

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Marion-Alvey Transmission Line Mile 1-43 Access Road Upgrade Project

PP&A No.: 2,666

Project Manager: Todd Wehner, (CONTR) - TEP-TPP-1

Location: Marin, Linn and Lane counties, Oregon

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

B1.3 Routine Maintenance

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA is proposing to improve approximately 35.3 miles of access road between miles 1 and 43 along the Marion-Alvey No. 1 500 kV transmission line that are in need of maintenance. In addition, approximately 1.31 acres of tower landings would also be constructed consisting of 66 graded and rocked areas of either 30x30 feet (ft) or 40x40 ft located ahead on line and back on line of existing transmission towers where current access is difficult with standard line equipment. Project work includes but is not limited to; grading and shaping of roads, installation of geo-textile material, placing rock, compacting road surfacing, and installation and cleaning of drainage structures. This work is necessary to allow for proper and safe access to the transmission line.

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/ Laura Roberts

Laura Roberts

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: April 14, 2016

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

The project is located along the eastern boundary of the Willamette Valley and passes through a variety of environments including alluvial bottomlands and uplands composed of hills and ridgelines adjoining with foothills of the Western Cascades of Oregon. The main valleys crossed by the project area are primarily used for the production of hay or livestock grazing. Upland areas crossed by the project are typically managed as timber lands with some areas of Christmas tree farms and agricultural lands.

Township		Range		Section	County
9	S	1	E	9,16,21,28,33	Marion/Linn, OR
10	S	1	E	4,5,7,8,18,19,30,31	Linn, OR
10	S	1	W	36	Linn, OR
11	S	1	W	1,12,13,24,25,36	Linn, OR
12	S	1	W	1,12,13,24-26,35	Linn, OR
13	S	1	W	2,10,11,15,21,27,28,34	Linn, OR
14	S	1	W	3,10,15,22,27,33,34	Linn, OR
15	S	1	W	4,9,16,21,28,29,32	Linn/Lane, OR

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"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Siletz Tribe and BLM did not respond to BPA's Letter of Determination that no historic properties would be affected by the project during the stipulated 30-day waiting period. Oregon SHPO did respond with concurrence; therefore, according to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR Part 800, BPA's consultation requirements have been fulfilled. Several sensitive sites would be avoided during the project.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Minimal soil disturbance; most areas would be rocky, and erosion control measures would be used.		

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

Explanation:

No special-status species present. Work is to be conducted in an existing transmission line right-of-way (ROW). Any un-rocked disturbed areas would be seeded with a geographic and climate appropriate seed mix.

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

Explanation:

No special-status species or designated habitat present. Work to be performed in existing road prism. An insignificant amount of habitat typical of the area would be disturbed when creating new landings.

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

Project would not be in a floodplain. Some work would occur in dry drainages that exhibit only ephemeral flow. Typical erosion control BMPs will be implemented and no riparian habitat will be affected.

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation:

None present.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation:

No new wells or use of groundwater proposed; maximum depth of disturbance would be about 2 feet; spill prevention measures would be present.

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

Explanation:

Existing land use would not be affected as work to be completed in existing ROW and would be consistent with the surrounding land use. No specially designated areas present.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation:

All work to be completed within the existing ROW and would not impact the visual quality of the surrounding environment.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation:

Temporary dust and vehicle emission due to construction.

11. **Noise**

Explanation:

Temporary noise due to construction equipment.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation:

The project 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

Description: The proposed project is located on private and BLM land. BPA would continue ongoing coordination with the landowners and land managers.

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

Signed: /s/ Laura Roberts

Laura Roberts

Environmental Protection Specialist

Date: April 14, 2016