

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: City of Vancouver Burnt Creek Pump Station Improvement on North Bonneville-Ross No. 1 and No. 2 Right-of-Way

Project No.: LURR20230142

Project Manager: Billie Woodman, 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 the City of Vancouver (City) to construct improvements to an existing sewer pump station, and to utilize the area for temporary staging and storage of construction equipment and materials within BPA fee-owned right-of-way (ROW) between structures 34/3 and 34/2 on North Bonneville-Ross No. 1 and No. 2. The proposed improvements include installing a permanent 6-foot-tall security chain link fence, access gates within the fence, and modifying existing diversion and meter structures. Actions would also include replacing underground electrical utility lines using existing conduit between the sewer facilities along the north side of the BPA ROW and the pump station located outside of the BPA ROW to the south. The proposed permanent fence would enclose an area measuring approximately 50 feet (east-west) by 7 feet (north-south) and would encompass the existing meter vault and diversion structure located 10 feet south of the northern boundary of the BPA ROW. Materials and equipment would be staged temporarily on the project site with the protection of a temporary fence but would not require any other site preparation or alteration. The total temporary disturbance area for this proposed action including project materials storage and staging, and the installation of the security fence is approximately 1.8 acres.

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.

Jessica A. Heppler
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Katey C. Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

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: City of Vancouver Burnt Creek Pump Station Improvement on North Bonneville-Ross No. 1 and No. 2 Right-of-Way

Project Site Description

The project site is within BPA fee-owned North Bonneville-Ross No. 1 and No. 2 transmission line ROW, between, and to the north of structures 34/3 and 34/2 in Vancouver, Clark County, Washington (Township 02 North, Range 02 East, Section 30 (DC 45)). Project activities would be carried out to the east and north of Ross No. 1 and No. 2 transmission line structures 34/3. Ground cover within the project site consists of a graveled road and staging area as well as regularly mowed native and non-native herbaceous species. The ROW further to the east and west of the project site is similarly characterized by open, managed low-growing herbaceous vegetation, with Burnt Bridge Creek Greenway Trail located to the north and 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 Greenway Trail. The National Hydrography Dataset indicates the nearest body of water and fish-bearing stream is Burnt Bridge Creek located approximately 600 feet to the north of the project site. The soils survey data from the Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates the project site is characterized by Lauren gravelly loam, which is not hydric. The National Wetlands Inventory indicates the presence of freshwater forest / shrub wetland across Devine Road, about 50 feet to the north-west of the project site

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions.

Explanation: BPA initiated consultation with the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation Office (DAHP), the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde on August 16, 2023. DAHP provided concurrence with the Area of Potential Effect (APE) via a letter dated August 31, 2023. BPA sent a no effect to historic resources determination on August 19, 2024. No responses were received within 30 days.

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: There would be temporary soil disturbance from the construction of the new security fence, and construction materials would be staged in areas already disturbed. Geology is not anticipated to be affected.

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

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: Minimal vegetation disturbance is anticipated as a result of the proposed action. The action would occur in the BPA ROW that is currently graveled or managed to maintain low-growing vegetation. Small areas of vegetation will be permanently removed to accommodate the posts needed to support the fence. There are no documented occurrences of any special-status plant species, or plant species protected under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) occurring at the project site. 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 in, or near any surface waters or fish bearing streams and is not located within a floodplain. Project activities are not anticipated to affect surface waters, fish or fish-bearing streams.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: The project site is not located within any mapped wetlands, therefore project activities are not anticipated to affect any wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No with conditions.

Explanation: Soil disturbance is unlikely to reach depths affecting groundwater or aquifers. The proposed action would not require hazardous materials that could impact groundwater quality. Therefore, the proposed action would not substantially impact these resources.

Notes: The City of Vancouver would be responsible for implementing standard construction best management practices (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 or specially designated areas as a result of this project.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: There would be limited visual changes to the project area and surrounding environment. With the current presence of permanent security fencing at the at the action area, the permanent addition of a security fence around a relatively small area is expected to be a minimal alteration to visual quality.

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: The nearest residential dwelling to the project area is approximately 400 feet away. 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 the City, adjacent landowners, and any nearby ROW easement lessees, as necessary.

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

Signed:

Jessica A. Heppler
Environmental Protection Specialist