

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: K&B Technical Solutions Fiber Optic Cable Installation on North Bonneville-Ross No. 1 and No. 2 Right-of-Way

Project No.: LURR20200003

Project Manager: Charlene R. Belt – TERR-ROSS-MHQA

Location: Clark 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: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow K&B Technical Solutions (K&B) on behalf of MCI Metro Access Transmission Services (doing business as Verizon) to install underground fiber optic cable within BPA fee-owned right-of-way (ROW) between structures 34/3 and 34/4 on the North Bonneville-Ross No. 1 and No. 2 transmission line in Vancouver, Clark County, Washington. The fiber optic cable is part of a larger effort to install a fiber optic communications ring to better serve the community of Brush Prairie, Washington.

On BPA property, K&B would excavate a single, 4-foot by 6-foot bore pit and conduct a 6-inch diameter, north-south directional bore just east of N. Devine Road. The bore would cross the entire width of the ROW (approximately 300 feet) at a minimum of 36 inches below grade. K&B would then install two, 2-inch diameter conduits in the bore hole and would run fiber optic cable through the conduits. Once the boring and fiber installation are completed, a new 36-inch by 60-inch by 36-inch handhole would be installed in the excavated bore pit. The pit would then be backfilled with previously excavated material and graded to original contours. Prior to construction, K&B would be required to locate underground utilities. If any utilities were identified within the ROW, K&B would drill an approximately 6-inch diameter pot-hole over the crossing utility to verify depth and avoid boring through any utilities. Once the bore passes the located utility, the resultant hole would be backfilled, and the surface would be restored.

Equipment would include three pickup trucks, each of which would be required to tow a bore rig (for boring), a mini backhoe (for excavating bore pits), and a vacuum rig (to locate the depths of utilities that could cross the bore path). It is estimated that the work on BPA property would take up to three days to complete. No materials or equipment staging would be required on BPA property.

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, Jul. 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/ W. Walker Stinnette

W. Walker Stinnette

Contract Environmental Protection Specialist

Salient CRGT

Reviewed by:

/s/ Carol P. Leiter

Carol P. Leiter

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange

Katey Grange

NEPA Compliance Officer

July 10, 2020

Date

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: K&B Technical Solutions Fiber Optic Cable Installation on North Bonneville-Ross No. 1 and No. 2 Right-of-Way

Project Site Description

The project site is within Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) fee-owned North Bonneville-Ross No. 1 and No. 2 transmission line right-of-way (ROW), between structures 34/3 and 34/4 in Vancouver, Clark County, Washington (Donation Land Claim 45, Township 2 North, Range 2 East). Project activities would be carried out along the east side of N. Devine Road, where it crosses through the ROW. Ground cover within the project site consists of regularly mowed bunch native and non-native herbaceous species. The ROW further to the east and west of the project site is characterized by open, low-growing herbaceous vegetation, with Burnt Bridge Creek Trail located east of the project site. Outside of the ROW, the surrounding area is a mix of urban commercial, residential, and recreational land uses, with additional wooded areas associated with Burnt Bridge Creek Trail. According to the National Wetland Inventory, there are no wetlands mapped within the project site. However, a freshwater forested/shrub wetland is located approximately 50 feet west of the project site, on the opposite side of N. Devine Road. Soil survey data from the Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates that the project site is characterized by Lauren gravelly loam, which is not hydric. The National Hydrography Dataset indicates that the closest surface water body is Burnt Bridge Creek, which is located approximately 600 feet north of the project site.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA initiated National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 consultation with The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, Cowlitz Indian Tribe, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and Washington Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation (DAHP). BPA completed background research and an intensive field survey of the proposed project area and determined that the actions would result in No Adverse Effect to Historic Properties (BPA CR Project No.: WA 2020053; DAHP Log No.: 2020-02-00940). No previously recorded archaeological resources were located near the project site, and the field survey similarly found no archaeological resources. Two historic properties were identified within the ROW: the North Bonneville-Ross No. 1 and No. 2 transmission lines. However, the proposed activities would not diminish any of the standards under which they are considered eligible and would not result in an adverse effect. DAHP concurred with BPA's determination on May 27, 2020, and The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde concurred on July 1, 2020. No other comments were received.

Notes:

- Should any cultural resources be discovered during project activities, then all project work must stop, and the Environmental Protection Specialist should be notified immediately.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Ground-disturbing activities would include excavating a bore pit, boring north-south along N. Devine Road, and excavating utility pot-holes, if required. In addition, use of vehicles and heavy equipment would likely result in minor soil compaction. Soils within and around the project site were previously disturbed during construction of N. Devine Road, and any excavated holes would be backfilled with native soils and graded to original contours. The proposed project would not impact geology. K&B and its delegates would implement best management practices (BMPs) to address temporary erosion and sediment control.

3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Use of vehicles and equipment and excavation would result in removal of herbaceous ground cover in small areas. No additional tree or vegetation removal is proposed. There are no documented occurrences of any special-status plant species or plant species protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). Therefore, the proposed project would result in No Effect to protected plant species.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary disruption of normal wildlife behavior could occur from elevated noise and human presence during project implementation. However, wildlife species that could be present in the area are likely already habituated to human activity, including vehicle traffic and other activities associated with urban commercial and residential development. There are no documented occurrences of any special-status wildlife species or wildlife species protected under the Federal ESA, and no such species or suitable habitat are expected to occur at the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would result in No Effect to protected wildlife species.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project site is not located near any surface waters or fish bearing streams, and is not located within a floodplain.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project site is not located in any mapped wetlands, and soils mapped within the project site are not typically associated with wetlands. With implementation of the erosion control BMPs, the proposed project would not impact wetlands that are near the project area.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Soil disturbance could reach depths to groundwater or aquifers. With BMPs, the proposed project would not substantially impact these resources.

Notes:

- K&B and its delegates would implement BMPs to reduce the potential for inadvertent spills that could enter groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no change in land use at the project site. The proposed project would not impact the nearby Burnt Bridge Creek Trail. No other specially-designated areas are in the project vicinity.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Most areas where soil is excavated and vegetation is removed would gradually become revegetated to pre-existing conditions. The fiber optic cable and handhole would be underground or flush with the ground surface. The proposed project would not substantially alter the visual quality of the area.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary and minor dust and vehicle emissions would increase in the local area from vehicle and equipment use during project implementation. There would be no long-term impact to air quality following completion of the project.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project-related noise would be temporary and intermittent and would occur during daylight hours. Operational noise would not change from current ambient conditions.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would not generate or use hazardous materials and would not create conditions that would increase risk to human health and safety. No impact to human health and safety is expected as a result of project activities.

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: N/A

Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation: N/A

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: N/A

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: N/A

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: The project site is on BPA fee-owned property. The BPA Realty Specialist would coordinate with K&B, adjacent landowners, and any nearby ROW easement lessees.

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

Signed: /s/ W. Walker Stinnette 07/10/2020
W. Walker Stinnette, ECT-4 Date
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Salient CRGT