

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** St. Johns-St. Helens Transmission Line Access Road Improvements

**PP&A Project No.:** 3201

**Project Manager:** Jonathan Fulton – Civil Design – TELF-TPP-3

**Location:** Located in Multnomah County, Oregon; Longview District

Transmission Line/ROW	Structure #	Township	Range	Section	County, State	Ownership
St. Johns-St. Helens No. 1	4/8	2N	1W	28	Multnomah, OR	Private
	9/1-9/8	2N	2W	1		
	10/1-10/3	3N	2W	36		

**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 road maintenance along BPA's St. Johns-St. Helens No. 1 to Structures 4/8, 9/1-10/3.

BPA proposes to perform routine road maintenance including grading, and shaping of roads, placing and compacting of rock surfacing, installation and maintenance of erosion control and water drainage features, and restoration of disturbed areas along existing access roads, both on and off the rights-of-way (ROW). The work involves approximately 1.3 miles of road improvement work on roads leading to structures and along the subject transmission line ROW and the reconditioning of one structure landing.

The roadwork is needed to improve access for crews that will be maintaining the transmission line and towers within the transmission line corridors. All proposed work will occur within the existing road prisms and will not result in disturbance outside of previously disturbed roadbeds. No unauthorized construction activities will occur in any water body including streams, ponds, wetlands, etc. The project includes but is not limited to:

- Reshaping, grading and compacting existing road surfaces, turnouts, and landings
- Hauling, placing, and shaping of crushed rock
- Constructing or reconditioning of water bars, drain dips and outlet ditches
- Cleaning and/or replacing cross drain culverts

General equipment used for this type of project includes: graders, rollers, excavators, and dump trucks.

The proposed action would allow safe and timely access to the transmission lines, which would help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region. All work would be done in accordance with the National Electric Safety Code and BPA standards.

**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/ Kevin George*

Kevin George

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

*/s/ Stacy L. Mason*

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: *June 23, 2015*

Attachment(s):

Environmental Checklist

Effects Determination for T&E Species

## 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 project work would take place in the existing BPA access road and right-of-way corridor. The access roads and corridor are on moderate to steep and rocky hills on private property that is forested.

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

	Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
<p><b>1. Historic and Cultural Resources</b></p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> According to the scope of the proposed work, the activity is not a type that would result in changes in the character or use of historic properties, if any such historic properties are located in the area of potential effects. The proposed action is considered to be routine access road maintenance necessary to preserve existing infrastructure, maintain roadway safety, and manage stormwater run-off and will be limited to maintenance on an existing access road cut and prism and structure footprints in the cleared transmission line ROW.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inadvertent discovery form should be provided and explained to the road contractor. The contractor is to limit maintenance activities and equipment to the existing roadway, pullouts, and landings. In the event that archaeological or historic materials are discovered during project activities, work in the immediate vicinity must stop, the area will be secured and the SHPO and the environmental project lead must be notified.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>2. Geology and Soils</b></p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> Material and equipment staging areas will be located on existing roads, structure landings, and turnarounds. Equipment is to be restricted to the existing road prisms, road fills, and structure landings. Excess soils are to be collected, deposited, and stabilized in upland areas approved by PP&amp;A. As applicable, schedule work to occur when dry. Utilize BMPs to control erosion and run-off.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>3. Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> This project requires no tree or vegetation clearing. All construction equipment will be thoroughly cleaned prior to coming onto project sites to remove weed seeds, vegetative matter, soils, oil and greases. No suitable habitat is present within the project area for listed plant species.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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



Explanation: No suitable habitat is present within the project area for listed wildlife species.

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



Explanation: This project requires no tree or vegetation removal, nor any new roads or landings. Where determined to be necessary, utilize erosion control BMPs. This project crosses several non-fish bearing seasonal streams. Perform culvert replacements when dry or utilize proper site dewatering methods. Provide adequately stocked oil spill response kits in all construction equipment. No work will be taking place in or adjacent to McCarthy Creek.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No wetlands were identified in work areas.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: All work takes place within a few feet of the ground surface. Spill prevention measures would be present on site during construction. Project would not result in any ground water withdrawals nor provide a pathway for groundwater contamination.

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



Explanation: No change in land use and no specially designated areas identified. Limit equipment and material staging to existing access road prisms, fills, pull-outs, and structure landings.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The project involves maintenance of an existing road and will not significantly alter or effect visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Any fugitive dust or similar during project implementation is expected to be temporary and insignificant. Utilize dust prevention measures to limit dust impacting adjacent residences.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Construction noise will be temporary and localized. Equipment not to be left idling or unattended near residences.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: A Site Specific Safety Plan will be prepared for this project.

### **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: Landowners will be contacted by the contractor prior to construction.

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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/Kevin George

Kevin George

Environmental Protection Specialist

Date: June 23, 2015