

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Keller Tap – Grand Coulee Okanogan No. 2 Structures 20/4 and 21/2 Urgent Wood Pole Replacement.

**Project No.:** P06642

**Project Manager:** Jodi Anderson – TELP-TPP-1

**Location:** Ferry County, WA

**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 replace two woodpecker damaged wood pole structures and associated structural/electrical components (e.g., cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) on the Keller Tap – Grand Coulee Okanogan No. 2 transmission line in the Wenatchee District. Replacement poles would be placed in or adjacent to existing holes following removal of current pole structures and may be re-augured to assure proper depth placement. The existing poles would be removed utilizing a backhoe. The project would require a boom truck, bucket truck, and backhoe. The project site would be accessed using existing roads and no access road or landing improvements would be needed.

Wood pole replacement locations are listed below:

Transmission Line	Structure	TRS	County, State
Keller Tap – Grand Coulee Okanogan No. 2	20/4, 21/2	T30N R33E SEC29	Ferry, WA

The proposed action would maintain reliable power in the region. All work would be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA standards.

**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/ Adrienne Wojtasz*

Adrienne Wojtasz

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

*/s/ Sarah T. Biegel*

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: September 18, 2024

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:** Keller Tap – Grand Coulee Okanogan No.2 Structures 20/4 and 21/2 Urgent Wood Pole Replacement.

## Project Site Description

The project area is confined to the areas immediately adjacent to Keller Tap – Grand Coulee Okanogan No.2 Structures 20/4 and 21/2. The project area is predominantly western larch and ponderosa pine forest located west of the Sanpoil River on the Colville Reservation.

Proposed maintenance activities would be performed in the existing transmission line rights-of-way, on land managed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

## Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

### 1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: BPA initiated consultation with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) on June 27, 2024. On June 29, 2024, the THPO responded, concurring with the APE and stating that the project could proceed with a Post-Review Discovery plan in place. The THPO noted that an old cabin, a mining audit, and a camas meadow are nearby, but not in the APE, and should be avoided. On September 4, 2024, the THPO confirmed that as long as these resources are avoided, the project would have no effect on historic properties.

Notes:

- THPO noted several cultural resources in the area but would be avoided if all work is confined to the project APE.

### 2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Localized soil disturbance would occur during wood pole replacement. Standard construction erosion control measures would be utilized as necessary.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Minimal disturbance to vegetation is anticipated. There would be no effect to ESA-listed plant species impacted. No impacts to state or federally sensitive species are anticipated. Project activities would be limited to the already impacted rights-of-way and would not substantially alter existing plant communities.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project area does not include habitat for any Federal or State special-status species. There would be no effect to ESA-listed species in the area. Project activities would be limited to the already impacted rights-of-way and would not substantially alter the footprint or operational noise of the line; therefore, wildlife and associated habitat would not be affected.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project area is not located within a floodplain and there are no nearby water bodies that support resident, anadromous, or ESA-listed fish. Erosion control best management practices would be used to ensure sedimentation into any water body does not occur.

#### **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands are within the project area.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No use of groundwater proposed, and excavation would not extend to a depth that would intersect groundwater. Maximum depth of disturbance would be about 9 feet below grade.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No specially-designated areas were identified within the project area. Land use would not change as a result of project activities.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would be performed within existing transmission line rights-of-way. Replacement of wood pole and associated components would be in-kind and replaced in the same location.

## 10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would have a temporary impact on air quality from a small amount of vehicle emissions and dust generated during construction.

## 11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be temporary construction noise. Operational noise of the transmission line would not change.

## 12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would allow safe and timely access to the transmission line which would help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power to 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: 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 personnel and archaeologist have coordinated the proposed project activities with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation prior to project initiation and any concerns regarding proposed transmission line maintenance activities have been addressed.

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

Signed: /s/ Adrienne Wojtasz  
Adrienne Wojtasz  
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: September 18, 2024