

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Hampton Butte Radio Site Access Road Maintenance

Project No.: PP&A 3862

Project Manager: Randall Browning Or Darin Bowman, Access Road Engineer – TFLF-TPP-3

Location: Deschutes County, Oregon

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 7,200 linear feet of routine road maintenance, repair and improvements for access to Hampton Butte Radio Site. The proposed work is necessary to maintain or repair existing infrastructure and roadway safety. The proposed project includes the following features:

The work would involve laying gravel, cleaning six culverts, and cleaning and repairing approximately 100 linear feet of existing roadside ditches. No in-water work would be conducted. The above described road maintenance activities are proposed to be conducted during 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/ John Wiley

John Wiley

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: April 13, 2018

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.

Proposed Action: Hampton Butte Radio Site, Redmond District, Access Road Maintenance Project

Project Site Description

A site evaluation was conducted by an Otak Inc. biologist on August 2, 2016 to evaluate site conditions and the surrounding environment. The proposed project is located near the community of Hampton in rural Deschutes County, OR. Land ownership within the project area includes Bureau of Land Management (BLM) property, State-owned, and privately held lands. Land use within the project vicinity includes agriculture (pivot irrigation), cattle grazing, and open space. The approximate site elevation is between 5,700 and 6,343 feet above sea level. The project is located in high desert Western juniper and sagebrush habitat.

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"/>

Explanation:

Explanation: A pedestrian archaeological survey of the work area was conducted on October 18, 2017 by Heritage Research Associates, Inc. No surface evidence of prehistoric or demonstrably historical cultural materials was found. OR SHPO concurred with BPA's no adverse effect determination on 4/9/18. The Yakama Nation, Umatilla, and Nez Pierce Tribes were consulted and did not provide responses.

In the event that archaeological or historical materials are discovered during project activities, work in the immediate vicinity would stop, the area would be secured, and the SHPO and the environmental project lead will be notified.

2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Explanation:

The project includes laying gravel on an existing road prism cleaning culverts, and cleaning and repairing existing roadside ditches to improve roadway drainage. The proposed roadway improvements would likely conserve soil resources by reducing ponding and soil erosion within the roadway. The water bars or drain dips would not connect to other aquatic resources. No prime or unique farmlands would be affected. Therefore, the proposed action would have limited impacts to geology and soils.

3. **Plants** (including federal/state special-status species)



Explanation:

The project is located in high desert Western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*) and sagebrush (*Artemesia* spp.) habitat. Plants occurring within the existing roadway are largely absent. Federal and state special status plant species that have the potential to occur in the high desert environment were not observed in the road project area or in the immediate vicinity due to lack of suitable habitat. No trees or woody vegetation would be removed as a result of the project. A Letter of No Effect has been completed to document compliance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and has been submitted under separate cover to BPA. Therefore, the proposed action would have no effect on special-status plant species and limited impacts to other native and non-native vegetation.

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



Explanation:

No suitable habitat for special-status wildlife species was found to occur within the project area. An official federally-listed species list was requested from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Information, Planning and Conservation database (IPaC) on July 25, 2016. No federally-listed or proposed listed species or their designated critical habitats under jurisdiction of the USFWS or NMFS have been documented to occur within 2 miles of the proposed project limits. Therefore, the project would have no impact to special-status wildlife species. See the ESA Letter of No Effect for this project for further details. The proposed project actions would mainly occur within the existing road prism; therefore, any impacts to non-listed wildlife species would be temporary in nature and limited to the construction window. Therefore, the project would have no impacts to federally-listed wildlife or other wildlife species.

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



Explanation:

There are no waterbodies or floodplains present within the proposed work area. Lizard Creek is mapped along the approach road to the project area, but no watercourse is present in the 7,200 linear foot project area. The existing culverts and roadside ditches were installed in uplands to convey stormwater during precipitation events. The culverts convey stormwater underneath the road prism, and discharge to uplands on steep slopes down gradient of the road. No impacts to watercourses, floodplains, or fish are expected to result from the proposed project.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation:

No wetlands are present in the project area or within at least 100-feet to either side of the existing road. No wetlands would be impacted by the proposed project.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation:

Groundwater and aquifers would not be impacted by the proposed project as the project does not include any groundwater withdraws or aquifer recharge areas.

8. **Land Use and Specially Designated Areas**



Explanation:

No change in land use is proposed as part of the project. No specially designated areas were identified within the project limits. The project would not result in changes or impacts to land use or specially designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation:

There are limited residences within visual range of the work limits. The proposed project feature is consistent with existing roads. There would be no impacts to visual resources.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation:

The proposed project is expected to reduce dust generation and improve air quality along the rural access road by covering exposed soils with a gravel surface layer. Minor vehicle emissions during construction would be temporary in duration.

11. **Noise**



Explanation:

Temporary construction noise during daylight hours is expected. Construction is expected to last less than four weeks. The current level of road use is not expected to change and no operational noise increases are expected.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation:

The project would develop a site-specific health and safety plan to address any hazards during the proposed work. The proposed work is necessary to ensure ongoing safe and reliable operation of the transmission line and to maintain power delivery in the region. Project activities would not impact human health or safety.

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

The Access Road Engineer would contact adjacent and potentially affected landowners prior to project construction.

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

Signed: /s/ John Wiley
John Wiley EP-4
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: April 13, 2018