

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Ashe-Pebble Springs Access Road Use

Project No.: LURR 20180291

Project Manager: Mike Deklyen – TERR-3

Location: Benton County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.9 Multiple use of powerline rights-of-way

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to allow a land-locked private landowner use of an existing BPA access road for ingress/egress. BPA uses this road to access the Ashe-Pebble Springs No. 1 and 2 transmission lines near structures 15/1. No improvements would be needed for the access road and no disturbance would occur.

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/ Gene Lynard FOR

Nancy A. Wittpenn
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Office

Date: July 19, 2018

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: Ashe-Pebble Springs Access Road Use

Project Site Description

The existing access road crosses both private and BPA fee-owned land, both on and off the existing BPA Ashe-Pebble Springs transmission line right-of-way. Besides the transmission line, the immediate area contains rural residences along the fringes of the larger agricultural community of Benton County.

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"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Allowing use of an existing access road does not have the potential to cause effects on historic properties.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Allowing use of an existing access road use would not cause impacts to geology and soils.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Allowing use of an existing access road use would not cause impacts to plants.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Allowing use of an existing access road use would not cause impacts to wildlife.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Allowing use of an existing access road use would not cause impacts to water bodies, floodplains, and fish.		
6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Allowing use of an existing access road use would not cause impacts to wetlands.		
7. Groundwater and Aquifers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Allowing use of an existing access road use would not cause impacts to groundwater and aquifers.		

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



Explanation: Allowing use of an existing access road use would not cause impacts to surrounding land uses. There are no specially designated areas in the vicinity of the access road.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: Allowing use of an existing access road use would not cause impacts to the visual quality of the surrounding area.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Allowing use of an existing access road use would not cause impacts to the surrounding air quality.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Allowing use of an existing access road use would not cause impacts to ambient noise in the area. Other rural residences exist in the area as well as agricultural uses that cause periodic engine noise.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: Allowing use of an existing access road use would not cause impacts to human health and 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 has been notified through the LURR process.

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

Signed: /s/ Gene Lynard FOR
Nancy A. Wittpenn
Environmental Protection Specialist

Date: July 19, 2018