

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Sanitary Sewer Pipeline Installation Through BPA Fee-Owned Right-of-Way

Project No.: LURR 20240399

Project Manager: Darin Smith, TERR - Chemawa

Location: Washington County, Oregon

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from 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 Ken Randall Homes, LLC (the applicant) to install a public sanitary sewer line through BPA fee-owned right-of-way (BPA ROW) near King City, Oregon to support residential development. The sewer line would cross between structures 17/8 and 17/9 of the Keeler-Oregon City No. 2 and structures 18/7 and 18/8 of Oregon City-Stub-C transmission lines and connect to an existing sewer main to the east, outside of the BPA ROW.

The applicant would install approximately 115 feet of 18-inch-diameter PVC sanitary sewer line through BPA ROW by directionally boring approximately 15 feet below the ground surface. Boring would occur in a west to east orientation, where it would pass through BPA's ROW and connect to the existing sewer main. A pilot hole would be excavated within BPA ROW to receive the bore at the midpoint. Dimensions for the pilot hole would be 4 feet wide, 8 feet long, and 12 feet deep. A midpoint inspection would be required to verify the bore's depth and direction prior to passing underneath a high-pressure gas line buried 5 feet deep located outside the eastern border of the BPA ROW. Bore depth at the eastern edge of the BPA ROW would be approximately 10 feet underground. Following the installation of the sewer pipeline, the pilot hole would be backfilled with native soil. Equipment within the BPA ROW would include the boring machine, excavator, trucks, and general construction related tools. The applicant would enter BPA ROW from SW Capulet Lane to the east. Equipment and material staging would be located outside of BPA ROW at a designated location.

BPA authorizes the use of and manages its fee-owned lands pursuant to its authority under sections 2(e) and 2(f) of the Bonneville Project Act. 16 U.S.C. § 832a(e)-(f).

Findings: In accordance with Section 1021.102 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; 89 FR 34074, April 30, 2024; 90 FR 29676, July 3, 2025 [Interim Final Rule]) and *DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Implementing Procedures* (dated June 30, 2025), BPA has determined the following:

- 1) The proposed action fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021;
- 2) The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion; and
- 3) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal (see attached Environmental Evaluation).

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.¹

Justin Olmsted
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Katey C. Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

¹ BPA is aware that the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), on February 25, 2025, issued an interim final rule to remove its NEPA implementing regulations at 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500–1508. Based on CEQ guidance, and to promote completion of its NEPA review in a timely manner and without delay, in this CX BPA is voluntarily relying on the CEQ regulations, in addition to the interim final rule to revise DOE NEPA regulations implementing NEPA at 10 C.F.R. Part 1021 and NEPA Implementing Procedures (dated June 30, 2025), to meet its obligations under NEPA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 et seq.

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.

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Project Site Description

The project site is located near King City, Oregon (Township 2 South, Range 1 West, Section 16). The surrounding area is primarily residential to the north and east, which includes Deer Creek Elementary located just over 1000 feet to the east. SW 137 Avenue runs parallel to BPA's western edge of ROW and beyond the road contains some rural land and the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge approximately 1 mile southwest. The Tualatin River is approximately 0.5 mile south of the project site. The BPA ROW is maintained as an open grass field consisting of various grasses and other low-growing herbaceous species. Himalayan blackberry and other woody vine species are present which follow a channelized drainage on the western border of the BPA ROW. Multiple wetlands exist near the project site, which have been identified in a 2024 wetland delineation survey by the City of King City, Oregon (WD 2024-0294). Adjacent to the eastern border of BPA ROW, an 8-inch-diameter high pressure gas line is buried approximately 5 feet underground, as well as overhead transmission lines owned by Portland General Electric (PGE).

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA initiated Section 106 consultation on March 3, 2025, with the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). On March 31, 2025, SHPO responded but did not concur with the Area of Potential Effect (APE). After consideration and communications with SHPO, BPA determined that the APE was appropriate for the undertaking. No other responses were received. On June 10, 2025, the BPA archaeologist submitted the project report and determination that the proposed undertaking would result in no effects to historic properties. No responses were received within the 30-day review period.

Notes:

- In the event that cultural material is inadvertently encountered during project implementation, BPA would require the applicant to halt construction in the vicinity of the finds until inspected and assessed by BPA and in consultation with the appropriate parties.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would result in soil disturbance no greater than 2 acres of previously disturbed ground on BPA fee-owned ROW, and may include minor soil compaction, rutting, and soil displacement. Approximately 384 cubic feet of soil would be excavated for the pilot hole and then backfilled with native soil following project completion. Disturbed soil would stabilize as vegetation is reestablished. Standard construction best management practices (BMPs) would be implemented to minimize soil erosion, sedimentation, and fugitive dust. The proposed action would not impact geology.

Notes:

- The Applicant would be responsible for proper off-site disposal of spoils associated with directional boring as required by state and federal regulations, if applicable.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed actions would occur in areas with degraded pasture grasses and degraded Himalayan Blackberry Thicket. Trenching would remove approximately 32 square feet of vegetation within the degraded pasture grasses, and additional vegetation would be crushed or covered during equipment transport. The applicant would be required to reseed all disturbed ground with native, regionally-appropriate seed mix. There are no documented occurrences of any special-status plant species that would be impacted by the proposed action. Overall, the proposed action would result in temporarily minor impacts to plants.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Minor and temporary disturbance of normal wildlife behavior and wildlife displacement could occur from elevated noise and human presence during construction activities. However, there would be no permanent impacts to wildlife habitat within BPA ROW, and temporarily disturbed or displaced wildlife would likely reoccupy the site following completion of the proposed action. There are no documented occurrences of any special-status wildlife species near the project site and no suitable special-status species habitat is present according to best available data.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Boring would occur underneath a man-made water drainage that leads to a confluence of the Tualatin River; however, no changes to the drainage are proposed. BMPs would be utilized to protect the drainage throughout construction. The project is not located within a floodplain, and there are no fish-bearing streams within the project area. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact water bodies, floodplains, or fish including federal and state special status species or their habitat.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: The applicant would temporarily install visual markers 25 feet from all wetlands identified in the delineation report. No work would occur within the 25-foot wetland buffer and BMPs (i.e., spill control measures) would be used to minimize the potential for inadvertent impacts to these wetlands. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact wetlands.

Notes:

- The applicant is responsible for ensuring the proposed actions follow all federal, state, and local guidelines associated with directional boring near potential wetlands. If impacts to the identified wetlands become unavoidable during construction, the applicant would be required to halt construction and coordinate as required with the US Army Corps of Engineers, Oregon Department of State Lands, and Clean Water Services.
- Maintain a spill kit on site during construction.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Directional boring may reach depths of groundwater given the presence of wetlands within the project site. However, the proposed action would not generate or use hazardous materials that would contaminate groundwater or aquifers. No new wells or other uses of groundwater or aquifers are proposed.

Notes:

- The applicant would not be authorized to store or use hazardous materials within BPA ROW, including materials such as fuels, herbicides, solvents, paints, etc. that may enter groundwater in the event of a spill.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed actions would not impact the existing land use of BPA's ROW or any specially-designated areas.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Visual quality within the BPA ROW would be temporarily impacted due to the presence of construction equipment and the associated ground disturbances that would occur. These impacts would be minor overall, and the applicant would be required to return the BPA ROW to its pre-existing visual conditions following project completion.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Minor dust and vehicle emissions would occur due to construction activities, but these would be temporary and would return to normal conditions following construction completion.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary and sporadic increases to noise in the area would occur during construction activities; however, construction would occur during daylight hours. There would be no permanent changes to noise conditions as a result of the proposed actions.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The applicant and their contractors would follow BPA and OSHA safety standards and would submit a safety plan for BPA's review and approval prior to commencing construction work within BPA's fee-owned ROW. The project would not create any new safety hazards or use materials that could threaten human health and safety. No new impacts to human health and safety are anticipated.

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 proposed action would occur on BPA fee-owned property.

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

Signed:

Justin Olmsted
Environmental Protection Specialist