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CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION FOR NOANET TELECOMMUNICATIONS INSTALLATION, HANFORD SITE, RICHLAND, WASHINGTON

Proposed Action: To support the installation of fiber optic cable by Northwest Open Access Networks (NoaNet) in order to provide telecommunications service to the Quincy, Washington area.

Location of Action: from the BPA customer vault to the Grant County PUD vault along Priest Rapids Road near the Midway substation control house, on the Hanford Monument

Description of the Proposed Action: DOE proposes to support the following activities proposed by NoaNet:

NoaNet is working with other communications firms to provide diverse communications service to the Quincy, Washington area. They have built routes out of the city to the north, west and east, and need to provide a southern route. In order to do so, NoaNet proposes to connect the fiber leased from BPA, located overhead on the high voltage transmission tower near Midway, with the state-wide fiber ring located in the Grant County PUD vault. This would be accomplished by trenching from the BPA vault west to the PUD vault. The trench would be placed to the north of and immediately adjacent to Priest Rapids Road. Approximately 700 feet of cable would be placed within PVC conduit and buried 3 feet below grade.

After installation, the side of the road would be recontoured as necessary and planted with appropriate grass species to limit erosion and long-term disturbance of the area.

The proposed activities would also include foreseeable actions necessary to implement the proposal, such as equipment and material staging, management of wastes/construction debris; maintenance, transport, and use of typical construction equipment and tools; project closeout; and award of grants and contracts.

Cultural And Biological Resources Review: A cultural resource review was obtained and is attached to this categorical exclusion (CX). The review and subsequent meeting with the Tribes indicate that cultural resources would not be adversely affected by the proposed activities, though the excavation will be monitored. A biological resource review was also performed and is attached to the CX. The review indicates that the project site is dominated by cheatgrass and Sandberg's bluegrass. The recommendation is made that to avoid disturbing shrubs to the extent possible and revegetate the site after disturbance. Based on these reviews, the proposed action would not result in any impacts to sensitive resources in the vicinity.

Categorical Exclusion to Be Applied: The following CX is listed in the DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) implementing procedures, 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D, published in the Tuesday, July 9, 1996, Federal Register (61 FR 36221):

B1.7 Acquisition, installation, operation, and removal of communication systems, data processing equipment, and similar electronic equipment.

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Eligibility Criteria: The proposed activity meets the eligibility criteria of 10 CFR 1021.410(b) because there are no extraordinary circumstances that might affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal. The proposed activity is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts [40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)] or with cumulatively significant impacts [40 CFR 1508.25(a)(2)] and is not precluded by 10 CFR 1021.211.

The "Integral Elements" of 10 CFR 1021 are satisfied as discussed in the following table:

INTEGRAL ELEMENTS, 10 CFR 1021, APPENDIX B, SUBPART D	
WOULD THE PROPOSED ACTION:	**COMMENT OR EXPLANATION:**
Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, including requirements of DOE and/or Executive Orders?	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?	Waste generation is expected to be minimal and would remain the responsibility of NoaNet.
Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases?	There are no known hazardous substances in the vicinity of the proposed fiber installation. No preexisting hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act-excluded petroleum and natural gas products would be disturbed in a manner that would result in uncontrolled or unpermitted releases.
Adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited, to: (a) property of historic, archeological, or architectural significance designated by federal, state, or local governments or property eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (b) federally listed threatened or endangered species or their habitat, federally proposed or candidate species or their habitat, or state-listed endangered or threatened species or their habitat (c) wetlands regulated under the Clean Water Act and floodplains (d) federal- and state-designated wilderness areas, national parks, national natural landmarks, wild and scenic rivers, state and federal wildlife refuges, and marine sanctuaries, prime agricultural lands, special sources of water, tundra, coral reefs, or rainforests.	No environmentally sensitive resources would be adversely affected. Refer to the attached cultural and biological resource reviews. The proposed action would not adversely affect threatened or endangered species or their habitat; floodplains; wetlands regulated under the Clean Water Act; national monuments or other specially designated areas; prime agricultural lands; special sources of water; or tundra, coral reefs, or rainforests.

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.

IMPACT TO AIR

	Would the proposed action:	**YES**	**NO**
1	Result in more than minor and temporary gaseous discharges to the environment?		X
2	Release other than nominal and temporary particulates or drops to the atmosphere?		X
3	Result in more than minor thermal discharges?		X
4	Increase offsite radiation dose to >0.1 mrem (40 CFR 61 Subpart H)?		X

IMPACT TO WATER

	Would the proposed action:	**YES**	**NO**
5	Discharge any liquids to the environment?	X	
6	Discharge heat to surface or subsurface water?		X
7	Release soluble solids to natural waters?		X
8	Provide interconnection between aquifers?		X
9	Require installation of wells?		X
10	Require a Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures plan?		X
11	Violate water quality standards (Washington Administrative Code [WAC] 173-200, Table 1)?		X

IMPACT TO LAND

	Would the proposed action:	**YES**	**NO**
12	Conflict with existing zoning or land use?		X
13	Involve hazardous, radioactive, polychlorinated biphenyl, or asbestos waste?	X	
14	Cause erosion?		X
15	Occur on the Hanford Reach National Monument?	X	
16	Require an excavation permit?	X	
17	Disturb an undeveloped area?		X

GENERAL

	Would the proposed action:	YES	NO
18	Cause other than a minor or temporary increase in noise level?		X
19	Make a long-term commitment of large quantities of nonrenewable resources?		X
20	Require new utilities or modifications to utilities?	X	
21	Use pesticides, carcinogens, or toxic chemicals?		X
22	Require a radiation work permit?		X

Explanations:

1. During construction, there might be minor and temporary amounts of localized dust and fumes from trenching equipment. These would be minimized as necessary, using water applications or other means of dust suppression.

5. It is possible that minor quantities of liquid effluents could be generated, for example, water applications for dust control. These effluents would be managed in accordance with applicable State of Washington environmental protection standards.

13. Fiber installation might generate small amounts of waste that might be hazardous, such as excess components (fiber, PVC conduit, etc). If not recyclable, such wastes would be the responsibility of NoaNet and be packaged, transported, stored, and/or disposed of in appropriate waste-management areas or in existing permitted treatment, storage, and disposal facilities in accordance with applicable regulations.

15. The installation would occur on the Hanford Monument, within the previously disturbed area directly adjacent to Priest Rapids Road. It is not expected to adversely affect native plants or animals in the vicinity.

16. An excavation permit would be obtained as necessary for any excavations to identify the presence of any underground utilities and to make certain that sensitive cultural and biological resources are protected.

18. Temporary construction activities would increase the noise level in the immediate area for short periods of time. Workers would use hearing-protection devices as necessary.

20. Fiber installation would involve connecting two existing commercial fiber systems.

Compliance Action:

I have determined that the proposed action satisfies the eligibility criteria, 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 1, I have determined that the proposed action may be categorically excluded from further NEPA review and documentation.

Signature: Woody Russell **Date:** April 7, 2008

Woody Russell
Hanford NEPA Compliance Officer

ATTACHMENT

Biological Review of the NOANET Fiber Optic Installation Project, 600 Area
ECR #2008-600-012

February 20, 2008

Pacific Northwest
National Laboratory
Operated by Battelle for the
U.S. Department of Energy

20 February 2008

Ms. Angela Bennink
NoaNet
21507 42nd Avenue S. #J-4
SeaTac, WA 99352

Dear Ms. Bennink:

BIOLOGICAL REVIEW OF THE NOANET FIBER OPTIC INSTALLATION PROJECT, 600 AREA, ECR #2008-600-012.

Project Description:

- Dig a trench to install approximately 620 feet of 4 inch PVC conduit for fiber optic cable on the north edge of Priest Rapids County Road, at the Midway Substation. The cable will connect existing vaults near the base of two existing transmission towers.

Survey Objectives:

- Determine the occurrence in the project area of plant and animal species protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), candidates for such protection, and species listed as threatened, endangered, candidate, sensitive, or monitor by the state of Washington, and species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA).

- Evaluate and quantify the potential impacts of disturbance on priority habitats and protected plant and animal species identified in the survey.

Survey Methods:

- Pedestrian and visual reconnaissance of the proposed project site was performed by M.R. Sackschewsky on 20 February 2008. The percent cover of dominant vegetation was visually estimated.

- Priority habitats and species of concern are documented in: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (2007a, 2007b), and Washington State Department of Natural Resources (2007). Lists of animal and plant species considered Endangered, Threatened, Proposed, or Candidate by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are maintained at 50 CFR 17.11 and 50 CFR 17.12; the list of birds protected under the MBTA is maintained at 50 CFR 10.13.

902 Battelle Boulevard • P.O. Box 999 • Richland, WA 99352

Telephone (509) 371-7187 □ E-mail: michael.sacksch@pnl.gov □ FAX: (509) 371-7160

Survey Results:

- The proposed project site is dominated by cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) and Sandberg's bluegrass (*Poa secunda*), with a smaller amount of sand dropseed (*Sporobolus cryptandrus*), and scattered sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) and gray rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosa*) shrubs.

- No migratory bird species were observed nesting in the vicinity of the proposed site.

Considerations and Recommendations:

- No plant or animal species protected under the ESA, candidates for such protection, or species listed by the Washington state government as threatened or endangered were observed in the vicinity of the proposed site.

- It is recommended that damage to existing shrubs be minimized to the extent possible.

- It is recommended that seed of a native bunchgrass such as Sandberg's bluegrass be applied to the disturbed areas once the project is completed.

- Although no birds were seen at the site, several species of migratory birds could use the site for nesting or foraging during the March through July time frame. It would be preferable to avoid this time period if possible. If work does occur during the nesting season, contact me at 509-371-7187 if workers observe birds displaying defensive or distracting behaviors.

- No adverse impacts to species, habitats, or other biological resources are expected to result from the proposed action.

- This Ecological Compliance Review is valid until 15 April 2009.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Sackschewsky
Compliance Assessment Manager
Ecological Monitoring and Compliance Project

LB:mrs

REFERENCES

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2007a. Species of Special Concern in Washington. WDFW web site http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/diversty/soc/soc.htm

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2007b. Priority Habitats and Species List. WDFW web site. http://wdfw.wa.gov/hab/phshabs.htm

Washington Department of Natural Resources. 2007. Washington Natural Heritage Information System Plant Ranks. http://www.dnr.wa.gov/nhp/refdesk/lists/plantrnk.html

ATTACHMENT

Cultural Resource Review of the NOANET Fiber Optic Installation Project
600 Area, HCRC #2008-600-012

February 26, 2008

Pacific Northwest National Laboratory

Operated by Battelle for the U.S. Department of Energy

February 26, 2008

PNWD-3921

Mr. Rob Hastings
Acting Assistant Manager for Safety and Environment
U. S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office
825 Jadwin St., MSIN A5-19
Richland, Washington 99352

Dear Mr. Hastings,

CULTURAL RESOURCES REVIEW FOR NOANET FIBER-OPTIC CABLE INSTALLATION AT MIDWAY STATION, 600 AREA, HANFORD SITE, BENTON COUNTY, (HCRC# 2008-600-012).

In compliance with 36 CFR 800, a National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 cultural resources assessment of the subject project has been completed for NoaNet. The attached document provides a summary of the project, components of the assessment and a finding of effect. Twenty-five copies have been provided for further distribution to the Washington State Historic Preservation Office and tribes as appropriate.

Pursuant to 36 CFR 800, SHPO and tribes have 30 days from receipt of this document to comment. Following receipt of any comments, the project will be notified of any additional conditions required in order for the project to proceed.

As you are aware, this document contains sensitive cultural resource location information and should be distributed accordingly. If you have any questions, please call me at 371-7105.

Very truly yours,

Ellen P. Kennedy

Ellen P. Kennedy, Project Manager
Cultural Resources Project

EPK: cas

Attachment (1)

cc: File/LB
H.B. Hathaway A2-15
Annabelle Rodriguez (25), A5-15

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Cultural Resources Review for NoaNet Fiber-Optic Cable Installation at Midway Station, 600 Area, Hanford Site, Benton County (HCRC# 2008-600-012)

E. P. Kennedy

February 2008

Prepared for
NoaNet, SeaTac, Washington,
under Contract 54362
Battelle—Pacific Northwest Division
Richland, Washington 99352

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PNWD-3921

Cultural Resources Review for NoaNet Fiber-Optic Cable Installation at Midway Station, 600 Area, Hanford Site, Benton County (HCRC# 2008-600-012)

E. P. Kennedy

February 2008

Prepared for
NoaNet
SeaTac, Washington
under Contract 54362

Battelle—Pacific Northwest Division
Richland, Washington 99352

Summary

This document is a *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966*[1], Section 106 cultural resources assessment of a NoaNet project occurring on the Hanford Site, which is managed by the U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office.

The Area of Potential Effect (APE) was defined as being contained to the project area. Per 36 *Code of Federal Regulations* 800[2], the Washington State Historic Preservation Office, Yakama Nation, Nez Perce Tribe, Wanapum, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation were notified of the Area of Potential Effect on February 7, 2008. A literature review indicated that the project area has been surveyed for cultural resources and most of the project area is disturbed. A field visit with tribal participants confirmed disturbance and the absence of cultural resources within the project area. Based on the field visit and tribal input, this project should not affect historic properties. However, given the ethnographic sensitivity of the general project location, and based on tribal input, cultural resources monitoring of excavation activities should be performed.

[1] *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966*. 2000. Public Law 89-665, as amended, 16 USC 470 et seq.

[2] 36 CFR 800. "Protection Of Historic Properties." *Code of Federal Regulations*, U.S. Government Printing Office.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

APE	Area of Potential Effect
BPA	Bonneville Power Administration
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CHRP	Cultural and Historic Resources Program
DOE-RL	U. S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office
HCRP	Hanford Cultural Resources Project
NHPA	*National Historic Preservation Act of 1966*
PVC	polyvinyl chloride
SHPO	Washington State Historic Preservation Officer

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1.0 Introduction

In compliance with 36 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) 800, this document is a *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966* (NHPA), Section 106 cultural resources assessment of a NoaNet project occurring on the Hanford Site, managed by the U. S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office (DOE-RL). This assessment has been completed for NoaNet and the DOE-RL Cultural and Historic Resources Program (CHRP).

2.0 Project Description

NoaNet, a fiber-optic cable company, will connect a fiber-optic cable near the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) Midway Substation at the 600 Area located within the Hanford Site (Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2). At this location, NoaNet will install a fiber-optic cable to connect with existing cables. Connection will require that a trench be excavated between the BPA customer vault and the Grant County Pubic Utility District transmission line tower, which is located adjacent to and north of Priest Rapids Road and BPA's Midway substation control house (Figure 2.3). Approximately 188 m (620 ft) of cable will be placed within a 10-cm (4-in.) polyvinyl chloride (PVC) conduit and buried 0.9-m (3-ft) below grade. The work will be performed with equipment, such as a trencher or back hoe. Work staging areas will be confined to the existing roadway.

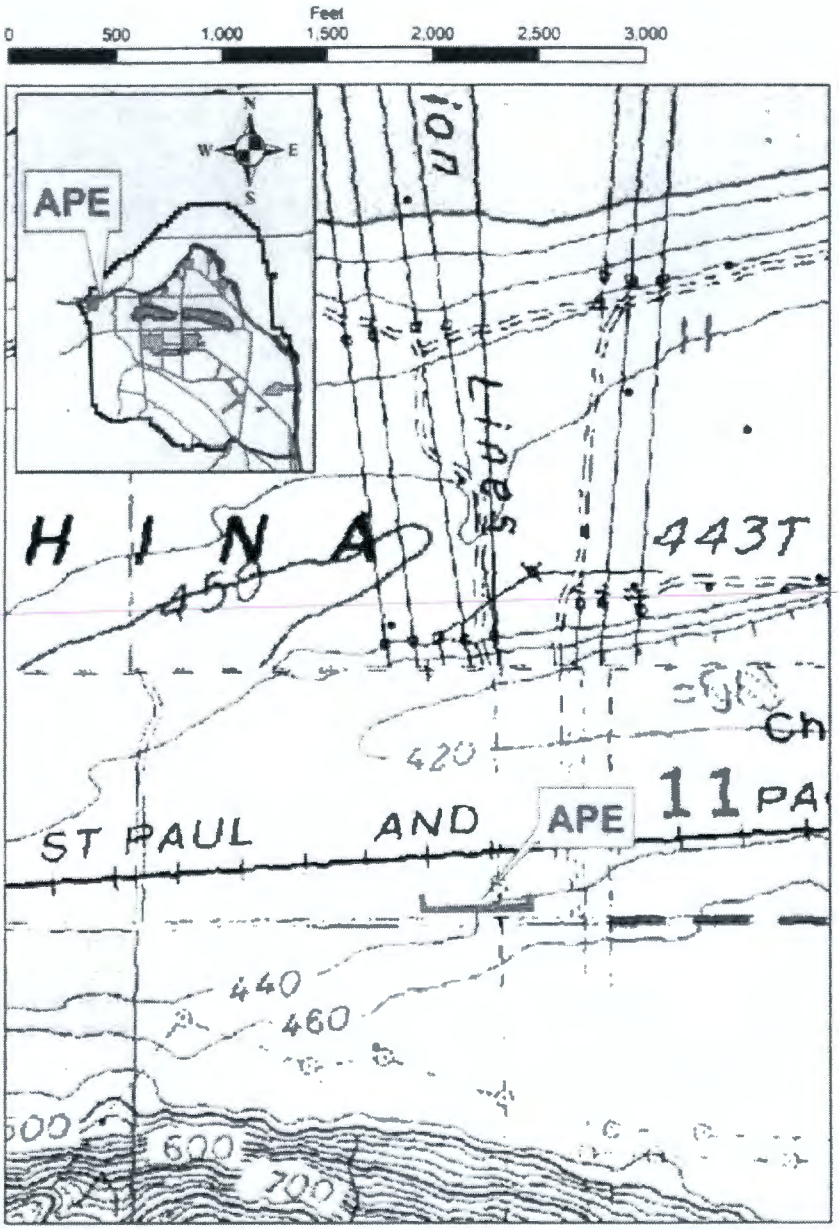

Figure 2.1. General Location of Project Area of Potential Effect in Relation to the Hanford Site and Area of Potential Effect Overlaid on U.S. Geological Survey 2.2-m (7.5-ft) Series Priest Rapids and Emerson Nipple Topographic Maps

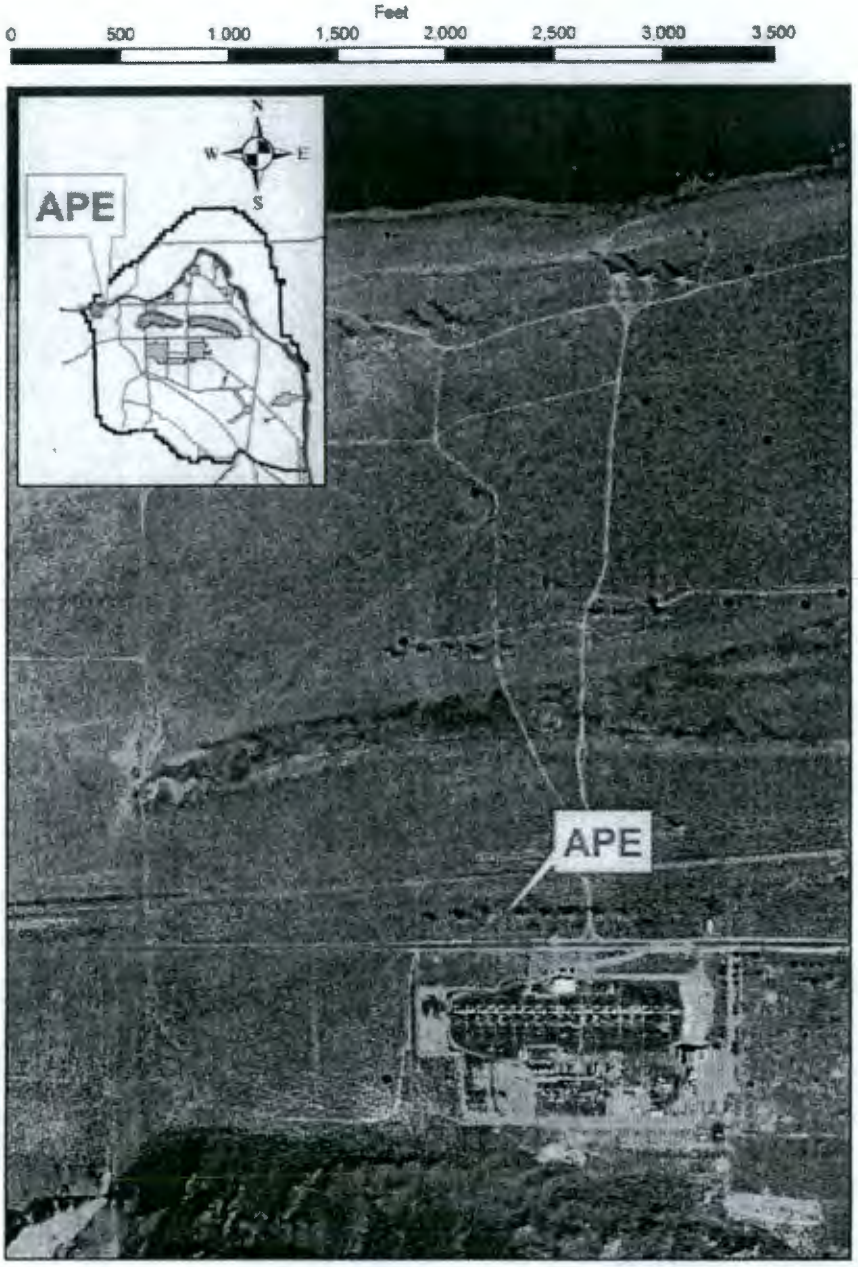

Figure 2.2. Area of Potential Effect Overlaid on 2002 Aerial Photograph

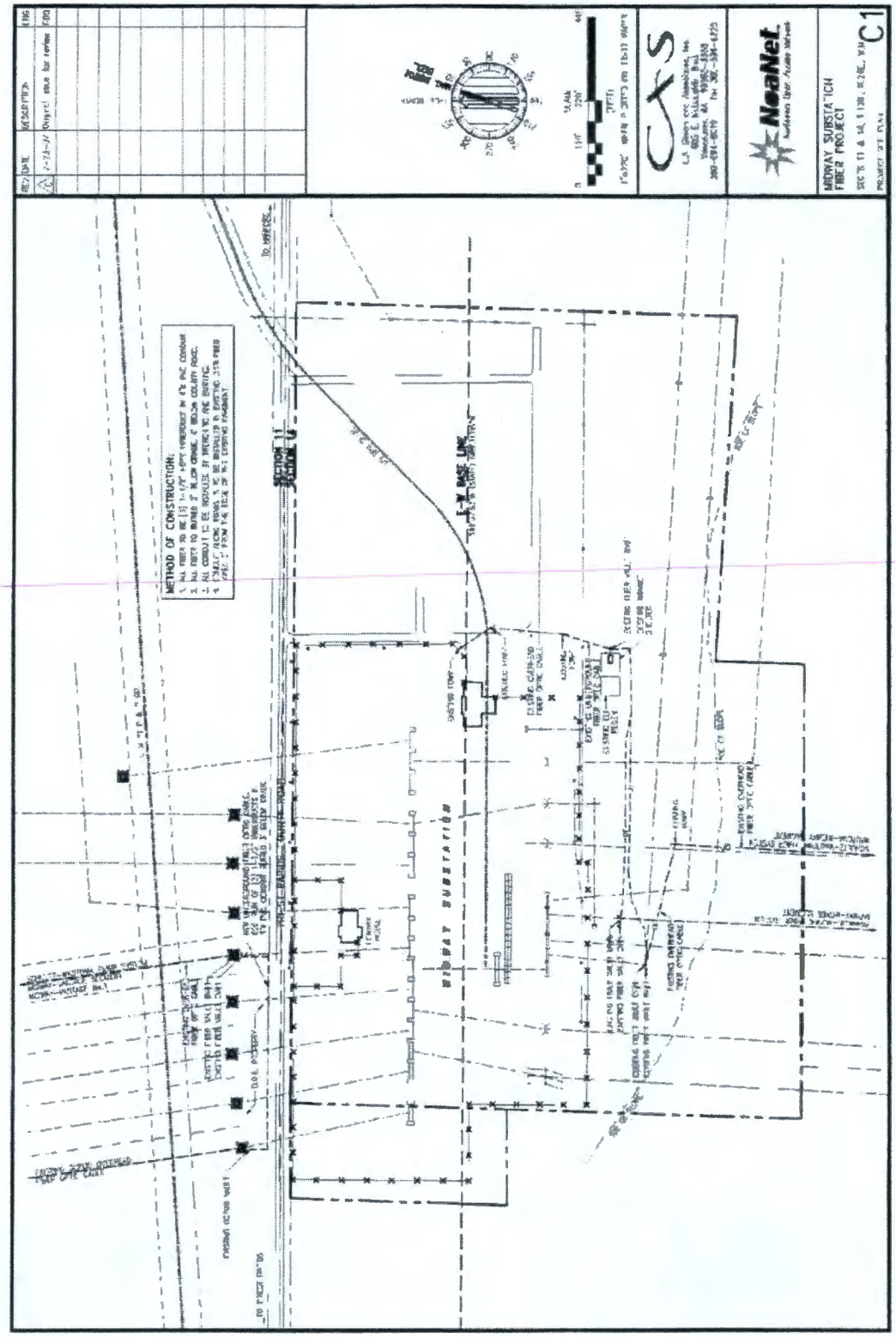

Figure 2.3. Schematic Showing Location of Excavation and Project Design

3.0 Notifications and Public Involvement

Per 36 CFR 800, on February 7, 2008, the Washington State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and area Tribes were notified of the Area of Potential Effect (APE). The APE was defined as being confined to the trench area to be excavated and the roadway just south of the trench as delineated in Figure 2.1 and 2.2. On February 8, 2008, SHPO concurred with the APE. The project was also presented at the DOE-RL CHRP cultural issues meeting on February 21, 2008. There was agreement among tribal cultural representatives that cultural resources monitoring should occur during excavation activities.

4.0 Historical Background and Cultural Overview

The historical background information for the Hanford Site can be found in the *Hanford Site National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Characterization* (Duncan et al. 2007) and the *Hanford Cultural Resources Management Plan* (DOE/RL 2003).

5.0 Literature Review and Identification of Historic Properties

A records and literature search was completed to determine if the APE had been surveyed, and to identify historical references to the general project area. This search indicated that the entire project area had been surveyed for cultural resources in 1998 under HCRC # 98-600-028 (Hale and McClintock 1998). No archaeological resources were located by this survey in the APE. Aerial photographs and construction records indicate that the project area is extensively disturbed as a result of the installation of several (eight) transmission line towers and the paved road known as Priest Rapids Road. There are several precontact-era isolated finds and archaeological sites within 1 km of the project area consisting of lithic flakes, lithic scatters, and talus pits. The closest significant precontact era site is 45BN566, an extensive lithic scatter located on the Columbia River within 1 km of the project. Several talus pits (45BN546) are located 500 m south of the project APE, along the foothills of the Umtanum Ridge. The general location is also known to be in a significant ethnographic fishing and traditional-use area as documented by Rice (1987) and Relander (1986), and confirmed by Wanapum tribal elders. Historic archaeological sites within close proximity to the project APE include 45BN991, a farming-era historic debris scatter located 250 m south of the project APE, and pre-1943-era historic farmsteads (45BN1344 and 45BN992) within 1 km of the project APE. The National Register-eligible Midway Substation, constructed in 1941, is located just south of the project APE.

According to the 1880 General Land Office maps, a trail which may be the modern-day Priest Rapids road is located just south of the project APE. The road continues to appear in 1915 topographic maps, as well as the 1943 Hanford Atomic Works property maps and aerial photographs. Historic aerial photographs depict evidence of extensive disturbance occurring at the project APE. Several transmission lines were installed in the project area between the 1940s and 2005. A reconnaissance field visit was completed on February 14, 2008, by the Hanford Cultural Resources Project (HCRP), NoaNet, Yakama Nation, and Nez Perce Tribe staff. This visit confirmed extensive disturbance in the project area and the absence of cultural material in the project APE (Figure 5.1). No concerns were expressed regarding

impact to the traditional-use area. Additional consultation with Wanapum elders also indicates that project activities should not affect the traditional-use area.

Figure 5.1. Photograph Showing Location of Trench to Be Excavated Along Existing Priest Rapids Road. View is to the east.

6.0 Findings

Based on the literature review, tribal input, and reconnaissance research, it is the staff's opinion that the project will not affect historic properties because none are known to be located in the project APE. Consultation indicates there is no affect to the traditional-use area. Given the overall ethnographic and traditional cultural significance of the area, archaeological resources monitoring should be performed.

Pursuant to 36 CFR 800, SHPO and tribes have 30 days from receipt of this document to comment. Following receipt of any comments, the project will be notified of any additional conditions required in order for the project to proceed. For questions regarding this project, please call Ms. Ellen Kennedy at (509) 376-4626.

7.0 References

36 CFR 800. "Protection of Historic Properties." *Code of Federal Regulations*, U.S. Government Printing Office.

DOE/RL. 2003. *Hanford Cultural Resources Management Plan.* DOE/RL-98-10, Rev. 0. U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office, Richland, Washington.

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