

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Winthrop Tap to Twisp-Okanogan No. 1 Access Road Maintenance Project

PP&A No.: 3735

Project Manager: Richard Ross – Civil Design – TELF-TPP-3

Location: Okanogan County, Oregon

Township	Range	Section	County, State	Ownership
34N	22E	20	Okanogan, WA	WDFW

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

B1.3 Routine Maintenance

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to perform routine road maintenance along the access road for the Winthrop Tap to Twisp-Okanogan No. 1 Transmission Line, between structures 5/6 and 6/1 to maintain access to structures 5/7 and 5/8. Access road work would include: adding one ditch relief, one cross-drain culvert, 12 waterbars, and one landing; and performing minor blading, shaping, grading and adding rock (improvements) to approximately 5,100 feet of existing serviceable access and structure spur roads. General equipment used for this type of project includes graders, rollers, excavators, and dump trucks.

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/ Kevin George

Kevin George – EPI-4

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: August 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.

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Project Site Description

Proposed maintenance activities are located in a segment of access road for the Winthrop Tap to Twisp-Okanogan No. 1 Transmission Line, between structures 5/6 and 6/1, approximately 4.5 miles southeast of Winthrop, WA. There are no National Wetland Inventory mapped wetlands or hydric soil units that intersect the project area – the nearest mapped wetland is mapped 2,200 feet southwest of the project area. Elevation (above mean sea level) within the project area ranges from approximately 142 to 203 feet with an average elevation of 170 feet. The project area is owned by WDFW and includes natural land cover. Land use in the surrounding area includes rangeland, agriculture, and scattered, rural development.

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> Historical Research Associates, Inc. conducted an on-site cultural resources review on November 18, 2016. BPA received WA DAHP concurrence on no adverse effect determination on July 6, 2017. The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and WDFW were consulted – no response.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Soil disturbance would occur within the existing road prisms and at the new landing installation. Minimal soil disturbance is proposed; any soil cut from the landing location would be sidecast in thin layers so growth of existing vegetation would not be inhibited. Excess soils shall not be sidecast into drainage ditches, or water bodies. Erosion control measures would be used. Stabilization would include: roughening of soils, seeding with an appropriate native erosion control seed mix, using slow-release fertilizer, and mulch.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No mapped special-status species present; road improvements would be limited to the existing road prism and to the new landings. Disturbed areas would be reseeded.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species or designated habitat present; existing road prism and surrounding area under transmission line is previously disturbed habitat.</p>		

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



Explanation: No stream culvert replacement, installation, or cleaning would occur. One cross-drain culvert would be installed with no direct connectivity to any mapped perennial or fish-bearing streams/waterbodies. There is an existing ford through Davis Creek, which is a non-fish stream with unknown periodicity (WDNR Forest Practices water type = Nu), that would be used to transport equipment to/from proposed maintenance activity sites; no significant impacts are anticipated.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: There are no National Wetland Inventory mapped wetlands or hydric soil units that overlap road maintenance activities.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: Groundwater would not be affected by proposed road improvement activities; no new groundwater wells or use of ground-water proposed; maximum depth of disturbance would not exceed existing road fill.

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



Explanation: All proposed road improvements would occur within the footprints of the existing roads or transmission line and are consistent with existing land use; no specially designated areas are located within the project area.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: All improvements would be at ground level and are limited to existing road prisms and the area immediately surrounding the transmission lines.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions is expected for a short duration due to construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Temporary noise is expected for a short duration from road improvement activities during daylight hours.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No known soil contamination or hazardous conditions are known. No changes to electric and magnetic fields would result from the project.

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 project is located entirely on Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife land. Sherry Furnari, Methow Wildlife Area Manager, was contacted on March 15, 2016. Ms. Furnari requested that the project avoids the fire season, if possible, and to follow fire danger precautions. Ms. Furnari requested notice prior to construction.

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

Signed: */s/ Kevin George*
Kevin George – EPI-4
Environmental Protection Specialist

Date: *August 15, 2017*