

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Ross-Lexington No. 1 Transmission Line Sidewalk Installation

LURR No.: 20210024

Project Manager: Charlene Belt, Ross MHQA

Location: Clark County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.9 Multiple use of powerline right-of-ways

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow Clark County Public Works (Clark County) to install a portion of a new sidewalk on BPA fee-owned property in Clark County, Washington. The project site is located between structures 1/7 and 2/1 on the Ross-Lexington No. 1 transmission line right-of-way. The purpose of this project is to accommodate the installation of a portion of a new six-foot-wide sidewalk by Clark County on Northeast 68th Street. Currently, there is no sidewalk on this segment of the roadway and it is unsafe to walk along.

Specifically, Clark County Public Works contractors would pave an approximately 270-foot-long, two-foot-wide area with pervious concrete in BPA right-of-way for the installation of the new sidewalk to the south of the existing NE 68th Street. A small area on the western portion of the project site would be graded to match the elevation of the existing roadway. Additionally, a small area of woody vegetation, which contains four western red cedar trees and several shrubs, would be cleared as part of this project.

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/ Ronald "RJ" Theofield

Ronald "RJ" Theofield
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Portland State University

Reviewed by:

/s/ Carol Leiter

Carol Leiter
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel January 19, 2021

Sarah T. Biegel 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: Ross-Lexington No. 1 Transmission Line Sidewalk Installation

Project Site Description

The project site is located on BPA fee-owned property between structures 1/7 and 2/1 on the Ross-Lexington No. 1 transmission line in Clark County, Washington. It is located in Township 2 North, Range 1 East, and Section 11. The site abuts the south side of NE 68th Street and is currently covered by primarily grasses, with an area of trees (e.g., western red cedar) and shrubs on the eastern portion of the right-of-way. The surrounding area consists of public (park) and low- and medium-density residential land uses. There are no wetlands or surface waters within or nearby the project site.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A survey completed in 2019 determined that the Ross-Lexington No. 1 Transmission Line was eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. However, the line's character-defining features would not be impacted visually or structurally by the proposed work and the work area was previously modified and artificially leveled during construction of the transmission line and adjacent roadway. Therefore, a BPA archeologist determined on December 14, 2020, that while the proposed project is an undertaking, there would be no potential to affect historic properties.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be moderate soil disturbance for the installation of a new sidewalk. The maximum depth of disturbance would be three feet.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Moderate ground disturbance is anticipated. The project would occur in BPA right-of-way that is currently managed for low-growing vegetation. Approximately 2,445 sq. ft. grass and 315 sq. ft of trees and shrubs would be cleared. In total, four western red cedar trees would be removed. No special-status plant species or habitats are present.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The work would occur in maintained BPA right-of-way. There are no special-status species or habitats present.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no water bodies, floodplains, or fish within one mile of the project area. The project activities would not impact these resources.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no wetlands within one-quarter mile of the site.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No new wells proposed. The maximum depth of disturbance would be three feet and 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 area as a result of this project.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be minor visual changes to the project area due to the installation of the sidewalk and the removal of vegetation. However, the visual changes would be consistent with the existing transmission line right-of-way and surrounding residential area. The new sidewalk would match the materials and dimensions of an existing sidewalk to the east of the site. The removal of vegetation would increase the visibility of transmission structures and lines for nearby residents.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Short-term dust and vehicle emissions would occur 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: Clark County would notify adjacent landowners of the project via mailings.

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

Signed: /s/ Ronald "RJ" Theofield
Ronald "RJ" Theofield, ECT-4
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Portland State University

January 19, 2021
Date