

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Grand Ronde-Boyer No. 1 Transmission Line Impairment Remedy

PP&A No.: 4205

Project Manager: Sarah Hall

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 locations (1/7 and 2/1), BPA proposes to raise steel lattice transmission towers in order to boost the conductor further from the ground. 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 tower raise work would potentially utilize the following type of equipment: line truck, crane, helicopter, and tractor trailer. 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
Biological Scientist

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange
Katey Grange
NEPA Compliance Office

Date: September 11, 2019

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 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				
1/7	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

- | Environmental Resource Impacts | No Potential for Significance | No Potential for Significance, with Conditions |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| <p>1. Historic and Cultural Resources</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> 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 30th, 2019.. BPA received concurrence from Oregon SHPO on August 28th, 2019 and a request from the the Grand Ronde to be contacted when construction work occurs at structure 1/7.</p> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>2. Geology and Soils</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> 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.</p> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> 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.</p> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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



Explanation: The proposed project would not impact any special-status species. 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)



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

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No wetlands occur within the proposed project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: Spill prevention measures would be utilized during construction activities. The project would not provide a pathway for groundwater contamination.

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



Explanation: No change in land use would occur and project activities would not impact land use.

9. **Visual Quality**



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**



Explanation: The project would have no significant impacts on air quality; however, a small amount of vehicle emissions and dust may occur during construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Some temporary construction noise would occur during daylight hours. The operational noise of the transmission line would not change.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: During project activity, all standard safety protocols would be followed. Project activities would not impact 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:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: All activities would be coordinated with landowners prior to beginning work.

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
Laura Roberts, EPI-4
Biological Scientist

Date: September 11, 2019