

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Categorical Exclusion Determination – Grand Ronde-Boyer No. 1 Transmission Line Impairment Remedy (*Update to previous categorical exclusion issued on September 11, 2019*)

**PP&A No.:** 4205

**Project Manager:** Lisa Casey, TEPL-TPP-1

**Location:** Polk County, Oregon

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

**Description of the Proposed Action:** The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to remedy three impairments along the Grand Ronde-Boyer transmission line located in Polk County, Oregon, within BPAs Salem District. An impairment is an area where the distance from the conductor to the ground surface is inadequate, per National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) standards, resulting in a threat to line reliability and posing a risk to public health and safety. The proposed work is necessary to ensure the line meets current NESC and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) standards.

At two of the three impairment locations (1/9 ARY 8 and 2/1 ARY 9), BPA proposes to raise H-frame wood pole structures in order to increase conductor distance to the ground. In addition, structures 2/2 and 2/3, would have adjustments made to hardware in order to plumb insulator strings. At the third location (4/5), BPA proposes to excavate soil to increase the clearance from the transmission line to the ground surface. Approximately 30 cubic yards of soil would be removed and spread along an upland area within the right-of-way. Both the excavated area and the spoils deposition area would be stabilized and seeded. Proposed structure raises would potentially utilize the following type of equipment: line truck, crane, helicopter, and tractor trailer. Proposed hardware adjustments would require a standard line truck and no ground disturbance. Proposed excavation work would potentially utilize the following type of equipment: excavator and backhoe.

**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/ Laura Roberts

Laura Roberts  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey C. Grange

Katey C. Grange  
NEPA Compliance Officer

December 4, 2020

date

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:** Grand Ronde-Boyer No. 1 Transmission Line Impairment Remedy (*Update to previous categorical exclusion issued on September 11, 2019*)

### Project Site Description

The proposed project is located in the western Oregon and situated within the Coast Range. The proposed area is comprised of nearly level to undulating prairie terraces with mixed land use of grassland and agricultural land within the ROW, with managed second growth forests found adjacent to the ROW.

Structures	Township, Range, Section	County, State	Ownership	USGS Quad Name
Grand Ronde-Boyer				
1/9	T6S R8W Section 12	Polk, OR	Grand Ronde Tribal Allotment	Grand Ronde
2/1	T6S R8W Section 11	Polk, OR	Grand Ronde Tribal Allotment	Midway
4/5	T6S R8W Section 8	Polk, OR	Private	Midway

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

#### 1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA initiated consultation with the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, the Siletz Tribe, and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office on March 18, 2019. As a result of the archaeological field survey, no historic properties were located in the propose project area. BPA determined the project would have a no effect to historical properties and sent letters of determination to the above listed parties on July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019. BPA received concurrence from Oregon SHPO on August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019 and a request from the Grand Ronde to be contacted when construction work occurs at structures 1/9 and 2/1.

#### 2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: During construction, all appropriate Best Management Practices would be used to implement site-specific erosion and sediment control. All disturbed areas would be stabilized and seeded.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed project would not impact any special-status species. There would be no effect to ESA-listed species in the area. Only necessary vegetation would be removed. Any disturbed areas would be stabilized and seeded with a geographic and climate-appropriate seed mix.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed project would not impact any special-status species or habitats. There would be no effect to ESA-listed species in the area.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed project area is not near any fish-bearing waterbodies

#### **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands occur within the vicinity of the proposed project.

#### **7. Groundwater and Aquifers**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The shallow digging involved would not impact groundwater or aquifers.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no change in land use or specially-designated areas as a result of the project.

#### **9. Visual Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The raising of the two structures would slightly alter the visual quality but overall the proposed changes would be consistent with the existing surroundings of the transmission line corridor.

#### **10. Air Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A small amount of vehicle emissions and dust may occur temporarily during construction.

#### **11. Noise**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary construction noise would occur during daylight hours. No ongoing noise increase is expected for this area as a result of this project.

## **12. Human Health and Safety**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No impacts to human health and safety are anticipated to result from this project

### **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: N/A

**Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.**

Explanation: N/A

**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: N/A

**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: N/A

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

Description: BPA Realty is in coordination with the adjacent landowners and easement holders.

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

Signed: /s/ Laura Roberts December 4, 2020  
Laura Roberts, ECT-4 Date  
Environmental Protection Specialist