

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Chehalis District (Pacific County) 2015 wood pole replacements

Project Manager: Cynthia Rounds, TEP-TPP-1

Location: Pacific County, Washington

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

Description of the Proposed Action:

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to replace twelve deteriorating wood pole structures and any associated hardware and guys along various transmission lines in Pacific County, Washington, in BPA's Chehalis Maintenance District.

See table below for structure names and locations on the transmission lines.

Transmission Line/ROW	Structure(s)	Township	Range	Section
Chehalis-Raymond No. 1	39/5	14N	8W	35
Holcomb-NaselleNo.1	14/2, 14/4	11N	8W	21
	15/1	11N	9W	20
	17/1	11N	9W	24
	17/7	11N	9W	23
	21/1, 21/3	11N	9W	33
	21/5,21/9	10N	9W	4
Raymond-Willapa River No.1	4/8,5/2	14N	9W	26

The work will include removing the existing wood pole structures (and guy wires if present) and replacing them with in-kind wood poles in the same location. Since the new poles will be installed in the same location minimal new excavation will be required. Additional structures in the immediate area may also be replaced during the work period if identified as danger poles. Transmission line maintenance will coordinate with the environmental lead and receive clearance, prior to any additional replacements.

In addition, BPA will improve existing access roads that currently inhibit access at specific locations to the transmission lines. The project includes improvements to existing road surfaces and landings (blading & rocking) as well as improvements and in-kind replacements of existing drainage features.

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/ Phil Smith for
Greg Tippetts KEPR/Olympia
Olympia District Environmental Scientist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason
Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: May 8, 2015

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.

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Project Site Description

All work would be done in existing managed right-of-way or developed access roads that cross industrial forest land.

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The proposed work is not a type that would result in changes in the character or use of historic properties, if any such historic properties are located in the area of potential effects. The access road work is routine maintenance limited to existing access road cut and prism. The structure replacements will be in the existing structure locations in the cleared transmission line right-of-way.</p> <p>An inadvertent discovery form will be provided and explained to the road contractor. In the event of an inadvertent discovery, work will immediately cease and the appropriate archaeological resources (BPA and WA DAHP) will be contacted.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Sites would be stabilized upon completion of project activities. Excess material would be contoured to match surrounding terrain. Storm water BMPs will be used during the project to protect the surrounding area from runoff and erosion issues.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No species with special-status are known to occur at the sites.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> A no effect determination for ESA species and critical habitats was completed for the project. No Federal/state special-status wildlife species are not known to occur in the project areas.</p>		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> A no effect determination addressing ESA aquatic species and ESUs was completed for the project. The sites do not include any water bodies or nearby connections to any waterbodies, including any fish bearing streams. Any potentially affected drainage area will be protected with appropriate storm water BMPs.</p>		

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: Structure 4/8 on the Raymond-Willapa River No. 1 line resides within and adjacent to an estuarine and marine wetland, adjacent to the Willapa River. The structure is accessible from an existing filled access road. The road may require placement of spot rocking over existing road fill for stabilization and safety. There will be no temporary or permanent fill within the identified wetland outside of the existing road bed. No wetlands are involved in the remainder of the project locations covered by this document.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: Project activities do not have the potential to impact groundwater or aquifers, including public and private water wells or springs. All spills will be addressed immediately and follow BPA protocol for cleanup and regulatory notifications.

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

Explanation: The project locations are confined to the existing transmission line ROW corridors. All surrounding lands are working industrial forests of various ownership. Project locations do not include any special designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: Proposed action at existing facilities will not alter or effect visual quality. Pole and hardware replacements are in-kind and will not be visibly different that existing structures.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: The project has a short duration and involves normal construction equipment activities.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: The project is located away from any populated areas and places of residence. Noise disturbance will be limited to general construction equipment activities, be for a short duration, and occur during daylight hours.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: Completion of this project with increase system stability and reliability to the service area.

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: Notifications via mailed letters will be sent to all current landowners approximately 3-8 weeks prior to project initiation. The letters provide contact information for BPA to allow feedback from landowners/managers concerning the proposed project.

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

Signed: Phil Smith for
Greg Tippetts KEPR/Olympia
Olympia District Environmental Scientist

Date: May 8, 2016