

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** BPA Land Actions with the City of Richland

**Project No.:** TER ID: 21-0099

**Project Manager:** Luke Kinch, TERR-BELL-1

**Location:** Benton County, Washington

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B1.24 Property Transfers

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to dispose of part of its fee-owned land and participate in a land transfer with the city of Richland (City), Washington. 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).

BPA would dispose of about 3.8 acres of BPA fee-owned land to the City while retaining easement rights necessary to operate and maintain the existing transmission lines located within the corridor. The City would use this land for their upcoming Center Parkway Extension Project. BPA would not fund, carry out any ground-disturbing activities, or other activities associated with the construction of the Center Parkway Extension Project. Additionally, the City would transfer ownership to BPA of about 1.6 acres of land adjacent to BPA's fee-owned land at the Badger Canyon substation.

On the portion of BPA's land that would be transferred to the City, the City would construct approximately 1,150 linear feet of new transportation corridor. The City's proposed project would construct a two-lane 34-foot-wide paved roadway (11-foot-wide travel lanes with 6-foot-wide bike lanes) connecting the southeast terminus of the existing Center Parkway, located northeast of BPA's Badger Canyon Substation, to the existing Leslie Road and Lorayne J. Blvd intersection. The City would also construct a 12-foot-wide multi-use paved pathway on the north side of the roadway, which would be separated from the driving surface of Center Parkway by an earthen bioswale. The City's project would install new conduits for power distribution and fiber optic cable, pathway lights, streetlights, and storm drainage collection via curbing and a storm drainage treatment system (treatment vault and/or use of on-site adjacent bioswales). An estimated 5,900 cubic yards (cy) of material would be excavated and approximately 3,700 cy of fill material would be placed during project construction on the BPA-owned land that is proposed for disposal. The Center Parkway Extension Project footprint on BPA-owned land that is proposed for disposal would be approximately 4.6 acres, with approximately 3.6 acres of temporary disturbance and approximately 1 acre of permanently paved roadway and multiuse path.

Additionally, to facilitate the City's project associated with the BPA land disposal, the City would decommission an existing BPA road that crosses the West Fork Amon Wasteway and adjacent wetland. The City would construct a new crossing on the West Fork Amon Wasteway, with installation of a new culvert, to connect the new roadway to the intersection of Leslie Rd. and Lorayne J. Blvd.

The City's Center Parkway Extension Project would improve traffic circulation, reduce congestion on nearby arterial streets, improve emergency response times, and support commercial development for the City. Construction of the project is anticipated to take multiple months to complete.

**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 the current *DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Implementing Procedures*, 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.

Laura Roberts  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Katey C. Grange  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment(s): Environmental Evaluation

# Categorical Exclusion Environmental Evaluation

This evaluation 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:** BPA Land Actions with the City of Richland

## **Project Site Description**

The proposed land actions would occur near BPA's Badger Canyon Substation in Township 8N, Range 28E, and Section 1. The general area consists of a high-voltage transmission line corridor that contains a substation and multiple transmission lines. Land cover is made up of predominantly low-growing native and non-native grasses and shrubs. A wetland and the adjacent West Fork Amon Wasteway occur in the general vicinity and are both part of the larger, approximate 66 acre, Amon Creek Natural Preserve. Urban-residential neighborhoods and industrial lands occur in the surrounding area.

## **Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources**

### **1. Historic and Cultural Resources**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA initiated consultation for the Area of Potential Effect (APE) of the proposed actions with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, the Nez Perce Tribe, and the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) on September 6, 2023, along with a determination of no historic properties affected. DAHP concurred on September 14, 2025. BPA did not receive any other responses. Subsequently, the project was expanded to include a land transfer within the original APE. BPA sent a no adverse effect to historic resources determination on November 24, 2025, and DAHP concurred on November 24, 2025. The CTUIR responded on December 23, 2025 requesting additional information. BPA responded to the request on February 3, 2026. No additional response was received within 30 days.

### **2. Geology and Soils**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Foreseeable impacts from BPA's land disposal and the City's subsequent Center Parkway Extension Project would include approximately 3.6 acres of temporary impacts and approximately 1 acre of permanent impacts to soils from the construction of the new transportation corridor. Erosion from wind and rain could occur during grading and clearing of the city's project. Best Management Practices and stormwater management would be implemented by the City during construction and following construction; all exposed areas would be either planted, hydroseeded, or covered with asphalt/rock to prevent erosion.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no listed or special-status plant species present within the disposal area. Foreseeable impacts would include an estimated 3.6 acres of temporary impact to existing vegetation, a small portion of that being wetland vegetation. Additional foreseeable impacts include approximately 1 acre of plant habitat being permanently covered by paved roadway and multiuse pathway. The City would stabilize and seed disturbed areas following construction with wetland areas seeded with a site-specific wetland seed mix.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no listed or special-status wildlife species present within the disposal area. Foreseeable impacts would include approximately 1 acre of potential wildlife habitat being permanently covered by paved roadway and multiuse pathway. The city's project may temporarily increase disturbance to locally occurring species resulting from noise and human presence. However, suitable habitat occurs adjacent to the project area accessible to wildlife during construction. Construction of the City's project is anticipated to take several months in the fall and winter.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Foreseeable impacts from BPA's land disposal actions and the City's subsequent Center Parkway Extension Project would include the removal of an existing culvert crossing along West Fork Amon Wasteway and installation of a new culvert crossing approximately 650 feet downstream. The City, based on literature reviews and discussion with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife staff, determined that no fish are present within the wasteway. The City obtained a Section 404 of the Clean Water Act permit authorization (*NWS-2022-406, December 13, 2024*) for impacts to the West Fork Amon Wasteway from removal and installation of culverts. The City would implement all impact minimization and mitigation measures stipulated under the permit authorization. Disturbed areas would be restored and seeded with a site-specific seed mix.

#### **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Foreseeable impacts from BPA's land disposal actions and the City's subsequent Center Parkway Extension Project would include a small amount of fill to a wetland adjacent to the West Fork Amon Wasteway as well as temporarily impacts to a wetland during the decommissioning of a road. The City obtained a Section 404 of the Clean Water Act permit authorization (*NWS-2022-406, December 13, 2024*) for permanent and temporary impacts to wetlands resulting from the project. The City would implement all impact minimization and mitigation measures stipulated under the permit authorization. Disturbed wetland areas would be restored and seeded with a site-specific wetland seed mix.

#### **7. Groundwater and Aquifers**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no anticipated foreseeable impacts to groundwater or aquifers from BPA's land disposal actions and the City's subsequent Center Parkway Extension Project as they are relatively deeply occurring in the area and would not be impacted by the city's construction.

## 8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Foreseeable impacts from BPA's disposal land actions and the City's subsequent Center Parkway Extension Project would include alteration of land use within the action area. The change in land use would be consistent with surrounding land uses; urban-residential, existing Leslie Rd., and the previously constructed portion of the Center Parkway. The City's planned multiuse path would improve pedestrian and bicycle recreational access to the Amon Creek Natural Preserve occurring along the western border of the roadway.

## 9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Foreseeable impacts from BPA's disposal land actions and the City's subsequent Center Parkway Extension Project would include alteration of visual quality in the vicinity. The change resulting from the City's project would be consistent with urban-residential areas, existing Leslie Rd. and previously constructed portion of the Center Parkway.

## 10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Foreseeable impacts from BPA's disposal land actions and the City's subsequent Center Parkway Extension Project would include temporary equipment emissions during construction. Following the City's construction, overall emissions may increase from additional vehicles using the new roadway.

## 11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Foreseeable impacts from BPA's disposal land actions and the City's subsequent Center Parkway Extension Project would include temporary construction noise during daylight hours resulting from the City's project. Following completion of the City's project, noise is likely to increase locally and temporally from vehicles utilizing the new roadway and multiuse path use. The City would follow all applicable local and state noise ordinances.

## 12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no anticipated foreseeable impacts to human health and safety from BPA's disposal land actions and the City's subsequent Center Parkway Extension 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 has coordinated and would continue its coordination with the city of Richland. The city of Richland is conducting public involvement associated with their larger road project.

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

Signed:

Laura Roberts  
Environmental Protection Specialist