

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Driscoll-Astoria 19/3 Impairment Correction Project

PP&A WO#: 3922

Project Manager: Cynthia Rounds, TELP-TPP-1

Location: Clatsop County, Oregon

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

Description of the Proposed Action:

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to correct an impairment to the Driscoll-Astoria transmission line near structure 19/3. The ground to conductor distance has been determined to be insufficient based on current electrical safety standards. BPA is proposing to raise structures 19/2, 19/3, and 19/4 by rebuilding them in the same configuration with taller poles at their current locations. The rebuild would include any associated hardware, guy wires, and counterpoise. Additionally BPA would re-conductor from structure 19/1 within Fernhill substation to structure 19/4.

Where needed, the project may include improvements to existing access roads and landings associated with the above-mentioned transmission line right-of-way that currently inhibit access at the specified structure locations. Dependent on the structure location and access road conditions, the project may include surface improvements of existing road surfaces and landings (blading & rocking) as well as improvements and in-kind replacements of existing drainage features.

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

Transmission Line	Structure(s)	Township	Range	Section	Land Use
Driscoll-Astoria No. 1	19/1 to 19/4	8N	9W	14	Private Timber & Rural Residential

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/ Greg Tippetts

Greg Tippetts - EPR/Olympia
Olympia District Environmental Scientist

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange

Date: July 22, 2019

Katey C. Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

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 rights-of-ways that cross private timber and rural residential lands. The right-of-way is maintained as a community of low growing species including grasses and herbaceous shrubs and forbes. No streams, waterways, wetlands, or FEMA-mapped floodplains would be near the project work area.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> A cultural resources survey and Section 106 consultation were completed for the project APE. No resources were identified in the vicinity of the proposed work areas. On June 6th 2019, BPA sent the Oregon SHPO, the Oregon department of forestry, and any potentially effected tribes, letters with the determination that the project would result in no adverse effects to cultural resources. In separate written responses, dated July 2nd and July 9th, 2019, the Oregon SHPO and Oregon Department of Forestry concurred with BPA’s determination of no adverse effect to cultural resources. In a letter received June 27th, 2019 the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde concurred with BPA’s determination of no adverse effect to cultural resources. No other tribes sent a response to the determination within the required thirty-day timeframe; therefore, concurrence is implied. If resources are discovered during construction activities, work would cease and the appropriate archaeological resources (BPA and OR SHPO) would be contacted.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Upon completion of project activities, sites would be stabilized with native seed mix, or erosion control materials. Stormwater BMPs would 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> Work would occur in areas maintained as an open transmission line corridor; minimal vegetation may be removed at the pole location sites. No special-status species are present. Disturbed sites would be restored with native seed mix.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<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 known to be present. The project location is adjacent to an active Non-BPA substation and several rural residences. Minimal noise disturbance from work activities and construction equipment, (trucks, backhoe, etc.) would not be outside the normal levels of potential exposure and duration associated with the area’s typical background noise levels. All work would occur during</p>		

daylight hours.

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



Explanation: The project site is not located near any streams or waterways or FEMA-mapped floodplains. Appropriate stormwater 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.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: The project site is not located within or near any wetlands.

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. Replacement poles would be buried to a maximum depth not to exceed 10 feet. 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 right-of-way and established access roads. Surrounding land uses include, private timber and rural residential properties. Project locations do not include any special designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The project would occur at existing facilities and would not alter or effect visual quality. Structure replacements would be 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 would be expected due to construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: The project is located away from any heavily populated areas. 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:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: 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.

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

Signed: /s/ Greg Tippetts
Greg Tippetts EPR/Olympia
Olympia District Environmental Scientist

Date: July 22, 2019