

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Lynch Creek Counterpoise Installation

Project Manager: Scott Nosal, TELC-TPP-3

Location: Pierce County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.3: Routine maintenance

Description of the Proposed Action: To improve safety, the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to install grounding conductor and ground rods to 60 feet deep adjacent to the Lynch Creek Tap within the existing access road. The location of the project is listed in the table below.

Facility	Township	Range	Section	Land Use
Lynch Creek Tap	16N	4E	20	Forested

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, July 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/ Phil Smith for
Greg Tippetts EPR/Olympia
Ross District Environmental Scientist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel
Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: July 25, 2017

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.

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Project Site Description

All work would be done in existing managed rights-of-way located on private timber managed land.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. Historic and Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> All work will occur within the previously disturbed access to the tap location. No resources were identified in the vicinity of the proposed work areas. If resources are discovered during construction activities, work would cease and the appropriate archaeological resource staff (BPA and WA DAHP) would be contacted.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Sites would be stabilized upon completion of project activities. Where appropriate, storm water BMPs would be used during the project to protect the surrounding area from runoff and erosion issues.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Work would occur in areas maintained as access road within the open transmission line corridor; no vegetation would be removed and no special-status species are present.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Work would occur in areas maintained as access road within open transmission line corridor with little wildlife habitat; no mapped special-status species are known to be present.</p>		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> None of the proposed sites are located directly adjacent to any rivers, lakes, wetlands, or other water resources. Where appropriate, storm water BMPs would be used during the project to protect the surrounding areas from runoff and erosion issues. Sites would be stabilized upon completion of project activities. No in-water work is authorized for any of the project sites. No FEMA-mapped floodplains are mapped within the project site.</p>		

6. **Wetlands**
Explanation: None of the proposed sites are located within, directly adjacent to, the influence of any wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**
Explanation: Project activities do not have the potential to impact groundwater or aquifers, including public and private water wells or springs. In the unlikely event of a spill, all spills would be addressed immediately and follow BPA protocol for cleanup and regulatory notifications.

8. **Land Use and Specially Designated Areas**
Explanation: The project locations are confined to the existing transmission line ROW corridors. Surrounding land uses include BPA ROW and private timber property. Project locations do not include any specially designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**
Explanation: Proposed action at existing facilities would not alter or effect visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**
Explanation: The project has a short duration and involves normal construction equipment activities. A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions is expected due to construction.

11. **Noise**
Explanation: The majority of the project sites are located away from any populated areas and places of high residential use. Noise disturbance would be limited to general construction equipment activities, would be for a short duration, and would occur during daylight hours.

12. **Human Health and Safety**
Explanation: No known hazardous conditions are known. Completion of this project would increase system stability and reliability to the service area.

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, if necessary:

- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment

facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation, if necessary:

- 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, if necessary:

- 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, if necessary:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: Notifications via mailed letters will be sent to all current landowners approximately 3-8 weeks prior to project initiation. The letters provide contact information for BPA to allow feedback from landowners concerning the proposed work.

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

Signed: /s/ Philip Smith for
Greg Tippetts KEPR/Olympia
Olympia District Environmental Scientist

Date: July 25, 2017