

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Lostine Granger Road Repair Project

Project No.: 1998-007-02

Project Manager: Maureen Kavanagh, EWP-4

Location: Wallowa, Oregon

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

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA is proposing to fund the Nez Perce Tribe to complete repairs along Granger Road, a private road that provides access to the Tribe's Lostine Acclimation Facility in Wallowa County, Oregon. The road continues to be undercut by erosive forces of the Lostine River, which runs parallel to sections of the road. A 220-foot-long section of the road needs bank protection measures in place ahead of high water to limit the high potential for road failure this summer. The bank would be protected using either stabilization fabric or 6-inch minus angular rock to secure portions of the road that are actively eroding. Then, a layer of vegetated riprap and wood would be placed along the streambanks to halt further erosive forces affecting the roadbed. Fresh cut 16-inch diameter logs would be placed parallel to the roadbed, and anchored to the streambanks using rope, rip rap, and slash. All rock and wood placement would occur above the water line and along the banks of the Lostine River. No additional road grading or rocking would be needed to complete the stabilization work.

Although rock and wood placement would occur above the water line, in-water work area isolation measures would be used to protect migrating fish from potential construction-related runoff and debris. Silt fencing would be placed atop the existing stream bed and banks, and would be removed post-construction. All access and staging would be within the existing Granger Road prism, and all construction equipment would be operated from the road.

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.

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: Lostine Granger Road Repair Project

Project Site Description

The project is within the Blue Mountain physiographic province of northeast Oregon. The project area is adjacent to private farmland, the Lostine River, and the Nez Perce Tribe's Lostine Acclimation Facility.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project was evaluated by a BPA archaeologist, who determined that the undertaking would have no potential to affect historic properties.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Short-term soil displacement could occur during rock placement work. Standard erosion control measures, including silt fencing, would be installed to limit runoff into Lostine River. Long-term decrease in soil erosion potential expected.

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

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: No special-status species present. Two stream-side riparian trees with exposed root systems would be removed or disturbed during rock and log placement. Logs used for bank protection would be commercially sourced. Negligible long-term impact to vegetation expected.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No special-status species present.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: The proposed project is immediately adjacent to the Lostine River, where ESA-listed spring Chinook, summer steelhead, and bull trout are present. Bull trout and Snake River

Basin steelhead critical habitat are within the project reach. The Nez Perce Tribe has applied for a Clean Water Act Nationwide Permit (NWP) for the project (NWP application # 2021-244). Because road protection work would occur at low flows, National Marine Fisheries Service agreed that proposed work can be undertaken outside of the designated in-water work window for the area.

Notes:

- The construction contractor would adhere to all terms and conditions of the Army Corps of Engineers' NWP 13 for streambank protection.
- The construction contractor would adhere to applicable mitigation measures outlined in the Standard Local Operating Procedures for Endangered Species (SLOPES) Biological Opinion for streambank stabilization.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: None present.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Rock and wood placement would have no impact to groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No change to land use.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Minor change to visual quality where ground vegetation and trees are replaced with rock along a 100-foot section of Granger Road.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Short-term increase in dust from construction activities.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Short-term increase to noise during construction.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Long-term improvement to road 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: 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: The road is located on private property. BPA has a 20-foot-wide easement for construction, use, maintenance, repair, and reconstruction of the road. BPA and Nez Perce Tribe are in coordination with the landowner on this project.

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

Signed: /s/ Claire McClory May 28, 2021
Claire McClory ECF-4 Date
Environmental Protection Specialist