



U.S. Department of Energy

Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

Proposed Action Title: Bank Stabilization and Repair to Jones Island Road on the Clinch River (CX-ORR-26-001)

Program or Field Office: Oak Ridge Reservation

Location(s) (City/County/State): Oak Ridge, Tennessee

Proposed Action Description:

Jones Island Road is located near the southern boundary of the Department of Energy (DOE) Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR) along the Clinch River, ~3 miles downstream from Melton Hill Dam. Approximately a 100-foot portion of Jones Island Road has suffered bank erosion causing much of the bank to slough into the Clinch River, creating a safety hazard for vehicles that traverse through the area.

DOE proposes to conduct excavation, as needed, to ensure the appropriate grading is available for installation erosion control features (i.e., fabric linear, rip rap) to stabilize the bank. To reduce environmental impacts, all work would be limited to what is necessary to restore the bank and would occur during winter, low-water level conditions to eliminate the need to work in the water. All work would be done from the bank to allow for work-in-dry conditions.

No sensitive plants or animals are expected to be affected by the proposed project activities. A nearby dead tree potentially suitable for summer bat roosting would be cut during winter when bats are not present in accordance with Fish and Wildlife Agency guidance. Sensitive terrestrial fauna (e.g., state listed pine snake and slender glass lizard) are possible within the exposed terrestrial habitat immediately adjacent to the road. Any potential impacts to these areas would be most notable, albeit still likely negligible, during winter months. The project area overlaps the ranges of several federal and state-listed listed mussels, 1 aquatic snail, and several federal and state listed fish. Previous assessments indicate that habitat is poor for aquatic species. Moreover, there would be minimal to no disturbance of substrates below the water line, and reduced erosion from bank stabilization would benefit aquatic species.

DOE obtained an Aquatic Resource Alteration General Permit (ARAP) for Bank Armoring and Vegetative Stabilization with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, and is required to adhere to applicable conditions set forth in the permit. In consultation with TDEC during the ARAP permitting process, the project was determined not to need a 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers or a 26a permit from the Tennessee Valley Authority. Jones Island Road is not within the Clinch River floodplain, nor wetland; however, the proposed maintenance activities would include the installation of rip rap that would extend into the Clinch River.

No known archeological resources are known to exist within the proposed project footprint. The road and riverbanks have been heavily disturbed and are not likely to have preserved archaeological resources. If archaeological resources are discovered during project construction, all activities would cease so that DOE could reevaluate National Historic Preservation Act responsibilities. The proposed action has been reviewed in accordance with the Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP) and applicable sections in a ratified Programmatic Agreement document and would not result in an adverse effect to historic properties included or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register).

General surveys were performed for the river and roadside banks to ensure that the excavation would not result in radiological or contaminated soils. The data indicated the soil sediment would be categorized as unrestricted use and would not require any radiological controls for onsite handling or disposal. DOE would utilize routine disposal pathways and locations for the material generated during project activities.



Figure 1: Project aerial photo looking north, towards the Oak Ridge Reservation

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

B1.3 - Routine maintenance

For the complete DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations regarding categorical exclusions, including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see Subpart D of [10 CFR Part 1021](#). Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410(b): (See full text in regulation)

The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D.

To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not: 1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; 2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities; 3) 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; 4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph B(4) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B; 5) 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 listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. This proposal 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 preparation of an environmental impact statement.

The above description accurately describes the proposed action, which reflects the requirements of the CX cited above. Therefore, I recommend that the proposed action be categorically excluded from further NEPA review and documentation.

Program Point of Contact: John Shewairy 3.7.23
John C. Shewairy, DOE-SC-OSO Date Determined
Reservation Management

Based on my review of the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under DOE Policy 451.1B), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class(es) of action, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

NEPA Compliance Officer: _____ Date Determined
Peter R. Siebach, DOE-SC-41.1
DOE-SC-OSO NEPA Compliance Officer