

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Chief Joseph-Sickler No. 1 mile 45 access road improvement

PP&A Proj. #: 3791

Project Manager: Robert Zeller

Location: Douglas County, Washington

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 1.5 miles of access road from structures 45/3 to 45/5 of the Chief Joseph-Sickler No. 1 transmission line. The road has deep ruts from washouts and is a safety issue. Work on the access road will include blading and grading the road, and removal of sage brush that is growing over onto the road. All road work will be limited to the existing road prism and road width. The project is located in Township 24 North, Range 20 East, Section 36 in Douglas County, Washington.

The project will utilize erosion control devices (i.e. silt fencing, straw bales, etc.) as necessary to minimize sedimentation of any downstream water resources during project activities. Any vegetative areas disturbed during access road improvement activities will be reseeded with a BPA approve seed mix to stabilize the disturbed areas. Work in streams will not be required for this project.

The proposed project will allow safe and timely access to the transmission line corridor which will reduce outage times and maintain reliable power to 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/ Michael A. Rosales
Michael A. Rosales
Physical Scientist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason
Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: September 15, 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.

Proposed Action: Chief Joseph-Sickler No1 mile 45 access road improvement

Project Site Description

The project is located on private property in a rural, non-developed area of Douglas County, Washington. All proposed road improvements and repairs will be performed in the existing access road easement.

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> A cultural survey was performed at the proposed project location. Report findings indicated no historic properties affected by the undertaking. WA DAHP and the Colville Tribes concurred with BPA's No Historic Properties Affected determination on July 11, 2017.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Crews and equipment are to use existing access roads to and from the work site. Any access road maintenance performed will be limited to the existing road prism and road width. ▪ In the event that archaeological or historical materials are discovered during project activities, work in the immediate vicinity must stop, the area secured and the WA DAHP, BPA archaeologist, and the environmental project lead will be notified. 		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Ground disturbance will be limited to the existing road prism and road width.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMP's), if deemed necessary, will be implemented prior to any vegetation and ground disturbing activities. ▪ Any vegetative areas disturbed during access road improvement activities will be reseeded with a BPA approve seed mix to stabilize the disturbed areas. 		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No suitable habitat is present within the project area for listed plant species. This project requires minimal vegetation clearing which will be conducted within and adjacent to the access road easement.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clean and inspect all construction vehicles and equipment prior to entering and exiting the project site to prevent introduction of invasive weeds onsite. 		

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

Explanation: No federal/state special-status species are present in the project area.

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

Explanation: No instream work will be performed. No effect to aquatic species and/or habitat.

Mitigation:

- Erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMP's) will be implemented if deemed necessary prior to any vegetation and ground disturbing activities to protect any down stream water resources.

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: No wetlands were identified in the project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: No groundwater or aquifers will be affected by the proposed work.

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

Explanation: No change in land use.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: Visual quality will not be affected.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: Small amount of dust from vehicles will be temporary, existing air quality will not be affected.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: Construction noise will be intermittent, temporary and localized. There are no residences of other sensitive noise receptors in the immediate vicinity. Construction will be limited to daylight hours.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: Project activities will not affect 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: BPA Realty would perform landowner notifications and any concerns regarding the proposed transmission line maintenance activity would be addressed.

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

Signed: /s/ Michael A. Rosales
Michael A Rosales EPR-Bell-1

Date: September 15, 2017