

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Fairmount-Port Angeles No. 1 access road maintenance

PP&A No.: 3734

Project Manager: Rick Ross

Location: Clallam and Jefferson Counties, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.3 Routine Maintenance

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to perform routine maintenance along the access road for the Fairmount-Port Angeles No. 1 Transmission Line, between Structures 4/1 and 6/8 (BPA Road ID: FAMT-POAN-1-004-01-0 to 006-08-01). Access road maintenance work would include adding 18 ditch reliefs, 10 drain dips, 21 cross-drain culverts, one gate, seven landings, 15 waterbars, replacing one culvert, repairing two landings, performing minor blading, shaping, grading and adding rock (improvements) to approx. 13,375 feet of existing serviceable access and structure spur roads, reconstruction of 3,950 feet of road, and decommissioning 1,500 feet of road. General equipment used for this type of project includes: graders, rollers, excavators, and dump trucks.

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/ Kevin George

Kevin George – EPI-4

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: September 6, 2017

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: Fairmount-Port Angeles No. 1 access road maintenance

Project Site Description

Proposed maintenance activities are located in a section of access road for the Fairmount-Port Angeles No. 1 transmission line, between structures 4/1 and 7/1, that is approximately 8.5 miles southeast of Sequim, WA, slightly south of and between Sequim Bay and Discovery Bay. There is one mapped wetland between structures 4/3 and 4/5. Elevation (above mean sea level) within the project site ranges from approximately 240 to 1,300 feet, with an average of 1,950 feet. Land use in the surrounding area consists of public timber lands. The Project site and surrounding areas are mostly federal and state forestlands with a few privately owned parcels. Land use in the surrounding area is primarily forestland.

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> A cultural resources review was conducted by Historical Research Associates, Inc. on February 1-2, 2017; WA SHPO concurrence on no adverse effect determination was received July 5, 2017. Lower Elwha Klallam and Jamestown S'Klallam Tribes were consulted, no response received.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Minimal soil disturbance; improvements would not affect soils below existing road fill.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No mapped special-status species present. No vegetation disturbance beyond the existing road prism is expected.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species or designated habitat present; existing road prism; under transmission line is low-quality habitat. However, habitat for marbled murrelet and northern spotted owl is present adjacent to the transmission line right-of-way between structures 6/7 to 6/8. All construction activities within 0.25 mile of structures 6/7 to 6/8 will be conducted outside of the marbled murrelet (April 1 to September 23) and northern spotted owl nesting season (March 1 to September 30) to avoid potential disturbance to these species.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There is one mapped stream within the project; a drain dip is proposed within this feature (DD-10). Due to steep grades within and downstream of the project (greater than 20%), this stream has no federal special-		

status fish presence within the project footprint. To minimize impacts from sediments to downstream listed fish, drain dip construction will be conducted when the stream is dry or, if water is present, the stream will be isolated using sandbags and if necessary, bypassed during the grading activity. Wetland conditions with dense herbaceous vegetation are present immediately up and downstream of the proposed drain dip; no grading work or other impacts will be permitted within areas of vegetation at this location and the downstream drain dip apron will not be constructed.

The drain dip will be constructed within the currently serviceable access road footprint and will not change the character, size, or scope of the road footprint. Therefore, this drain dip construction will not require a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit per 40 CFR 232.3(c)(2).

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: Several wetlands are located between structures 4/3 to 4/5. Landings LA-7, 8, and 9 and associated access roads will be constructed to avoid all impacts within regulated wetland boundaries. Access road work between structures 4/4 to 4/5 has been eliminated to avoid impacts to wetlands. BPA will mark the wetland boundaries in the field and provide GPS boundaries to the contractor.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: Groundwater would not be affected by proposed road improvement activities; no new groundwater wells or use of ground water proposed; maximum depth of disturbance would not exceed existing road fill.

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



Explanation: All proposed road improvements would occur within the footprints of the existing roads or transmission line and are consistent with existing land use; no specially designated areas are located within the project site.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: All improvements will be at ground level and are limited to existing road prisms and the area immediately surrounding the transmission lines.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions is expected for a short duration due to construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Temporary noise is expected for a short duration from road improvement activities during daylight hours.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: Soil contamination or hazardous conditions are not known. No changes to electric and magnetic fields will result from the project.

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: The proposed action covers private and Washington State Department of Natural Resources and Olympic National Forest lands. Natural resource specialists Scott Horton, Ph.D., Wildlife Biologist with the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and Karen Holtrap, Wildlife Biologist with the Olympic National Forest were contacted. Mr. Horton provided data regarding marbled murrelet and northern spotted owl locations with no recommendations for northern spotted owl management considerations or restrictions, given the lack of proposed habitat disturbance. Mr. Horton recommended working outside of the marbled murrelet nesting season for activities within 110 yards of occupied habitat near structure 6/8 to comply with their Habitat Conservation Plan. Ms. Holtrap also noted potential marbled murrelet and northern spotted owl habitat in the vicinity of the project, but noted that no other species of concern or sensitive species are known in the vicinity of the project. BPA has addressed both comments regarding marbled murrelet and northern spotted owl as described in the wildlife section, above.

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

Signed: /s/ Kevin George
Kevin George – EPI-4
Environmental Protection Specialist

Date: September 6, 2017