

# memorandum

DATE: September 20, 2012

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: KEPR-Bell-1

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Joe Johnson  
Project Manager – TELF-TPP-3

**Proposed Action:** Access road improvement for the Kalispell-Kerr #1, 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission line

**PP&A Project No.:** 2474

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B1.3 Routine Maintenance, B1.13 Pathways, short access roads, and rail lines

**Location:** Township 26 North, Range 21 West, Section 13 and 24, Flathead County, MT.

**Proposed by:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to perform access road maintenance on several segments of the access road for the Kalispell-Kerr #1, 115-kV transmission line. Work includes reconstruction and drainage enhancements on 5000 feet of road beginning at structure 15/6 and ending at structure 16/7. Activities include the following:

- Raising the existing road grade 4 feet for 500 feet using 1067 cubic yards (cu yds) of pit run starting at 15/6+445 feet to 15/7+120 feet.
- Raising the existing grade 1 foot for 500 feet using 267 cu yds of pit run starting at 15/7+120 feet to 15/7+620 feet.
- Placing 155 cu yds of 1½ inch crushed aggregate surfacing on 1000 feet of road for a finished height of 4 inches.
- Placing 60 cu yds of 4 inch or bigger rock to armor 350 feet of drainage slope.
- Installing 450 feet of silt fencing.

No in-stream work will be performed. Road work will be confined to the existing road prism. Improvements are needed to improve water drainage and reduce flooding of road segments from adjacent creeks. Silt fencing will be installed prior to road work for erosion control and protection of nearby water resources.

The proposed action will allow safe and timely access to the transmission line, which will help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region. All work will be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA standards.

**Findings:** BPA has determined that the proposed action complies with Section 1021.410 and Appendix B of Subpart D 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). The proposed action does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal. The proposal is not connected [40 C.F.R. 1508.25(a)(1)] to other actions with potentially significant impacts, has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion, is not related to other proposed actions with cumulatively significant impacts [40 C.F.R. 1508.25(a)(2)], and is not precluded by 40 C.F.R. 1506.1 or 10 C.F.R. 1021.211. Moreover, the proposed action would not (i) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, (ii) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities, (iii) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that pre-exist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases, (iv) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, or (v) 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.

This proposed action meets the requirements for the Categorical Exclusion referenced above. We therefore determine that the proposed action may be categorically excluded from further NEPA review and documentation.

/s/ Philip W. Smith, for:

Michael A. Rosales  
Physical Scientist

Concur: /s/ Katherine S. Pierce  
Katherine S. Pierce  
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: September 20, 2012

Attachment:  
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

## Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Kalispell-Kerr mile 15 and mile 16 access road improvement

Work Order #: 00113531

This project does **not** have the potential to cause significant impacts on the following environmentally sensitive resources. See 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B for complete descriptions of the resources. This checklist is to be used as a summary – further discussion may be included in the Categorical Exclusion Memorandum.

Environmental Resources	No Potential for Significance	No Potential, with Conditions (describe)
1. Historic Properties and Cultural Resources Improvements will be confined to the existing road prism. No ground disturbance to the existing road bed will occur as road improvements will only raise height of existing grade.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) No T&E species are present within ½ mile of the project.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands Surface waters are present within ½ mile of the project. Erosion control devices (i.e. silt fencing) will be utilize to protect surface water resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime or unique farmlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Supporting documentation in the official project file:  
Effects Determination for Threatened & Endangered Species

Signed: /s/ Michael Rosales

Date: September 17, 2012