

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Ross-Lexington Transmission Line Corridor Lease for Horse Pasture and Garden

LURR No: 20150283

Project Manager: Dawneen Dostert, TERR-LMT

Location: Clark County, Washington

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

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA is proposing to allow an adjacent landowner to lease a portion of BPA's fee owned Ross-Lexington transmission line corridor. The lease agreement would allow the landowner to build a fence, graze livestock, maintain vegetation, and garden with ground disturbance activities on a 2.4 acre area between structures 15/5 and 16/1 of the transmission line right-of-way (ROW). All vegetation would be maintained at a height that would not interrupt transmission line operations and maintenance.

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/ Becky Hill

Becky Hill

Contract Environmental Protection Specialist

David Evans and Associates

Reviewed by:

/s/ Gene Lynard

Gene Lynard

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Date: December 2, 2015

Stacy L. Mason

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 to environmentally sensitive resources and would meet other integral elements of the applied categorical exclusion.

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Project Site Description

The project area is located approximately 1 mile east of La Center city limits in Clark County, WA on BPA fee-owned property between structures 15/5 and 16/1 of the Ross-Lexington transmission line.

The transmission line corridor is surrounded by rural residential and agriculture croplands. The vegetation community in the proposed lease area consists of native and non-native grasses, Himalayan blackberry, Scotch broom, common snowberry and other low growing shrubs. The project area's grade ranges between 0 and 30 degrees, and slopes downhill to the southwest.

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> WA SHPO concurrence on no adverse effect determination 10/26/2015. Cowlitz Tribe consulted with no response.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Minimal soil disturbance. Potential erosion due to steep slope and grazing activities will not adversely affect waters and wetlands in the watershed due to adequate vegetation buffers and distance from the project area.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No special-status plant species present. Native and non-native grasses, Himalayan blackberry, Scotch broom, common snowberry and other low growing shrubs have the potential to be grazed upon. The height of crops in the designated garden space will be maintained so not to interrupt with transmission line operations and maintenance.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No special-status wildlife species or designated habitat present. Approximately 2.4 acres of grassland habitat would be disturbed primarily due to grazing activities.		

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



Explanation:

No water bodies, floodplains, or fish are present in the project area. An intermittent stream runs north-south along the eastern edge of the ROW, parallel to and just outside of the proposed project area. Riley Creek, a perennial stream Designated Freshwater Critical Habitat, is approximately 1,000 feet downhill of the project; However, it is adequately buffered from potential erosion by vegetation. Furthermore, NE Finalburg Road is located between the project area and the creek.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation:

No wetlands present.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation:

Minimal ground disturbance proposed with fence installation. No new wells or use of groundwater proposed.

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



Explanation:

No change to land use. There are no specially designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation:

No change to the project site proposed.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation:

No impact to air quality.

11. **Noise**



Explanation:

No impact to noise.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation:

No impact 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: Coordinated with the requesting landowner.

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

Signed: /s/ Becky Hill

Date: December 2, 2015