Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy

Proposed Action: Fence Installation on North Bonneville-Midway No. 1 Right-of-Way

Project No.: LURR-20260289

Project Manager: Brent Leslie, TERR-THE DALLES

Location: Skamania County, Washington

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 a private landowner to install two new fences across BPA fee-owned right-of-way (ROW) in the North Bonneville-Midway No. 1 transmission line corridor.

The landowner intends to fence the perimeter of their agriculture easement. This would include installing an approximately 550-foot-long fence partially following the east side of Kanaka Creek Road and heading east and then north following an existing residential access road within the ROW. The landowner also would install an about 300-foot-long fence east of the residential access road along the boundary of their agricultural easement. The fence would be constructed of mixed materials that would include wood or metal fence posts, barbed wire, and chain-link woven metal material. Fence posts would be buried approximately 2 feet below the ground surface for both fence segments. Sixteen-foot-wide gates would be installed on each of the new fence segments to allow BPA to travel on the existing transmission line access road.

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.

JEREMY DOSCHKA

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Jeremy Doschka
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

KATEY GRANGE

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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.

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Project Site Description

The project site is located on BPA fee-owned ROW between structures 6/4 and 6/5 on the North Bonneville-Midway No. 1 230 kV transmission line corridor line in Skamania County, Washington (Township 3 North, Range 7 East, Section 25). Topography consists of gentle slopes and flat areas. Vegetation includes mainly grasses, weeds, and forbs. No wetlands or waterways are located within or adjacent to the project site. Outside of the project site, the surrounding area is primarily low-density residential areas with small, scattered stands of trees. The project site is located within a designated Urban Area of the Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area (CRGNSA).

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: BPA sent out an initiation and determination letter on September 16, 2026 (BPA CR Project No.: WA 2026 165; SHPO Case No.: 2026-09-05986) with a determination of no historic properties affected to the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, the Nez Perce Tribe, and the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP).

DAHP concurred with BPA's area of potential effects (APE) on September 16, 2026. On October 16, 2026, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe requested additional information on the proposed fence location. BPA provided additional information and the Cowlitz Indian Tribe approved the proposed work. No other responses were received.

Notes:

In the unlikely event that cultural resources or historic properties are inadvertently encountered during the implementation of the project, BPA would require that work be halted in the vicinity of the finds until they can be inspected and assessed by BPA and in consultation with the appropriate consulting parties.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Fence and gate installation would result in small, localized soil disturbance from the installation of fence posts and gate posts. If project activities include excavations resulting in larger spoils piles, the applicant would be responsible for management and disposal of any excess soil generated from the project. Excess soil would not be placed elsewhere on BPA property without BPA approval. The proposed action would not impact geology.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no documented occurrences of any special-status plant species in the project site, and no suitable special-status species habitat is present. The proposed action would result in small, localized areas of disturbance to grasses, weeds, and forbs from fence post and gate installation.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Minor and temporary wildlife disturbance could occur from fence and gate installation noise during the day. Wildlife would access the adjacent habitat during disturbance and would return upon completion. There are no documented occurrences of any special-status wildlife species near the project site, and no suitable special-status species habitat is present.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No water bodies, floodplains, or fish-bearing streams are present within or near the project area. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact water bodies and floodplains and would have no effect on fish species or habitats.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands are present within or near the project site. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Excavation for fence and gate posts would not reach depths that would intersect groundwater. No new wells or other uses of groundwater or aquifers are proposed. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would be consistent with current land use. The project site is located entirely within a designated Urban Area of the CRGNSA; therefore, the project would be exempt from the CRGNSA Management Plan.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: During implementation, the presence of equipment and general installation activities would cause temporary visual impacts. The proposed fence would be consistent with the existing fence in the ROW and visual quality of the area.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would result in a minor and temporary increase in dust and emissions in the local area during fence installation. There would be no long-term change in air quality following completion of the proposed action.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance:

Explanation: The proposed action could temporarily and intermittently produce noise at levels greater than current ambient conditions. Noise impacts would be temporary and would only occur during daylight hours (approximately 7 AM to 7 PM). There would be no long-term change in ambient noise following completion of the project.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed project would not be expected to impact human health and safety. The Applicant shall be responsible for and comply with all procedural and substantive environmental requirements imposed by local, state, or federal laws and regulations applicable to the 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: All proposed work would occur on BPA fee-owned property. No 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: JEREMY DOSCHKA

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