

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Big Eddy-DeMoss Transmission Line Access Road Maintenance and Repair

PP&A Project No.: 2649

Project Manager: Todd Wehner – TEP-TPP-3

Location: Wasco, Oregon; Bonneville Power Administration, The Dalles District.

Transmission Line/ROW	Structure #	Township	Range	Section	County, State	Ownership/Use
Big Eddy - DeMoss	8/1 to 10/1	01N	15E	8 & 17	Wasco, OR	Private/Agriculture

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

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to repair and conduct routine maintenance on existing access roads in order to access eight transmission line pole locations on the Big Eddy-DeMoss Transmission Line in Wasco County, Oregon. Road work will involve clearing of vegetation, blading, shaping, rocking, re-compaction, and the installation of water bars. The work will include approximately 6,500 feet of existing access road and have an approximate finish width of 12 feet (20 foot maximum total disturbance width).

Stream crossing improvements will also be associated with the maintenance and repair of the access roads. Three crossings require structure installation or replacement in order to provide vehicle and heavy equipment access. This will include:

- Removing failed bridge abutments and installing new culvert at a Fifteenmile Creek Tributary location.
- Removing and replacing undersized structure, cattle guard, and abutments on a Fifteenmile Creek Tributary with a three-sided concrete culvert.
- Installing new bridge over Fifteenmile Creek. All work will be conducted above the ordinary high water mark.

No unauthorized construction activities will occur in any water body including streams, ponds, or wetlands. The proposed action will help reduce outage times, maintain reliable power in the region, and provide for safe access.

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/ Fred Walasavage

Fred Walasavage

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: March 30, 2018

Attachment(s):

Environmental Checklist

Effects Determination for T&E Species

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: Big Eddy-DeMoss No. 1 Transmission Line Access Road Maintenance and Repair

Project Site Description

The road work will be conducted on private property. The project area is comprised of rolling hills with land use primarily consists of ranching and agriculture.

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"/>
Consultation under 106 was initiated on May 27, 2015. The archaeological inventory of the APE was completed on June 9, 2016 and the determination letter was submitted on April 28, 2017 to Oregon SHPO. Concurrence was received from Oregon SHPO (reference SHPO Report Numbers 29048, 28936, and 27778) on no adverse effects. Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation were also consulted and no responses were received.		
Inadvertent discovery form will be provided and explained to the road contractor. In the event of an inadvertent discovery, work will immediately cease and the SHPO and BPA archaeologist will be notified.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No prime or unique farmlands will be affected. Any disturbed soils outside of the road prism will be reseeded with a suitable seed mix to stabilize any disturbed vegetative areas.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species present.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species present according to a project area specific list that was received from the United States Fish and Wildlife Services IPaC – Information, Planning, and Conservation System on January 23, 2017 for the proposed project.		

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



Explanation: Fifteenmile Creek Flows through the project area and contains listed anadromous fish. Due to the upstream or upland distance of project work from ESA-listed stream segments, and that no work will be conducted within the ordinary high water mark, the proposed project would have “No Effect” on coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), or designated critical habitat.. In addition, the project would “Not Adversely Affect” Essential Fish Habitat (EFH).

See item 6 for permitting efforts.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: Minimal (less than 1/20th of an acre) wetlands have been identified and will be impacted by the two culvert replacements. A Joint permit application was filed with the U.S. Corps of Engineers and the Oregon Department of State Lands. No Mitigation is required and Best Management Practices will be use to prevent downstream transport of sediments.

The contractor will be provided a copy of the permit and will be required to follow conditions as directed by the U.S. Corps of Engineers (NWP-2017-477) and the Oregon State Department of Environmental Quality (60717-RF).

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The proposed work is in an upland area; maximum depth of disturbance would be about one to five below ground surface.

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



Explanation: No change in land use and no specially designated areas identified.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The finished access road will be similar in appearance to other roads in the area. The bridge will be new in the landscape..

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Any fugitive dust or similar during project implementation is expected to be temporary and minimal.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Construction noise will be temporary and localized.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: Project activities 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:

- 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: All landowners have been notified and have signed off on the project through the Nationwide Permit Process.

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

Signed: /s/ Fred Walasavage
Fred Walasavage
Environmental Protection Specialist

Date: March 30, 2018