

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Orchard Tree Planting within North Bonneville-Ross No. 1 Transmission Line Corridor

LURR No: 20150270

Project Manager: Dawneen Dostert – TERR-3

Location: Clark County, WA

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) is proposing to allow an adjacent private landowner to plant dwarf fruit trees on the BPA fee-owned right-of-way (ROW) of the North Bonneville-Ross No. 1 and North Bonneville-Troutdale No. 1 transmission line. The private landowner holds an existing agricultural easement which allows lawn mowing, fence installation, cattle grazing, and a garden, as well as, ingress and egress and underground utilities.

The dwarf fruit trees would be planted around the perimeter of the ROW and would be maintained at a height that would not interrupt with transmission line operations.

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/ Elizabeth Siping

Elizabeth Siping
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
David Evans and Associates, Inc.

Reviewed by:

/s/ Gene Lynard

Gene Lynard

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Date: December 4, 2015

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment: 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

The site is located on BPA fee-owned ROW on 380th Avenue in Washougal, Washington. The site is within the North Bonneville-Ross No. and North Bonneville-Troutdale No. 1 transmission line corridor on line mile 17. It is vegetated with grasses and shrubs. The project vicinity is rural with sparse residences.

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"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> BPA determined that this project would have no adverse effect on historic properties. Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) concurred with the no adverse effect determination on October 26, 2015. The Cowlitz Indian Tribe and Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation were consulted; however, no response was received.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u></p> <p>In the event any archaeological material is encountered on BPA ROW, the following actions should be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead, a BPA archaeologist, appropriate BPA project staff, interested Tribes, Washington DAHP and the appropriate federal, state, and local 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Planting of dwarf trees would impact a minimal amount of soil.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No federally listed or state special status plant species were documented or observed on the site.</p>		

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



Explanation: Planting of dwarf trees would have minimal impacts to wildlife.

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



Explanation: There is an intermittent stream running through the ROW, which is an unnamed tributary to the Washougal River. The applicant has agreed to avoid this area.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: Wetlands are likely present near the stream. The applicant has agreed to avoid this area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No new wells or use of groundwater proposed.

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



Explanation: Planting trees would not significantly alter existing land use.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: Planting trees would not significantly alter the appearance of the area.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Small amount of dust and vehicle emissions anticipated during construction activities.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: No impact to noise levels.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No impact to human health and 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

Description: BPA is working with the private landowner requesting the tree planting.

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

Signed: /s/ Elizabeth Siping Date: December 4, 2015