

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Land Disposal to the City of Vancouver

Project No.: LURR 20220343

Project Manager: Billie Woodman – TERR-ROSS MHQA

Location: Clark County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.24 Property transfers

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is responding to a request from the City of Vancouver to partially dispose of about 0.4 acres of BPA fee-owned property on the North Bonneville-Ross No. 1 and No. 2 transmission line rights-of-way (ROW) to the City of Vancouver to widen an existing paved road that crosses through the ROW. BPA authorizes the use of and manages its fee-owned lands pursuant to its authority under sections 2(e) and 2(f) of the Bonneville Project Act. 16 U.S.C. § 832a(e)-(f).

BPA would also allow the City of Vancouver to use about 0.2 acres total of the ROW immediately adjacent to the new road, for temporary construction while the existing road is improved. The existing road would be increased to 56 feet in width along a 300-foot length of the ROW to provide connection for emergency responders from NE 18th Street to a new housing subdivision to the south of the ROW.

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.¹

Beth Belanger
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Katey C. Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment: Environmental Checklist

¹ BPA is aware that the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), on February 25, 2025, issued an interim final rule to remove its NEPA implementing regulations at 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500–1508. Based on CEQ guidance, and to promote completion of its NEPA review in a timely manner and without delay, in this CX BPA is voluntarily relying on the CEQ regulations, in addition to DOE's own regulations implementing NEPA at 10 C.F.R. Part 1021, to meet its obligations under NEPA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 *et seq.*"

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: Land Disposal to the City of Vancouver

Project Site Description

The project is located in Vancouver, Clark County, Washington, 0.25 miles east of Interstate 205 and 2.5 miles north of the Columbia River. The project location is in Section 27, Township 2 North, Range 2 East. The right-of-way crosses land owned by Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and BPA has provided an outgrant to a third party for agricultural purposes. The ROW is currently developed with orchard trees. The surrounding area consists of high-traffic roads, residential houses and apartment complexes. There are no waterways or wetlands within 0.5 miles of the project area.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: On March 19, 2024, BPA initiated consultation with the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, Cowlitz Indian Tribe, and Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). The proposed land disposal area was then surveyed for cultural resources by a BPA archaeologist. BPA determined that no historic properties would be affected by the proposed land disposal. Determination letters were sent to the consulting parties on December 19, 2024. The Washington DAHP concurred with BPA's determination on December 23rd, 2024. No other consulting parties responded.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The City of Vancouver's proposed street widening project would require minor excavation and grading of soils. The maximum depth of disturbance would be 36 inches deep and non-paved surfaces would be revegetated upon project completion to stabilize disturbed soils.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No Federal or state special-status species or habitats are present in the area that is proposed for disposal. Approximately, 40 orchard trees, along with non-native grasses in between the orchard trees would be removed from a 0.2-acre disposal area for road widening.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No Federal or state special-status species or habitats are known to occur in the area that is proposed for disposal. The location is in an urban setting on land that is currently in agricultural production. Some wildlife may temporarily avoid the area during construction activities conducted by the City of Vancouver.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no water bodies, floodplains or fish in or adjacent to the land disposal area. No federal or state special-status species, ESUs or habitats would be affected by the future use of the project area.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no wetlands in or adjacent to the land disposal area. No wetlands would be impacted during future use of the project area.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The City of Vancouver's road widening project would not affect groundwater or aquifers because the maximum depth of disturbance would be 36 inches.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no substantial change to land use at the project location. The orchard would be allowed to continue operations at the location. There are no specially-designated areas that would be impacted by the City of Vancouver's road widening project.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The visual quality of the area would not change substantially after the City of Vancouver completes their road widening project. The project is in a developed urban area with interspersed agricultural areas.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Construction activities may result in a small amount of dust and an increase in vehicle emissions.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The City of Vancouver's road widening project may temporarily increase noise during construction activities, but it would be consistent with noise generated in the general area due to ongoing activities, such as nearby construction.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Human health and safety would not be negatively affected by the land disposal. The City of Vancouver's road widening project would ultimately improve emergency access to the adjacent residential housing development.

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: No landowner notification, involvement or coordination is necessary for the proposed land disposal to the City of Vancouver as it is BPA fee-owned land.

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

Signed:

Beth Belanger
Environmental Protection Specialist