

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Asset Transfer of Cheney and Four Lakes Taps

**Project Manager:** Jennifer Gumm—TPCF-MEAD-GOB

**Location:** Spokane County, Washington

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B1.24 Property Transfers

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville proposes to transfer ownership of two transmission lines and several disconnect switches to Avista. The transmission assets would include the following:

- The 5.92-mile long Four Lakes Tap-to-Avista's Sunset-E. Colfax No. 1 115-kV line (Four Lakes Tap), including line easements;
- The 9.03-mile long Cheney Tap-to-Avista's Silver Lake-Sunset No. 1 115-kV line (Cheney Tap), including line easements; and
- Five 115-kV disconnect switches (B-1729, B-1730, B-1731, B-1732, and B-239) associated with the above Tap Lines and Four Lakes Substation.

The Four Lakes Tap 115-kV line runs for 5.92 miles beginning at Structure 1/1 to Structure 6/9, which is the last structure prior to the Four Lakes Substation. The Cheney Tap 115-kV line runs for 9.03 miles beginning with structure 1/1 to structure 10/5, which is the last structure prior to the Cheney Substation. Both transmission lines were initially constructed around 1971 to supply power to Bonneville's customers in the Four Lakes/Cheney area of Spokane County, WA.

Bonneville would transfer ownership of the aforementioned transmission lines and substation easement rights together with all assets, including towers, footings, support structures, and appurtenances. Avista would use the transmission line and substation assets to continue to serve, by transfer, Bonneville's customers in the Four Lakes/Cheney area. In exchange for the above Bonneville transmission assets, Avista would transfer ownership to Bonneville the Avista owned 230-kV Bay 4 line terminal and relay equipment at Bonneville's Hatwai Substation.

The existing easement rights would be transferred to Avista, giving Avista the rights to the existing BPA easements for the tap lines.

**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/ Beth Belanger

Beth Belanger  
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist  
Motus Recruiting & Staffing

Reviewed by:

/s/ Gene Lynard

Gene Lynard  
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: April 3, 2017

Attachment: 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

The assets are located in Spokane County, Washington. The Four Lakes Tap transmission line originates from the Four Lakes Substation and terminates approximately 6 miles to the east. The Cheney Tap transmission line also begins at the Four Lakes Substation, but terminates approximately 4.25 miles to the north. These existing transmission lines are located on undulating topography that is dominated by agriculture use, mixed with some remnant ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) forests.

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
<p><b>1. Historic and Cultural Resources</b></p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> On January 5, 2016, Section 106 consultation was initiated with the Washington Department of Archaeology &amp; Historic Places (DAHP) and the Spokane Tribe of Indians. The Cheney and Four Lakes transmission lines were evaluated and determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Transferring ownership of these resources to a non-federal entity would result in an Adverse Effect, which would require mitigation.</p> <p>On March 21, 2016, DAHP and the Spokane Tribe were notified of the determination. The Spokane Tribe did not respond. On March 23, 2016, DAHP concurred with BPA’s determination that mitigation and a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) would be necessary.</p> <p>The Advisory Council of Historic Preservation (ACHP) was invited to participate in the MOA consultation. The ACHP responded with no interest on June 15, 2016.</p> <p>Mitigation was determined and agreed upon by both parties. The final MOA was signed by BPA and DAHP on January 27, 2017 and March 3, 2017, respectively.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>2. Geology and Soils</b></p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> The project would not include any ground disturbing activities.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>3. Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> The project would not include any ground disturbing activities.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>4. Wildlife</b> (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> The project would not include any ground disturbing activities.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. **Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish**  
(including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)



Explanation: The project would not include any ground disturbing activities.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: The project would not include any ground disturbing activities.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The project would not include any ground disturbing activities.

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



Explanation: The proposed asset transfer of transmission lines would not change the current land use at this location.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: There would be no visual changes to the project area or surrounding environment.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: The project would not include any ground disturbing activities.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: There would be no construction associated with this project. Operation noise would not change.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: There would be no impact to human health or safety.

### **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 transfer of the assets would not affect adjacent landowners. There would be no change in use or operation of the lines.

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

Signed: /s/ Beth Belanger

Beth Belanger  
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist  
Motus Recruiting & Staffing

Date: April 3, 2017