

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Addy-Cusick No. 1 Mile 20 to 22 Access Road Reconstruction

PP&A No.: 3321

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

Location: Pend Oreille County, Washington

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

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to reconstruct transmission line access roads for the Addy-Cusick No. 1 transmission line from structure 20/3 to structure 22/1. The project is located in Township 33N, Range 42E, Sections 22, 23, 26 & 27, in Pend Oreille County, Washington. Road reconstruction is necessary due to the degradation of the roadways. Roads will be reconstructed in the existing roadway footprint. The work is required to ensure safe and timely response for maintenance vehicles to access the transmission line right of way to perform inspections, preventative maintenance and emergency response.

Road work will involve reconstructing approximately 2.4 miles of existing access roads which are located on and off the transmission line right-of-way. Two rock fords will also be constructed in the locations of plugged culverts to allow for surface run-off from waterways. Water bars and ditches will be constructed for overland water flow, and several gates will be installed at critical junctures to control access.

Access road reconstruction will be limited to the existing road prism. Road work will include but is not limited to:

- Brushing of overgrown vegetation.
- Blading, grading and compacting travel routes.
- Hauling, placing and compacting rock surfacing on travel routes.
- Constructing/reconstructing of water bars, fords, drain dips, culverts and drainage ditches.

General equipment for this project will involve a Cat, grader, roller, water truck, dump truck and excavator.

Erosion control measures for this project will include utilizing erosion control devices (i.e. silt fencing, straw bales, etc.) to minimize sedimentation of any nearby water resources during project activities and reseeding with a U.S. Forest Service approved seed mix to stabilize any disturbed vegetative areas.

The proposed action will allow safe and timely access to the transmission line, which will reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region. All work will be in accordance with the National Electrical 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/ Aaron C. Siemers

Aaron C. Siemers
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: *February 2, 2017*

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 Addy-Cusick No. 1 Mile 20 to 22 Road Reconstruction & Ford Construction Project is located in the following Township, Range, Sections listed below within Pend Oreille County, Washington. The project area is located in sloped, upland areas within the Colville National Forest.

Township		Range		Sections
33	N	42	E	22,23,27 & 26

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
<p>1. Historic and Cultural Resources</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> A Cultural Resources Survey of the area of potential effect was initiated and completed in November of 2014 by EthnoTech. The survey found no cultural resources in the project area, and recommended that the proposed project proceed in compliance with Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act. In a letter dated 3/3/2015, the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation concurred with BPA that the project would have no effect on historic and cultural resources. Idaho Panhandle National Forests, Kalispel Tribe, and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation 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. Therefore, according to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR Part 800, BPA’s consultation requirements have been fulfilled.</p>		
<p>2. Geology and Soils</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Soil disturbance would be within existing roadways. All appropriate erosion and sedimentation control measures will be used during construction.</p>		
<p>3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> There are no special-status species present in the project area and no vegetation removal is required. Work is to be conducted near an existing transmission line right-of-way (ROW) on existing BPA and Forest Service access roads. Any un-rocked disturbed areas would be seeded with a geographic and climate appropriate seed mix.</p>		
<p>4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species or designated habitat will be significantly impacted. Work to be performed in existing road prism, so no new habitat typical of the area will be disturbed. The would no effect to ESA-listed species in the area.</p>		

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

Explanation: The project is located in an upland alpine environment and not located in a floodplain. Ford construction would occur in two small waterways. The upper ford location (FO 1) is usually dry in summer months, and the lower ford location (FO 2) is located in a relatively small intermittent to perennial waterway. No fish or special status species are found in the waterways. All construction activities will be conducted during the in-water-work window between July 1st and August 31st. Typical erosion control BMPs will be implemented to minimize sedimentation into the waterways. If flow is present during construction, the work area will be isolated with sand bag dams, and flow will be diverted around the work area, maintaining downstream flows at all times. Some riparian habitat will be affected immediately adjacent to the lower ford location (FO 2) to stabilize the banks of the waterway as it approaches the ford crossing. Mitigation measures include placing native streambed cobbles over downstream energy-dispersive rip-rap to mimic a natural riparian environment.

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: A wetland is present in the lower ford location at FO 2 in the access road footprint. The wetland has formed due to the presence of a plugged culvert and the intersection of the access roadway with the local gradient, creating a near-surface groundwater seep on the up-gradient side of the mountain. Historic photos suggest that the wetland is not naturally occurring in that area. A wetland survey and functional assessment was conducted and the wetland is a category III wetland with low water quality and flood storage functions. The wetland covers 0.087 acres. In accordance with the Clean Water Act, Bonneville Power Administration submitted a Joint Application to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and has been authorized to rebuild the access roadway within the wetland. Wetland impacts total 0.07 acres, and the Army Corps of Engineers has determined that compensatory mitigation will not be required. Mitigation measures include erosion and sediment control BMPs, the addition of native streambed cobbles into the FO 2 design to provide habitat for amphibians, macroinvertebrates, and other wildlife, and reduced erosion and sedimentation when the road is utilized by vehicular traffic in the future.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: No new wells or use of ground water is proposed. The maximum depth of disturbance will be about 2 feet. Spill prevention measures will be present.

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

Explanation: Existing land use will not be affected as the work will be completed in existing access road prism. There are no specially designated areas present.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: The work will be completed within the existing access road prism and will not impact the visual quality of the surrounding environment. There will be no significant impacts on visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: Some temporary dust and vehicle emissions due to construction will occur but there will be no significant impacts.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: Temporary noise due to road reconstruction will occur but there will be no significant impacts.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: The project will 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: Not applicable to the project area or scope of the project.

- 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: Not applicable to the scope of the project.

- 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: Not applicable to the project area or scope of the project.

- 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: Not applicable to the project area or scope of the project. Typical weed control BMPs will be utilized to minimize the spread of noxious weeds and invasive species.

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: The proposed project is located on Federal Forest Service land and private forested land. BPA will continue ongoing coordination with the landowners.

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

Signed: /s/ Aaron C. Siemers
Aaron C. Siemers, EPR-4
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: February 2, 2017