

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Clean Water Services Restoration Plantings

Project No.: LURR 2026092

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 Clean Water Services (CWS) to restore native vegetation on approximately one-acre of BPA's Oregon City-Stub-C and Keeler-Oregon City-2 transmission lines right-of-way (ROW). CWS would first mow the ROW to remove non-native Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*) and reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*). Mowing would be followed by spot applications of herbicides to invasive and non-native species over a period of approximately two years. CWS proposes to use the following herbicides: glyphosate (Aquaneat 1.5%) with ammonium sulfate surfactant and clopyralid (Vastlan 0.5%). The area would then be planted with approximately 1,600 bare root stock shrubs, 35 pounds of native seeds, and 10,000 herbaceous plant plugs. Shrub plantings would include the following species: swamp rose (*Rosa pisocarpa*), Douglas spirea (*Spirea douglasii*) and snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*). No plants would be installed within a 30-foot diameter around transmission structures. Only herbaceous plants that can tolerate being driven over periodically would be installed where transmission line maintenance and inspection vehicles would drive. CWS may maintain the site by: (a) treating invasive weeds on an annual basis, (b) mowing on a three or more year basis, depending on plant growth and site conditions, or (c) periodically removing tree seedlings within the site, if needed as determined by CWS. Mowing activity will be limited to the herbaceous area, not in the shrub area.

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 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.

Beth Belanger
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Katey C. Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment: 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.

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Project Site Description

The site is in Beaverton, Washington County, Oregon; SW Jenkins Road bounds the project to the north and SW 153rd Drive is just east of the project area. Cedar Mill Creek traverses through the northern portion of the restoration area and a wetland is adjacent to the creek on the north side. The project area is in Sections 5 and 8 of Township 1 South, Range 1 West.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: A BPA archaeologist determined that no historic properties would be affected by the proposed project. On April 29, 2026, BPA sent determination letters to the following consulting parties: The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). No comments were received from any of the consulting parties within 30 days.

Notes:

- If any cultural materials are inadvertently discovered during project implementation, the project proponent would follow the procedures outlined in BPA's Post-Review Discovery Procedure.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would have no impact on geology. Site preparation and installation of plants would result in a minor disturbance to soils.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: There would be no impacts on Federal/state special-status species or habitats. The project would remove non-native and invasive plants currently growing at the site and replace those with native shrubs and forbs. In the long term, there would be a beneficial effect associated with returning site vegetation to a more native composition.

Notes:

- Only BPA approved herbicides are allowed to be used on the right-of-way (ROW).
- Herbicides would only be applied by a licensed applicator and only in accordance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency labeling.
- No heavy equipment would be used to apply herbicides or install plants.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be minimal impacts on Federal/state special-status species or habitats. Human presence and temporary elevated noise associated with mowing may result in wildlife temporarily avoiding the project area; however, wildlife use of the area would be expected to return to normal once mowing and project activities have been completed. The installation of native plant species would increase the nectar resources available for native pollinator species, such as bumble bees and butterflies.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: The majority of the project area is within a Zone A, 100-year flood zone; however, project activities would not impact the floodplain at this location because no new infrastructure or impermeable surfaces would be installed. In the flood zone and riparian areas, CWS would use Aquaneat 1.5% herbicide or Vastlan 0.5%, which are approved for use in aquatic systems and wetlands, respectively.

Riparian plantings may moderate nutrient loading of the stream by absorbing excessive nutrient loads from runoff precipitation from the surrounding urban area. As the new shrubs mature, they may also dissipate the velocity of flashy precipitation events by absorbing and regulating water flow and therefore decrease erosion and sedimentation. Riparian plantings may also decrease stream temperatures by providing shade. Overall, the restoration project would improve the quality of the adjacent riparian area of Cedar Mill Creek, which is designated Essential Salmon Habitat (ESH) by the State of Oregon. No state approvals or permits are needed for riparian vegetation planting activities in ESH, per the Oregon Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Guide. The best management practices listed below would prevent inadvertent herbicide runoff into waterways. There would be no detrimental effects to Federal or state special-status species, ESUs, or habitats.

Notes:

- No heavy equipment is allowed within the waterway.
- No grading or contouring is allowed.
- Herbicides would only be applied by a licensed applicator and only in accordance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency labeling.
- An herbicide transportation and safety plan would be prepared by the licensed applicator to address spill prevention and containment.
- An herbicide spill kit would be readily available during transport and onsite.
- Herbicide mixing and loading locations would occur away from waterbodies and on impervious surfaces.
- Herbicides would not be used when the ground is saturated or when precipitation is forecasted within 48 hours following an application.
- Herbicides would not be used during temperature inversions or when air temperature exceeds 80 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Herbicides would not be sprayed when wind speeds exceed 10 miles per hour.
- Clopyralid (Vastlan) would not be broadcast sprayed within 100 feet or spot-sprayed within 15 feet of streams with flowing or standing water or within 50 feet of dry streams.
- Aquatic Glyphosate (Aquaneat) would not be broadcast sprayed within 100 feet of streams with flowing or standing water, or within 50 feet of dry streams. This product may be spot sprayed to the ordinary high-water mark of streams with flowing or standing water.
- No other herbicides would be used without BPA's approval.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: Per the National Wetland Inventory, most of the project planting area is within a freshwater forested/shrub wetland. Other than minor soil disturbance from plant installation,

the project would not generate removal or fill in quantities that would require a federal or state wetland permit. Voluntary habitat restoration activities such as this are exempt from Oregon's removal/fill permit requirements. CWS proposes to use Vastlan 0.5% herbicide which is approved for use in wetlands. Herbicides would not be applied over standing water.

Notes:

- No heavy equipment is allowed within the wetland.
- No grading or contouring is allowed.
- Herbicides would only be applied by a licensed applicator and only in accordance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency labeling.
- An herbicide transportation and safety plan would be prepared by the licensed applicator to address spill prevention and containment.
- An herbicide spill kit would be readily available during transport and onsite.
- Herbicide mixing and loading locations would occur away from waterbodies and on impervious surfaces.
- Herbicides would not be used when the ground is saturated or when precipitation is forecasted within 48 hours following an application.
- Herbicides would not be used during temperature inversions or when air temperature exceeds 80 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Herbicides would not be sprayed when wind speeds exceed 10 miles per hour.
- Clopyralid (Vastlan) would not be broadcast sprayed within 100 feet or spot-sprayed within 15 feet of wetlands with flowing or standing water or within 50 feet of dry wetlands.
- Aquatic Glyphosate (Aquaneat) would not be broadcast sprayed within 100 feet of wetlands with flowing or standing water or within 50 feet of dry wetlands.
- No other herbicides would be used without BPA's approval.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: There would be no impacts to groundwater or aquifers. Herbicide applications would be applied by licensed applicators and would follow label instructions to minimize the potential for groundwater contamination. Further, herbicides would not be applied within 50 feet of known groundwater wells and water sources. Plant installations would disturb the soil to a maximum depth of two feet.

Notes:

- Herbicides would only be applied by a licensed applicator and only in accordance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency labeling.
- An herbicide transportation and safety plan would be prepared by the licensed applicator to address spill prevention and containment.
- An herbicide spill kit would be readily available during transport and onsite.
- Herbicide mixing and loading locations would occur away from waterbodies and on impervious surfaces.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Land use would not change due to the project activities; the new vegetation would not impede BPA's ability to access and maintain its existing infrastructure within the ROW. The site is not within a specially designated area.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no negative impacts to the visual quality of the area. Native plants may be viewed by some as a visual improvement to the ROW.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would have no impact on air quality.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Noise levels would temporarily increase during mowing activities, but this would be of short duration and not outside of typical noises for the area. Overall the project would not increase noise levels above the ambient background noise.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Herbicides would be applied by licensed applicators in accordance with the label instructions and BPA-approved herbicides to limit the potential for public or worker exposure.

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 project proponent would coordinate with the adjacent business for permission to park their vehicles in the business's parking area.

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

Signed:

Beth Belanger
Environmental Protection Specialist