

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Mossyrock-Chehalis No. 1 Impairment Rectification

**PP&A No.:** 3456

**Project Manager:** Cynthia Rounds, TEP-TPP-1

**Location:** Lewis 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 address transmission line clearance impairments at multiple locations (see table below) along the Mossyrock-Chehalis No. 1 transmission line. The ground-to-conductor clearance in these locations is such that it poses an immediate risk to the surrounding public and significantly increases the possibility of an outage due to ground or vegetation contact.

To rectify ground-to-conductor distances, BPA proposes to either remove the impairments (stumps, vegetation, earth, etc.) or replace the existing wood-pole structures with taller structures. At five locations, BPA will remove stumps, or small mounds of dirt, vegetation and stumps--these impairments are no more than a couple feet high and under 10 feet in diameter.

At the remaining locations, the impairments will be corrected by raising the structure—work will include removing the existing wood-pole structures (and guy wires if present) and replacing them in-kind with taller poles in the same location.

In addition, some existing access roads to the impairment locations and landings sites at structures will be improved by blading and rocking as needed for construction equipment. At structure 9/5, approximately 948 linear feet of swamp mats will be temporarily installed through sensitive habitat to provide access for construction equipment.

Transmission Line	Mile/Structure	Township	Range	Section
Chehalis-Mayfield No. 1	7/8	13N	2E	33
	9/2, 9/4	13N	2E	32
	9/5, 10/1, 10/3	13N	2E	31
	10/7	13N	1E	36
	11/8	13N	1E	35
	13/4, 13/5, 13/6, 14/1	13N	1E	33
	14/6, 14/8, 14/9, 15/2	13N	1E	32
	18/5, 18/9, 19/2	13N	1W	34
	19/4, 20/2	13N	1W	33
	21/2	13N	1W	32
	21/9	13N	1W	31
	22/5, 22/8, 23/4	13N	2W	36
	24/4, 24/5	13N	2W	35
	24/7, 25/1	13N	2W	34
	25/6, 26/1	13N	2W	33
	26/2, 26/5, 26/7, 27/2	13N	2W	28
	27/6, 27/10	13N	2W	21

**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 EPR-Olympia  
 Olympia District Environmental Scientist

Concur:

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

Date: September 16, 2016

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:** Mossyrock-Chehalis No. 1 Impairment Rectification Project

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### Project Site Description

All work would be done in existing managed right-of-way that crosses privately owned rural residential, agricultural, and forested use lands.

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
<p>1. <b>Historic and Cultural Resources</b></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> A cultural resources survey and Section 106 consultation was completed for the project APEs. No resources were identified in the vicinity of the proposed work areas. Washington DAHP agreed with two no effects determinations from survey reports; on 5/31/16, Log No.: 2016-04-02982-BPA and on 7/25/16, Log No.: 2016-04-02975-BPA. If resources are discovered during construction activities, work would cease and the appropriate archaeological resources (BPA and WA DAHP) would be contacted.</p>		
<p>2. <b>Geology and Soils</b></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Sites would be stabilized upon completion of project activities. Storm water BMPs would be used during the project to protect the surrounding area from runoff and erosion issues. At the 9/5 structure access location swamp mats would be placed on top of the existing ground to protect the sensitive area.</p>		
<p>3. <b>Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Work would occur in areas maintained as an open transmission line corridor; no vegetation would be removed and no special-status species are present. At the 9/5 structure access location, approximately 0.35 acre of emergent vegetation would be temporarily compacted by the placement of swamp mats. No long term effects are anticipated.</p>		
<p>4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Work would occur in areas maintained as an open transmission line corridor with little wildlife habitat; no mapped special-status species or designated habitats are present.</p>		
<p>5. <b>Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish</b> (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Appropriate storm water BMPs would be used during the project to protect the surrounding areas from runoff and erosion issues. Sites would be stabilized upon completion of project activities. At the 9/5 structure access location, swamp mat installation and removal would occur over an unnamed tributary</p>		

to Mill Creek. Mill Creek has a presumed presence of rainbow trout and the potential for Chinook, coho, and steelhead according to Washington Statewide Integrated Fish Distribution (SWIFD). According to Scott Brummer, WDFW District Fisheries Biologist, there are no complete barriers to anadromous fish downstream of the project site. However, coho are likely the only listed species that may occur in the tributary to Mill creek at this location.

Although there is potential ESA-listed presence in the unnamed tributary, the swamp mats would full-span the creek and no impacts to fish or the waterbody are proposed.

No FEMA-mapped floodplains are mapped within the project site. Swamp mats are anticipated to be constructed in approximately 2 days, in place for construction activities for approximately 1 day, and removed over the course of an additional 2 days.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: Based on a site visit, emergent wetlands are present within the northern portion of the 9/5 project site. Temporary fill, swamp mats, would be used to cross the wetland and protect the sensitive area. This action is considered a maintenance exemption, no federal permits are required.

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 would 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. Surrounding land use includes rural residential, agricultural, and industrial forests. Project locations do not include any special designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: Proposed action at existing facilities would not alter or effect visual quality. Structure replacements are in-kind and would not be visibly different from the existing structures.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: The project has a short duration and involves normal construction equipment activities. A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions is expected due to construction.

11. **Noise**



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

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No known hazardous conditions are known. Completion of this project would 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:

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### **Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description: The project is located entirely on private land. Notifications via mailed letters have been 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.

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

Signed: /s/ Phil Smith for \_\_\_\_\_  
Greg Tippetts EPR/Olympia  
Olympia District Environmental Scientist

Date: September 16, 2016