur within 100 feet north or 185 feet south of the canal. There would be no effect to Federal/state special-status fish species or habitats.

Notes: The following minimization measures would be implemented.

- Erosion control measures would be implemented to prevent sedimentation from reaching any nearby waterbody.
- Appropriately stocked spill response kits would be located on vehicles, other equipment, and storage yards used on this project.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands occur within the vicinity of the proposed project.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The shallow digging involved would not impact groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no change in land use or specially-designated areas as a result of the project.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be minimal to no visual changes to the project area and surrounding environment due to the improvement of the existing road.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A small amount of vehicle emissions and dust may occur temporarily during construction.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary construction noise would occur during daylight hours. No ongoing noise increase is expected for this area as a result of this project.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No impacts to human health and safety are anticipated to result from this project.

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 Realty is in coordination with the adjacent landowners and easement holders.

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

Signed: /s/ Laura Roberts October 28, 2020
Laura Roberts, ECT-4 date
Environmental Protection Specialist