

**SITEWIDE CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION FOR MINOR ROAD AND UTILITY ALTERATIONS, PACIFIC NORTHWEST NATIONAL LABORATORY SITE, RICHLAND, WASHINGTON**

**Proposed Action:**

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Pacific Northwest Site Office (PNSO) proposes to conduct minor alteration, repair, replacement, or relocation of roads, pathways, and utilities such as water, sewer, electricity, natural gas, and communications lines.

**Location of Action:**

The proposed action would largely occur on the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) Site, within or near existing road and utility easements. Tie-ins to nearby offsite road and utility distribution points are occasionally necessary and are included in the scope of this categorical exclusion (CX).

**Description of the Proposed Action:**

The proposed action would be to conduct:

- Minor alteration, repair, extension, or expansion of existing roads and pathways within or near existing road easements to improve safety, maintenance, access, and connectivity between facilities. Note that substantial road widening and realignment would require additional DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review.
- Minor alteration, extension, upgrade, or relocation of aboveground and belowground utilities within or near existing utility easements on the PNNL Site, including tie-ins to nearby offsite distribution points as necessary.

These activities would generally serve existing and new facilities located on the PNNL Site or, when funded by DOE, within the footprint of the larger PNNL campus. This CX would also support necessary minor road or utility alterations proposed by other organizations (e.g., City of Richland or Benton County) within existing easements on the PNNL Site.

The proposed action would also include reasonably foreseeable actions necessary to implement the road and utility alterations, such as personnel, equipment, and material staging, management of temporary piles of dirt/debris from excavation, location of temporary support structures (e.g., utility connections, sanitary facilities, and office trailers), exploratory digging, interaction with City of Richland personnel, equipment maintenance, and award of grants and contracts.

Any excavation would comply with requirements for excavation safety. For example, requirements to avoid underground utilities, protect cultural and biological resources, and implement excavation safety requirements.

**Biological and Cultural Resources:**

It is not likely that minor road and utility modifications would result in adverse impacts to sensitive biological or cultural resources. However, when special project

circumstances warrant it, biological and cultural resource reviews would be conducted to assure that impacts to sensitive resources are avoided and minimized.

Biological resource reviews would assure that impacts to sensitive biological resources are avoided. These reviews would identify the occurrence of federal and state protected species in the project area such as avian species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA); plant and animal species protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), including candidates for such protection; and species listed as threatened or endangered by the state of Washington. Resource review recommendations would be followed to assure there are no adverse impacts to sensitive species and resources.

Cultural resource reviews would assure that impacts to sensitive cultural resources are avoided. Impact avoidance and mitigative measures would be implemented as stipulated by the resource review. Tagged historical artifacts would not be damaged. If consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office and/or affected tribes is deemed necessary, it would be initiated before project implementation.

**Categorical Exclusion to Be Applied:**

As the proposed action is to support the minor alteration of roads and utilities, the following CXs as listed in the NEPA implementing procedures, 10 CFR 1021, would apply:

- B1 .3 Routine maintenance activities and custodial services for buildings, structures, rights-of-way, infrastructures (including, but not limited to pathways, roads, and railroads), vehicles and equipment, and localized vegetation and pest control, during which operations may be suspended and resumed, provided that the activities would be conducted in a manner in accordance with applicable requirements. Custodial services are activities to preserve facility appearance, working conditions, and sanitation (such as cleaning, window washing, lawn mowing, trash collection, painting, and snow removal)... ...Routine maintenance activities include, but are not limited to:
  - (e) Plumbing, electrical utility, lighting and telephone service repair or replacement;
  - (h) Repair of road embankments;
  
- B1.7 Acquisition, installation, operation, modification, and removal of electricity transmission control and monitoring devices for grid demand and response, communication systems, data processing equipment, and similar electronic equipment
  
- B1 .13 Construction, acquisition, and relocation consistent with applicable right-of-way conditions and approved land use or transportation improvement plans, of pedestrian walkways and trails, bicycle paths, small outdoor fitness areas, and

**short onsite access roads and rail lines (such as branch and spur lines).**

- B1.32** Traffic flow adjustments to existing roads(including, but not limited to, stop sign or traffic light installation, adjusting direction of traffic flow, and adding turning lanes), and road adjustments (including, but not limited to, widening and realignment) that are within an existing right-of-way and consistent with approved land use or transportation improvement plans.
- B4.7** Adding fiber optic cables to transmission facilities or burying fiber optic cable in existing powerline or pipeline rights-of-way. Covered actions may include associated vaults and pulling and tensioning sites outside of rights-of-way in nearby previously disturbed or developed areas.

**Eligibility Criteria:**

The proposed activity meets the eligibility criteria of 10 CFR 1021.410(b) because the proposed action does not have any extraordinary circumstances that might affect the significance of the environmental effects, is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts [40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)], is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts [40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)], and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during EIS preparation.

The "Integral Elements" of 10 CFR 1021 are satisfied as discussed below:

<b>INTEGRAL ELEMENTS, 10 CFR 1021, SUBPART D, APPENDIX B (1)-(5)</b>	
<b>WOULD THE PROPOSED ACTION:</b>	<b>EVALUATION:</b>
Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health?	The proposed action would not threaten a violation of regulations or DOE or executive orders.
Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities?	No waste management facilities would be constructed under this CX. Any generated waste would be managed in accordance with applicable regulations in existing facilities. Waste disposal pathways are identified prior to generating waste and waste generation is minimized.
Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases?	No preexisting hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants would be disturbed in a manner that results in uncontrolled or unpermitted releases.
Have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• protected historic/archaeological resources</li> <li>• protected biological resources and habitat</li> <li>• jurisdictional wetlands, 100-year floodplains</li> <li>• Federal- or state-designated parks and wildlife refuges, wilderness areas, wild and scenic rivers, national monuments, marine sanctuaries, national natural landmarks, and scenic areas.</li> </ul>	<p>No environmentally sensitive resources would be adversely affected. Resource reviews would be conducted for special circumstances. Refer to the Biological and Cultural Resources section for details regarding the application of cultural and biological resource reviews.</p> <p>The proposed action would not adversely affect floodplains, wetlands regulated under the Clean Water Act, national monuments or other specially designated areas, prime agricultural lands, or special sources of water.</p>
Involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species?	The proposed action would not involve the use of 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.

**Checklist Summarizing Environmental Impacts:** The following checklist summarizes environmental impacts that were considered when preparing this CX determination. Answers to relevant questions are explained in detail in the text following the checklist.

<b>Would the proposed action:</b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
1	Result in more than minimal air impacts?	X	
2	Increase offsite radiation dose measurably?		X
3	Require a radiological work permit?	X	
4	Cause more than a minor or temporary increase in noise level?		X
5	Discharge any liquids to the environment?	X	
6	Require a Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures plan?		X
7	Require an excavation permit (e.g., for test pits, wells, utility installation)?	X	
8	Disturb an undeveloped area?	X	
9	Use carcinogens, hazardous, or toxic chemicals/materials?	X	
10	Involve hazardous, radioactive, polychlorinated biphenyl, or asbestos waste?	X	
11	Require environmental permits?	X	

**Explanations:**

1. Only insignificant air impacts would be expected, as minor road and utility installations might result in localized dust and fumes from equipment. Dust abatement measures would be employed as necessary, using water applications or other means of dust and erosion suppression, and would be compliant with applicable permits, local, state, and federal regulations, DOE orders, and PNNL guidelines.
3. Activities performed in radiologically controlled areas would be performed in compliance with as low as reasonably achievable principles, applicable state and federal regulations, DOE Orders, and PNNL guidelines. The radiation received by workers during the performance of activities would be administratively controlled below DOE limits as defined in 10 CFR 835.202(a). Under normal circumstances, those limits control individual radiation exposure to below an annual effective dose equivalent of 5 rem.
5. It is possible that alterations of sewer and water supply lines might result in minor and short-term liquid discharges. During road and utility upgrade or maintenance activities, there might be minor quantities of liquid effluents, for example, water applications to control dust and cleanup rinse water. Depending upon the effluent quality and location, effluents would be discharged to the ground or contained for treatment in accordance with applicable environmental requirements. Should concrete wastewater be generated, it would be managed in accordance with the Washington State Department of Ecology regulations and the Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington. Effluents would be managed in

accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations, PNNL requirements and best management practices.

7. **Minor road and utility alterations might require excavation permits. Stipulations in the excavation permit to minimize potential impacts to safety and the environment would be followed.**
8. **Disturbance of undeveloped areas is not expected, as all activities would occur within existing road and utility easements or within other previously disturbed areas where active utilities and roads in the vicinity are readily accessible. If proposed activities are located on or cause impacts to sensitive species or their habitats, such as old-growth sagebrush, additional NEPA would be required. Additional NEPA review would be required for activities on the Hanford Reach National Monument; within ¼-mile of the Columbia River; other sensitive environments, including wetlands, 100-year floodplains, critical habitats, and areas of traditional cultural properties or properties of historic, archeological, or architectural significance.**
9. **Although unlikely, proposed activities might involve the use of carcinogens, hazardous and/or toxic chemicals and materials. For example, excavation equipment might contain or require the use of chemicals such as antifreeze, hydraulic fluids, or fuel. In addition, road and utility alteration activities might require the use of adhesives, cleaning solvents, and other potentially toxic substances. Project inventories would be maintained at the lowest practicable levels, and chemical wastes would be recycled, neutralized, or regenerated if possible. Product substitution (use of less toxic chemicals in place of more toxic chemicals) would be considered where reasonable.**
10. **Road and utility alterations might generate hazardous or possibly radioactive waste (if alterations must be conducted in a contaminated area), such as excess wire, conduit, and pipe. If unrecyclable, such wastes would be characterized, handled, packaged, transported, treated, stored, and/or disposed of in existing Hanford Site or offsite treatment, storage, and disposal facilities in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations, DOE Orders and guidelines.**
11. **Although not expected during most minor road and utility alteration activities, the following types of permits, plans, and notifications might be required for some activities:**
  - **Notifications or approvals might be required from the Benton Clean Air Authority to use a temporary and portable air-pollution source, e.g., equipment using internal combustion engines such as excavation equipment and portable electric generators.**
  - **An erosion and sediment control plan might be required by the City of Richland for construction activities that might result in substantial erosion or sediment generation.**
  - **Any discharge of wastewater to ground must be reviewed before being discharged to determine if it meets Washington State Groundwater Quality Criteria, if it requires permitting under Washington State Waste Discharge**

regulations (Washington Administrative Code 173-216), and/or if it meets applicable purgewater discharge requirements.

- A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, permitting, or implementation of best management practices might be required if stormwater generated during construction activities is conveyed, either directly or indirectly, to a surface water.

**Compliance Action:**

I have determined that the proposed action satisfies the DOE NEPA eligibility criteria and integral elements, does not pose extraordinary circumstances, and meets the requirements for the CX referenced above. Therefore, using the authority delegated to me by DOE Order 451.1B, Change 2, I have determined that the proposed action may be categorically excluded from further NEPA review and documentation.

Signature:  Date: 11/28/11  
Theresa L. Aldridge  
PNSO NEPA Compliance Officer

cc: JA Stegen, PNNL