

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: FY21 Tacoma-Raver Access Road Improvement Project

PP&A No.: 4634

Project Manager: Justin Rinauro – TELF-TPP-3

Location: King and Pierce Counties, Washington

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

Description of the Proposed Action: The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) plans to perform road maintenance to improve approximately 5,275 linear feet, and to construct approximately 400 linear feet, of access roads for the Tacoma-Raver No. 1 and No. 2 transmission lines between miles 1 and 4 in King and Pierce Counties, Washington.

Access road work would include: performing minor blading, shaping, grading and adding rock (improvements) to approx. 5,275 feet of existing serviceable access and structure spur roads and constructing approx. 400 feet of new road; and adding one landing. General equipment used for this type of project includes graders, rollers, excavators, and dump trucks.

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, Jul. 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/ Chad Browning
Chad Browning
Environmental Scientist

Concur:

/s/ Katey C. Grange
Katey C. Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: April 14, 2021

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

Proposed maintenance activities are located within access roads and transmission line right-of-way for the Tacoma-Raver Nos. 1 and 2 transmission lines, between miles 1 and 4, east of Tacoma, WA. Elevation (above mean sea level) within the project area ranges from approximately 70 to 410 feet. The project area is privately owned land with BPA ROW easements for transmission lines and access roads. Land use in the surrounding area includes urban and rural development.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: The project area was surveyed by a BPA archaeologist and reviewed by Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). No cultural resources were identified during the survey. DAHP concurred with BPA's no adverse effect to historic properties determination on July 15, 2020.

In the event any archaeological material is encountered during project activities, stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead, archaeologist, and project manager; interested tribes; DAHP; and the appropriate local, state and Federal agencies. Implement reasonable measures to protect the discovery site, including any appropriate stabilization or covering. Take reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the discovery site, including restricting access.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: Access road construction would disturb approximately 5,675 linear feet at a width of 16 feet. BMPs would be used to prevent erosion and disturbed areas would be reseeded. No prime or unique farmlands would be affected.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Vegetation removal would be limited to those within the immediate road bed. No Federal or state special-status plant species are recorded in the project area. Any

disturbed areas outside the road bed would be reseeded. Vehicles and equipment would be washed prior to entry into project area to prevent the spread of invasive plant species.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The area provides minimal wildlife habitat. No Federal or state special-status wildlife species or habitats are recorded in the project area.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: No in-water work is proposed for this project; and the nearest water bodies containing populations of bull trout or anadromous fish, or their critical habitat is more than 0.15 mile from the proposed project area.

Additionally, construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be implemented throughout the project to ensure localized soil disturbance does not cause sedimentation issues for any waterway.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No work would be conducted in wetland areas.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed work is not anticipated to impact groundwater.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No change in land use and no specially designated areas identified.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The new access roads would maintain a historical route of access. No significant vegetation clearing would be required.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Any fugitive dust or similar air quality impacts during project implementation are expected to be temporary and minimal.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Construction noise from typical utility line equipment would be temporary and localized.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project activities would not impact human health or safety. In fact, the proposed action would help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region.

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: Notification letters would be sent by the BPA Realty Specialist to all landowners prior to work.

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

Signed: /s/ Chad Browning
Chad Browning, EPR-Covington
Environmental Scientist

Date: April 14, 2021