

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Rockdale Radio Site Access Road Maintenance

**PP&A No.:** 3620

**Project Manager:** Richard Ross – (CONTR) – TELF-TPP-3

**Location:** King County, WA

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

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to perform routine maintenance activities on the access road serving the right-of-way of the Rockdale Radio Site. The proposed work is necessary to preserve and repair the existing road, maintain roadway safety, and manage storm water run-off. The work would include the following:

- 3,551 lineal ft of roadway improvement (gravel road improvement);
- 5 water bars;
- 3 drain dips;
- 1 “V” ditch

The projects would include reshaping, grading, and compacting existing road surface as well as hauling, placing, and shaping of crushed rock. The above described road maintenance activities are proposed for construction in October 2018.

**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/ Jonnel Deacon*

Jonnel Deacon

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

*/s/ Stacy L. Mason*

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: *April 6, 2018*

Attachment(s):

Environmental Checklist

Mitigation Implementation Table

Mitigation Implementation Table Map

## 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 proposed project is located in rural King County, WA along Interstate 90, approximately 2.5-miles southwest of the Snoqualmie Pass summit (Township: 22N, Range 11E, Section 18). The access roads are located on BPA fee-owned land. The surrounding area is largely second-growth conifer forests with steep hillslopes. The approximate site elevation is 2200'-2360' above sea level.

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. <b>Historic and Cultural Resources</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> A cultural resources survey and Section 106 consultation were completed for the project APE. Background research indicated that two previous archaeological surveys had been conducted. No previously recorded cultural resources were identified within the project APE. BPA has determined that the implementation of the proposed undertaking will result in no effect to historic properties. Washington DAHP agreed with a no effects determination from a survey report; on 09/05/17, Log No.: 2017-05-03690-BPA. If resources are discovered during construction activities, work would cease and the appropriate archaeological resources (BPA and WA DAHP) would be contacted.</p>		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The project would require some ground disturbing activities for roadway improvements, but would be generally limited to the existing road prism. No prime or unique farmlands would be affected. Appropriate erosion control measures would be implemented as necessary. Install erosion control Best Management Practices (BMPs) such as silt fence or straw wattles along Access Roads 003-001, 003-002, and within 100 feet of Rockdale Creek along Access Road 003-003. Utilize BMPs along remaining portion of Access Road 003-003 and 003-004 as needed. Remove excess side castings or utilize in other areas of project. Do not leave on site. See mitigation implementation table (MIT) and MIT map for more details.</p>		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No trees have been identified for removal and there are no known federal/special status plants within the project area. The whitebark pine is a candidate species that is known or believed to occur in King County, WA, although no critical habitat has been identified. Again, no trees have been identified for removal, but if this changes, efforts will be made to minimize the removal of any whitebark pine trees. Disturbed areas would be reseeded as necessary.</p>		

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



Explanation: An official federally-listed species list was requested from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Information, Planning and Conservation database (IPaC) on March 1, 2017 and an updated species list was requested on March 1, 2018. The IPaC list included the marbled murrelet, northern spotted owl, yellow-billed cuckoo, Canada lynx, gray wolf, and North American wolverine. No critical habitat for any of these species is located within the project area. Northern spotted owl critical habitat is located approximately 0.08 miles away from the project. A nest was observed in 2003 approximately 1.16 miles away. However, in recent years, logging between the nest site and the project site has removed any suitable habitat for the northern spotted owl, within designated critical habitat as well as adjacent to the project area. Marbled murrelet critical habitat is located 0.16 miles away from the project that is considered suitable habitat. Because this habitat is located less than 0.25 miles from the project, work will occur after the nesting season (April 1-September 23).

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



Explanation: No in water work is proposed. Rockdale Creek does flow through the project area, although flows in late September should be minimal. Rockdale Creek flows into the South Fork of the Snoqualmie River. A query of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's SalmonScape on March 1, 2017 indicated that both Rock Creek and the South Fork of the Snoqualmie River are not anadromous fish streams. Bull trout are also not found in either water body. Appropriate erosion control measures would be implemented as necessary. Install erosion control Best Management Practices (BMPs) such as silt fence or straw waddles along Access Roads 003-001, 003-002, and within 100 feet of Rockdale Creek along Access Road 003-003. Utilize BMPs along remaining portion of Access Road 003-003 and 003-004 as needed. Remove excess side castings or utilize in other areas of project. Do not leave on site.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: A query of the National Wetlands Inventory on March 1, 2017 indicated that no wetlands are present within the project area. The nearest wetland is approximately 0.55 miles uphill from the project area and very difficult to access. No work would occur in or near the wetland.

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. Any 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 within existing transmission line rights-of-way and would not change existing land uses. Project locations do not include any specially designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: There would be no change to the visual quality as a result of the proposed road maintenance.

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 project is located adjacent to Interstate 90 and away from any populated areas and places of residence. 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 as well as correct the current impairment.

### **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:

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### **Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description: Land ownership within the project limits is privately held. BPA purchased an access road easement from the landowner that includes maintenance and repair activities. The access Road Engineer would contact adjacent and potentially affected landowners prior to the start of the project.

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

Signed: /s/ Jonnel Deacon  
Jonnel Deacon – EPR-4  
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: April 6, 2018