

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Animal Grazing on North Bonneville-Midway No. 1 and Knight-Ostrander No. 1 Rights-of-Way

Project No.: LURR 20200303

Project Manager: Lesa Gilmore – TERR-3

Location: Klickitat County, Washington

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

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow an applicant to graze animals on BPA fee-owned rights-of-way (ROW) between structures 30/2 and 30/3 of North Bonneville-Midway No. 1 and 31/3 and 31/4 of Knight-Ostrander No. 1. Activities would include installing an approximately 4-foot-high barbed wire fence anchored with t-posts and wooden corner posts. Steel gates would be installed for access. An existing fence along Snowden Road would be repaired or replaced. The fence would be constructed by hand and use gravel and soil to pack around posts. The wooden fence posts would be seated 2 feet deep into the ground. The applicant may hay the field in the future; this action would be covered under an existing customary agricultural uses easement on this section of ROW.

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/ Kali Levy

Kali Levy
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Portland State University

Reviewed by:

/s/ Carol Leiter

Carol Leiter

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey C. Grange September 23, 2021

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: Animal Grazing on North Bonneville-Midway No. 1 and Knight-Ostrander No. 1 Rights-of-Way

Project Site Description

The project site is on a BPA fee-owned right-of-way (ROW) between structures 30/2 and 30/3 of North Bonneville-Midway No. 1 and 31/3 and 31/4 of Knight-Ostrander No. 1 (Township 3 North, Range 11 East, Section 5). The ROW consists of grasses and low shrubs. The surrounding area is a mix of rural residential properties and forests. The nearest waterway is Jewett Creek approximately 0.25 mile southwest. There are no wetlands in the area.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: On October 15th, 2020, BPA initiated National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 consultation with the following parties:

Washington State Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation (DAHP)
Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation
Cowlitz Indian Tribe

BPA completed background research and an intensive pedestrian survey of the area. No cultural resources were identified. Therefore, BPA has determined that the proposed undertaking would result in no effect to historic properties or cultural resources. DAHP concurred with BPA's determination. No other comments were received.

Notes:

- In the unlikely event that cultural material is inadvertently encountered during the implementation of this project, BPA would require that work be halted in the vicinity of the finds until they can be inspected and assessed by BPA in consultation with the appropriate consulting parties.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Ground disturbance would be limited to installing the fence posts.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No special-status plants are known to be within the project area. Existing vegetation includes grasses and low shrubs, which may be trampled or consumed by grazing animals. Installation of the new fence would disturb vegetation where posts were installed.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Any local wildlife in the area may be temporarily disturbed by noise generated by project work. The fence may partially limit access of the project area for some species. There are no documented occurrences of any state special-status wildlife species or wildlife species protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act near the project site, and no such species are expected to occur at the project site. The project would not result in any adverse modification to suitable protected species habitat. Therefore, the proposed project would have no effect on protected wildlife species.

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 within the project site; the nearest water body is 0.25 miles away.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no wetlands within or near the project site.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Ground disturbance would not reach depths that would impact groundwater or aquifers, if present.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Although the ROW is not currently managed for livestock grazing, there is an existing agricultural easement on the property. The proposed project is consistent with surrounding land uses. No specially-designated areas are in the project vicinity.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The only visual change would be additional fencing. The proposed project would not impact the visual quality of the area.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary dust may increase during the fence installation. Livestock would not be stocked in densities high enough to significantly impact air quality. Therefore, there would be little to no long-term impact to air quality following completion of the site preparations.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project-related noise (i.e., fence installation) would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours. Although livestock may intermittently create noise, it would be consistent with the current ambient noise typically associated with rural residential land use. Therefore, there would be little to no long-term noise impacts following completion of the site preparations.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed project would not be expected to impact human health and 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: All proposed activities would occur on BPA fee-owned property. No other landowner notification, involvement, or coordination would be required.

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

Signed: /s/ Kali Levy September 23, 2021
Kali Levy, ECT-4 Date
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Portland State University