

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: City of Hillsboro Bendemeer Sanitary Sewer Upgrade

Project No.: LURR-20230082

Project Manager: Billie Woodman, TERR-ROSS MHQA

Location: Washington County, Oregon

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 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 grant the City of Hillsboro Public Works Department (the City) a temporary construction easement on BPA fee-owned property between structures 2/4 and 2/5 on the Keeler-Alston No. 1 transmission line in Hillsboro, Washington County, Oregon. The City is proposing to upgrade the existing Bendemeer sanitary sewer line, a portion of which is located on BPA fee-owned property within the City's existing easement (BPA Case No. 19890150). The new temporary construction easement would grant the City the right to access the project site with vehicles and equipment (e.g., tractor, excavator, dump truck, pipe bursting equipment, and pipe fusing equipment) and to stage equipment and materials (e.g., pipe segments and manholes) for the duration of the sewer line upgrade. The City could clear some common, low-growing shrubs, grasses, forbs, and weeds and could lay down temporary gravel to provide suitable access and staging areas, if required. If gravel is used, then the City would be responsible for removing it following completion of the project. The proposed action could temporarily disturb up to approximately 2 acres. All temporarily disturbed areas would be reseeded with native, regionally appropriate seed mix, or as agreed upon with other easement holders.

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/ Walker Stinnette
Walker Stinnette
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel September 26, 2023
Sarah T. Biegel Date
NEPA Compliance Officer

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: City of Hillsboro Bendemeer Sanitary Sewer Upgrade

Project Site Description

The project site is located on BPA fee-owned property between structures 2/4 and 2/5 on the Keeler-Allston No. 1 transmission line in Hillsboro, Washington County, Oregon (Township 1 North, Range 2 West, Section 22). The temporary construction easement would encompass an approximately 2-acre area that largely consists of existing gravel access roads and agricultural fields of cultivated fescue. An unnamed tributary of Waible Creek that has been artificially channelized flows east-west through the property. In addition to common low-growing grasses, forbs, and weeds, hedges of blackberry (*Rubus sp.*) with poplar (*Populus sp.*), ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), and western redcedar (*Thuja plicata*) grow at the margins of the fields and thickets of blackberry grow along the banks of the tributary. Soil series mapped within the temporary construction easement include Willamette and Woodburn as well as hydric soils, including Dayton, Verboort, and Waldo. A portion of the temporary construction easement is within a floodplain and palustrine emergent and palustrine scrub-shrub wetlands associated with the tributary. Commercial and industrial properties immediately surround the property to the east and the west.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: On behalf of the City, Archaeological Investigations Northwest, Inc. (AINW) conducted background research using the Oregon Archaeological Records Remote Access database followed by a pedestrian field survey of the Area of Potential Effects (APE). A report prepared by AINW and provided to BPA identified a single historic resource determined minimally eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP): the Keeler-Allston No. 1 transmission line. However, the proposed undertaking would not alter the integrity or eligibility of the historic transmission line. The AINW report identified no other historic or cultural resources eligible for inclusion in the NRHP within the APE. Therefore, on June 21, 2023, BPA simultaneously determined that the proposed undertaking would result in no historic properties affected (BPA CR Project No.: OR 2023 036) and initiated National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 consultation with Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (Oregon SHPO). The AINW report was provided to the consulting parties. Concurrence was received from Oregon SHPO on July 21, 2023. No other comments were received.

Notes:

- A Post Review Discovery Procedure form with contact information for the BPA cultural resources lead would be supplied to the construction contractor prior to commencing construction work. Should any cultural resources be discovered during project activities,

then all project work must stop in the area, and the cultural resources lead should be notified immediately.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would result in soil disturbance associated with access and staging, including minor soil compaction and rutting from vehicle and equipment use and gravelling access roads and/or staging areas, if required. All ground disturbance would occur within an area no greater than approximately 2 acres that is routinely disturbed through agricultural practices. Temporarily disturbed soils would stabilize as vegetation is reestablished and would eventually return to pre-existing conditions following completion of the proposed action. Standard construction best management practices (BMPs) would be implemented to minimize soil erosion, sedimentation, and fugitive dust. The proposed action would not impact geology.

Notes:

- Reseed disturbed areas during the appropriate time period for germination with a native, regionally-appropriate seed mix, or as agreed upon with other impacted easement holders.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would crush, strip, or bury low-growing common grasses, forbs, shrubs, and weeds as well as cultivated fescue. Disturbed areas would be reseeded with a native seed mix, or according to the preference of other easement holders in the project area. No tree removal would be authorized. The project site would eventually return to pre-existing conditions following completion of the proposed action. There are no documented occurrences of any special-status plant species near the project site, and no suitable special-status species habitat is present.

Notes:

- Reseed disturbed areas during the appropriate time period for germination with a native, regionally-appropriate seed mix, or as agreed upon with other impacted easement holders.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Minor and temporary disturbance of normal wildlife behavior and wildlife displacement could occur from elevated noise and human presence during construction. However, there would be no permanent impacts to wildlife habitat, and temporarily disturbed or displaced wildlife would likely reoccupy the site following completion of the proposed action. 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: An unnamed tributary of Waible Creek that has been artificially channelized flows through the ROW between the two agricultural fields. A portion of the proposed temporary construction easement is within a floodplain associated with the tributary. No in-water activities would occur, and standard construction BMPs would prevent indirect impacts to the tributary. Per the City of Hillsboro Municipal Code (12.27.120[A4]), the proposed action

within the floodplain would not require the approval of a permit. There are no documented occurrences of any special-status fish species near the project site, and no suitable special-status fish habitat is present.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: Palustrine emergent and palustrine scrub-shrub wetlands are present within the temporary construction easement and could be temporarily impacted by vegetation disturbance and graveling associated with access and staging. The City confirmed with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that the proposed action would be covered by Nationwide Permit 58 – Utility Line Activities for Water and Other Substances. In addition, the City has acquired a Removal-Fill Permit from the Oregon Department of State Lands (Permit No.: 64166-RF). The City would be responsible for implementing standard construction BMPs as well as all terms and conditions specifically outlined in permit documentation to minimize and/or mitigate wetlands impacts. The proposed action would not permanently impact wetlands.

Notes:

- Comply with all terms and conditions set forth in local, state, and Federal permit documents.
- Reseed disturbed areas during the appropriate time period for germination with a native, regionally-appropriate seed mix, or as agreed upon with other impacted easement holders.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Ground disturbance is unlikely to reach depths to groundwater and 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 with Conditions

Explanation: The proposed action could temporarily impact agricultural land uses within the temporary construction easement due to blocked access and/or crop damage, and surrounding commercial and industrial land uses could be temporarily impacted due to construction noise. However, there would be no permanent land use impacts following completion of the proposed action. The project site is not located in a specially-designated area.

Notes:

- Coordinate construction activities with other entities who retain agricultural easement rights within the project area to minimize impacts to current land use activities.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The presence of vehicles and equipment and general construction activities, including vegetation disturbance and graveling associated with access and staging, would cause temporary visual impacts. Temporarily disturbed areas would be returned to a state that is the same or similar to current conditions. There would be no permanent change in visual quality.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would produce minor and temporary dust and vehicle emissions in the local area. There would be no long-term change in air quality following completion of the proposed action.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would produce intermittent and temporary construction-related noise at levels greater than current ambient conditions, which could be audible from nearby commercial and industrial properties. 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 proposed action.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would not generate or use hazardous materials and would not create conditions that would increase risk to human health and safety. Therefore, no impacts to human health and safety are expected as a result of the proposed action.

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: The proposed action would occur on BPA fee-owned property. BPA and/or the City would notify, involve, and coordinate with all other entities who retain easement rights within the project area.

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

Signed: /s/ Walker Stinnette September 26, 2023
Walker Stinnette Date
Environmental Protection Specialist