

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** City of Centralia—Salzer Valley Tap (Update to previous categorical exclusion issued on July 06, 2017)

**Project No.:** L0394

**Project Manager:** Amanda Williams—TEP-TPP-1

**Location:** Lewis County, Washington

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B4.11 Electric power substations and interconnection facilities

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to approve the City of Centralia's line and load interconnection request to BPA's Chehalis-Centralia No. 1 69 kV line, north of Salzer Valley Road. The City of Centralia would add two taps near wood poles 9/10 and 9/11, on which BPA would install two line sectionalizing switches. To accommodate the new taps, BPA proposes to relocate wood pole 9/10 approximately 60-ft north, and wood pole 9/11 approximately 30-ft south of the existing locations. Land would be graded for the new structures and three new landings would be installed between, and near, the relocated structures. Approximately 3,745 cubic yards of soil would be cut and filled for this project.

In addition to the work described in the previous categorical exclusion, BPA would realign the existing access road to reduce the steep grade; therefore, easing vehicle access for heavy equipment. The access road would be a maximum of 50 feet from the existing road. It would be 10-feet wide and 200-feet long. To do this, approximately 20 small trees would be removed. The existing access road would be decommissioned and revegetated.

A small landing is needed at the top of the access road for heavy equipment. Another 15-20 small trees would be removed at this location to accommodate the landing.

The existing 12-inch culvert at the bottom of the project access road is in need of replacement prior to the commencement of construction. The culvert is for a roadside drainage ditch and not connected to a fish-bearing stream. The culvert would be replaced with a new 18-inch dual-walled high-density polyethylene culvert and extended approximately 20 feet to the east. A vehicle pullout would be installed at the base of the access road by installing a 20-ft extension to the east. Quarry spalls (rock) would be installed at the base of the access road to reduce the amount of soil that would be tracked onto the adjoining highway.

Some of the excavated soil from the project location may be temporarily stored three miles southeast of the project location within BPA's utility corridor near Centralia-Alpha Road (SE ¼ of Section 26, Township 14 North, Range 2 West).

**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/ Beth Belanger  
Beth Belanger  
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist  
Motus Staffing & Recruiting

Reviewed by:

/s/ Gene Lynard  
Gene Lynard  
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel  
Sarah T. Biegel  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: September 13, 2017

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.

**Proposed Action:** City of Centralia—Salzer Valley Tap (update to July 6, 2017, categorical exclusion)

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### Project Site Description

The project site is near BPA's Chehalis-Centralia transmission line 1, mile 9, towers 10 & 11. The line is located in Section 15, Township 14 North, Range 2 West. The site is located just north of Salzer Valley Road.

The vegetation in the area of the road realignment consists of Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), Oregon ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*), Indian plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*), sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*), and blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*). The vegetation near the culvert replacement consists of reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), horsetail (*Equisetum* sp.), and blackberry.

The temporary soil storage location is approximately three miles southeast of the project location, which is between Bonneville Power Administration's (BPA) Chehalis-Covington transmission line 1, mile 6, near tower 1 and Paul-Napavine line 1, mile 8, near tower 4. The location is in Section 26, Township 14 North, Range 2 West. The site is located in a right-of-way easement, just south of Centralia-Alpha Road. The soils would be stored in an area that is approximately 0.25 acres in size.

The vegetation at the temporary soil storage site consists of salal (*Gaultheria shallon*), sword fern, bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), thistles (*Cirsium* spp.), oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*), and native blackberries (*Rubus ursinus*).

A review of the National Wetland Inventory, topography, and aerial photos did not indicate that there are any wetlands or water bodies at the sites; however, the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) soil survey rates the soils as being hydric. During July 18<sup>th</sup> and August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017, site visits, BPA staff determined that neither location exhibits wetland characteristics.

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

| Environmental Resource Impacts            | No Potential for Significance | No Potential for Significance, with Conditions |
|---|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. <b>Historic and Cultural Resources</b> | <input type="checkbox"/>      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>            |

#### Explanation:

The BPA archaeologist determined that this project is unlikely to have any adverse effects to historic or cultural resources.

In the event of an inadvertent archaeological discovery, all construction work would cease, until the BPA archaeologist and other appropriate parties are notified and suitable action is taken.

2. **Geology and Soils**



Explanation:

Best management practices (BMPs) that meet the standards of the Washington State Department of Ecology's Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington would be utilized to avoid erosion and sedimentation. Silt fencing and straw wattles would be used around the construction areas. Bare soils would be reseeded and mulched.

There would be no ground excavation at the soil storage area. The soils from the project location would be temporarily stored at this location.

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



Explanation: No special-status plant species or habitat is present. Excavated top soil would be redistributed over the decommissioned access road to utilize the existing seed bank at the site. Additionally, these disturbed areas would be reseeded with a native plant mix.

The right-of-way corridor at the temporary soil storage location is routinely mowed and managed to deter shrub and tree growth.

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



Explanation: No special-status wildlife species or habitat is present. The project would have no impacts to special-status species.

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



Explanation: The project area does not have any water bodies, floodplains, or listed fish species; however, there is an intermittent stream approximately 35-50 feet west of the proposed access road realignment area. The streambed does not contain salmon-spawning habitat. A vegetative buffer would remain between the road and stream. Silt fencing and straw wattles would remain on site until the slope is stabilized and revegetated. BMPs that meet the standards of the Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington would be utilized to avoid erosion and sedimentation.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: The project area does not contain wetlands. The native soils at the locations are classified as hydric; however, soil test pits were dug at the temporary soil storage location during a July 18, 2017, site visit and the soils seemed to be fill materials. On August 17, 2017, soil test pits were dug at the culvert replacement and quarry spalls location, and hydric soil features were not present. No redoximorphic features (soil mottling) were present. Furthermore, the project area did not exhibit wetland vegetation or hydrology characteristics.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The road realignment and culvert replacement of the project is unlikely to impact groundwater or aquifers, as maximum depth of disturbance would be 4 feet. The nearest Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 10 Sole Source Aquifer is approximately 25 miles northeast of the project location. The temporary soil storage portion of the project would not involve any ground-disturbing activities; therefore, there would be no

impact to groundwater or aquifers.

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



Explanation: There would be no permanent changes to the land use at either location.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The additional scope of this project would not result in any permanent change to visual quality in the area.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions would occur during construction; however, there would be no significant changes to air quality during or after construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: The nearest residence to the road realignment and culvert replacement project area is approximately 200 feet to the northwest. The nearest residence to the temporary soil storage location is approximately 0.25 miles east. Construction noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours. Operational noise would not change.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: The access road realignment, the culvert replacement, nor the temporary soil storage location would impact human health or safety. The vehicle pull out at the bottom of the access road would improve worker safety at the entrance to the site.

### **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: The access road realignment would be occurring on land recently acquired by the City of Centralia; the project proponent. The City has given BPA permission to do the work. The remainder of the work would occur on BPA rights-of-way. There would be no significant visual changes or other effects to adjacent landowners.

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

Signed: /s/ Beth Belanger  
Beth Belanger ECT-4

Date: September 13, 2017