

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: THPRD Pedestrian Bridge Geotechnical Exploration

Project Manager: James Barnhart—TIPL-TPP-1

Location: Washington County, Oregon.

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B3.1 Site characterization and environmental monitoring, B4.9 Multiple use of powerline rights-of-way.

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow GRI to perform geotechnical testing and soil sampling, on behalf of KPFF and Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District (THPRD), within the Oregon City-Stub C and Keeler-Oregon City, No. 2 transmission line right-of-way (ROW), in the City of Beaverton, Oregon, adjacent to Highway 26. The geotechnical activities and soil sampling would take place between structures 9/5 and 8/11 on the Oregon City-Stub C transmission line and between structures 7/11 and 8/5 on the Keeler-Oregon City, No. 2 transmission line.

The actions for this geotechnical exploration would involve:

- Seven (7) machine-drilled borings to depths between 10 and 80 feet.
- Three (3) cone penetrometer testing probes drilled to a maximum depth of 150 feet.
- Two (2) dilatometer test soundings to a maximum depth of 80 feet.
- Up to 12 shallow soil borings to a maximum depth of 2 feet.

Geotechnical drill rigs would access the proposed sites on existing roads or through other access points in the ROW. A track-rig would be used in some areas to avoid soil compaction. The excavated boreholes would be backfilled in accordance with Oregon Water Resources Department rules and regulations, using bentonite clay or another inert substance. Where needed, pavement surfaces would be repaired using quick-setting grout or concrete.

Findings: In accordance with Section 1021.102 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; 89 FR 34074, April 30, 2024; 90 FR 29676, July 3, 2025, Interim Final Rule) and the current *DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Procedures*, BPA has determined the following:

- 1) The proposed action fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021;
- 2) The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion; and

- 3) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal (see attached Environmental Evaluation).

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

Jessica A. Heppler
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment(s): Environmental Evaluation

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Evaluation

This evaluation 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.

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Project Site Description

The project site is at the BPA fee-owned ROW in Washington County, Oregon (OR T1N R1W, OR T1NR1W DC 57, OR T1N R1W SEC32). Ground cover at this project site consists of areas managed to maintain low-growing vegetation, wetlands, and associated vegetation, and parking lots. Outside of the project area, the surrounding area may be characterized primarily as dense residential, light industrial, and commercial properties. The National Wetland Inventory and Soil Survey data from the Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates hydric soils both near and within the project area. The National Hydrography Dataset indicates the presence of an intermittent creek and associated wetland in the project area to the north of Highway 26.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: The BPA archaeologist initiated Section 106 consultation on May 22, 2026, with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). On June 22, 2026, the 30-day response period expired with no comments received from consulting parties. Previous cultural surveys have been conducted at this location in the ROW and no resources were documented; therefore, it is unlikely that geotechnical testing would have an effect on cultural resources.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: There would be no impacts to geology and impacts to soils from testing procedures would be insignificant. The boreholes would be backfilled in accordance with Oregon Water Resources Department rules and regulations.

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

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: No ESA-listed or special-status plant species or habitats occur at the site. A site visit conducted on April 24, 2025, noted both native and introduced species, including Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*), common tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*), cattails (*Typha spp.*), willow (*Salix spp.*), and reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*). Temporary impacts to existing vegetation may occur from equipment crushing some individual plants while accessing work areas.

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

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: No ESA-listed or special-status wildlife species or habitats are known to be present. Temporary impacts to area wildlife may occur from increased noise and vehicle traffic.

during testing. Wildlife in the area are likely already acclimated to human presence, noise, and activity.

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

Potential for Significance: No with conditions.

Explanation: The project area has a small intermittent stream flowing through it. To conduct the geotechnical sampling, all vehicles and equipment would avoid crossing or driving over the stream. Access to proposed sampling sites may be done in locations that prevent vehicles from crossing or entering the stream. No migrant or residential fish populations are known to occur in this stream, and it is not listed as designated essential fish habitat. There are no floodplains in the project area.

Notes:

- Avoid crossing the stream with vehicles and other heavy equipment.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No with conditions.

Explanation: A wetland delineation of the project area indicated that there are wetlands and hydric soils within the project area, particularly to the north of Highway 26. A track-rig would be used in wetlands to avoid soil compaction. Wetland mats would be used if soil inflection is greater than 3-inches deep. Some wetland vegetation may be crushed during sampling activities.

Notes:

- Require a track-rig to be used in wetlands.
- Deploy wetland mats if soil inflection is greater than 3-inches deep.
- Maintain an oil/fuel spill kit on-site during construction to address containment, cleanup, and disposal in the event of a spill.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: The project site is over 50 miles from the Troutdale Aquifer System. No new wells or other uses of groundwater or aquifers are proposed. Best management practices would prevent impacts from unintended spills to groundwater or aquifers. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact groundwater or aquifers.

Notes:

- Maintain an oil/fuel spill kit on-site during construction to address containment, cleanup, and disposal in the event of a spill.

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 these project actions.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: The geotechnical work is expected to be a minor and temporary change to visual quality. No long-term visual effects are expected from this proposed project.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: Depending upon vehicles or equipment used, there could be minor, temporary emissions and dust associated with project actions.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: Construction noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours. Operational noise would not change.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: There would be no impact to 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: 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 land and would not require any additional landowner notifications, involvement, or coordination.

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