

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Chehalis-Raymond Impairment Removal Project

PP&A No.: 3997

Project Manager: Tina Edwards - TELP-TPP-1

Location: Pacific County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.6 Additions and modifications to transmission facilities

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to correct impairments between structures 34/6 and 34/7 and 35/2 and 35/3 of the 115-kilovolt Chehalis-Raymond No. 1 transmission line. An aerial survey of the transmission line resulted in the identification of two locations where the transmission line conductor, in certain atmospheric conditions (temperature, wind, and/or ice), has the potential to become too close to the ground. The reduced clearances (impairments) between the ground and the conductor at these locations create a risk of electrical arcing that can cause a power outage and/or a fire.

The impairments would be corrected by replacing the existing wood pole structures 34/6 and 35/3 with new wood pole structures that are approximately 15 feet taller. Both structures would be the same configuration as the original structures, but may be moved up to 5 feet in any direction to facilitate construction. Hardware replacements, such as insulators, cross-arms, cross-braces, and jumpers, may be performed at the time of the pole replacements. Guy anchors would be re-used if possible, but may need to be replaced and relocated to a location adjacent to the original. Some earthwork would be necessary at each site to provide safe and level areas, measuring approximately 40 feet by 60 feet, to position equipment needed for the work.

Some access road work would be necessary to smooth out ruts and facilitate drainage. Crushed rock may be placed in discrete road segments to create a stable road surface prior to mobilizing equipment to the work sites. Two potential staging areas were identified: one near Holcomb Substation, and the other on the right-of-way north of 35/3.

The work would be done using conventional utility techniques and a combination of the following equipment, backhoe, excavator, dump truck, dozer, boom truck, digger/derrick, bucket trucks, and work trucks. Following the structure replacements, disturbed soils would be recontoured and seeded with an appropriate seed mix and mulch would be applied. The work would take approximately eight work days in late-September/early-October 2020.

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, Jul. 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/ Oden Jahn
Oden Jahn
Physical Scientist

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange
Katey C. Grange
NEPA Compliance Office

Date: June 10, 2020

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

The project area is located on private timber land and Washington Department of Natural Resources lands. Both structures are set on topographic highs surrounded by steep slopes. Work would occur in the established right-of-way that is adjacent to forested lands. There are no wetlands or waterbodies within or near the project 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> A BPA Historian and Archaeologist reviewed proposed activities and conducted a cultural survey of the area. The Chehalis-Raymond No. 1 transmission line was identified in the Area of Potential Effect (APE) and is potentially eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). No additional resources were identified as a result of the cultural resources. BPA determined that these activities would have a no adverse effect on historic properties.</p> <p>On May 6, 2020, the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historical Preservation (DAHP) concurred with the finding. On May 15, 2020, the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) concurred with the finding. No other comments were received from BPA's consultation efforts.</p> <p>In the event any archaeological material is encountered during project activities, BPA would stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead, archaeologist, and project manager; interested tribes, DAHP, and the appropriate local, state and Federal agencies. BPA would implement reasonable measures to protect the discovery site, including any appropriate stabilization or covering, and take reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the discovery site, including restricting access.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Project activities are expected to cause temporary soil disturbances that increase the chance of project-related erosion. Site restoration would begin during, and immediately after, the pole replacements and would include the minimization measures discussed below. Additional BMPs would be implemented as necessary. Therefore, the proposed action would have limited temporary impacts to geology and soils.</p> <p><u>Notes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare soils for revegetation by contouring, if necessary, to blend with existing topography, and by surface-roughening by tracking and/or contour furrows as described in BMP C130 in the Western Washington Stormwater Manual.• Re-establish vegetative cover/stabilization by seeding and mulching as described in BMP C120: Temporary and Permanent Seeding; and C121: Mulching. An appropriate seed mix would be chosen from BMP C120 and applied at the recommended rate, unless otherwise specified by landowner.• Use bonded fiber matrix (as discussed in BMP C122) for slopes greater than 2.5H:1V (40 percent) or rolled erosion control products (as discussed in BMP C122: Nets and Blankets).		

3. **Plants** (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)



Explanation: Vegetation would be removed in ground disturbance areas, which would take place in upland areas within maintained transmission rights-of-way and access roads. There are no Federal/state special-status species and habitats known to occur in the project area. Therefore, the proposed action would not affect special-status plant species.

4. **Wildlife** (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)



Explanation: Project activities are adjacent to marbled murrelet critical habitat; however, there are no recorded marbled murrelets within one mile of the work area. Project activities would take place outside of the marbled murrelet habitat breeding season (April 1-September 23) and no potential habitat would be altered by the project. There are no other Federal/state special-status species and habitats known to occur in the project area; therefore, the proposed action would not affect marbled murrelets or other special-status wildlife. Non-sensitive wildlife that may utilize the project area could be affected by construction noise, use of equipment, and human activity; however, these impacts would be temporary, would only occur during daylight hours, and habitat would not be modified in a way that would preclude the future use of the project area.

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



Explanation: Project activities are located in upland areas away from waterbodies, floodplains, or listed fish species; therefore, the project would have no impacts to these resources.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: Project activities are located in upland areas, thus the project would not impact wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: Project activities are not expected to impact groundwater or aquifers. Excavation would not occur below approximately 10 feet and is not anticipated to intersect ground water.

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



Explanation: No change in land use is proposed as part of the project. No specially designated areas were identified within the project limits. The project would not result in changes or impacts to land use or specially designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The project would not substantially alter visual quality as the new poles and access road improvements would be consistent with the current visual condition of the existing right-of-way.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Exhaust and dust from utility equipment may temporarily reduce air quality in the immediate project area.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Construction noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: BPA personnel would develop a site-specific health and safety plan to address any hazards during the proposed work. The proposed work is necessary to ensure ongoing safe and reliable operation of the transmission line and to maintain power delivery in the region.

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

BPA's Real Property Services has contacted Washington DNR regarding the proposed project, and no concerns were indicated. A letter dated May 15, 2020, in response to Section 106 consultation, Washington DNR stated that any additional land use licensure or other operational clearances required on this project must to come through DNR's rights-of-way staff. No additional landowner notification is required for this project.

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

Signed: /s/ Oden Jahn
Oden Jahn
Physical Scientist

Date: June 10, 2020