

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Olympia District, Chehalis TLM, 2019 Priority Wood Pole Replacements

Project Manager: Tina Edwards, TEP-TPP-1

PP&A Proj#: **4111**

Location: Lewis and Pacific counties, Washington

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) is proposing to replace deteriorating wood pole structures and any associated hardware and guys at the below locations in BPA's Chehalis TLM Maintenance District. For all structures, the work would include removing the existing wood pole structures (and guy wires if present) and replacing them with in-kind in the same location.

Where needed, the project also includes improvements to existing access roads and landings associated with the below-mentioned transmission line rights-of-way that currently inhibit access at the specified locations for routine maintenance. Dependent on the structure location and access road conditions, the project may include surface improvements of existing road surfaces and landings (blading and 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
Chehalis-Mayfield No. 1	12/8, 13/1, 15/5	13N	1E	31	Private Agricultural
Chehalis-Olympia No. 1	5/8	14N	3W	35	Private Agricultural
Naselle-Tarlett No.1	10/3	11N	10W	32	Private Timber
	10/8	10N	10W	5	Private Timber
	12/2, 12/4, 12/5, 12/6	10N	10W	8	USFWS
Naselle-Tarlett No.2	8/1	11N	10W	27	Private Timber
	12/2, 12/3	10N	10W	8	USFWS
	12/4, 12/5, 12/6, 12/7, 12/8, 13/1, 13/2, 13/3, 13/4	10N	10W	17	USFWS
	13/5	10N	10W	17	USFWS
	14/2	10N	10W	19	Private Timber

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/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: July 1, 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

All work would be done in existing managed rights-of-way that cross USFWS wildlife refuge, private timber, and private agricultural lands.

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 APEs. No resources were identified in the vicinity of the proposed work areas. BPA sent Washington DAHP and any potentially affected tribes, letters with the determination that the project would result in no adverse effects to cultural resources. On May 7th 2019, Washington DAHP concurred with BPA's determination of no effect to cultural resources. No 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 WA DAHP) 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. Some of the project sites on the Naselle-Tarlett lines are located on the USFWS Willapa Bay Wildlife Refuge. No special requirements beyond BPA's plan were requested.</p>		

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



Explanation None of the project sites on the Chehalis-Mayfield No. 1 and Chehalis-Olympia No. 1 are located near any streams or waterways or FEMA-mapped floodplains. Several of the project sites on the Naselle-Tarlett lines are located with a tidally-influenced wetland. Professionally installed (contractor) wooden swamp mats would be used to cross the saturated soils and protect the sensitive area. 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: Several of the project sites on the Naselle-Tarlett lines (12/2 to 13/5) are located with a tidally-influenced wetland. Professionally installed (contractor) wooden swamp mats would be used to cross the saturated soils and protect the sensitive area. Less than 1/10 of an acre would be impacted with the use of the temporary fill, swamp mats. The mats would be used to cross the saturated soils and protect the sensitive area. This action is considered a maintenance exemption and thus, no Federal permits are required.

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. 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 ROW corridors. Surrounding land uses include the USFWS Willapa Bay Wildlife Refuge, private timber, and private agricultural. Project locations do not include any specially-designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: Proposed action at existing facilities would not alter or effect visual quality. Structure replacements are 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 are expected due to construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: The project is located away from any populated areas and places of residence. 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. BPA staff have been in coordination with USFWS staff throughout the planning of the projects.

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 KEPR/Olympia
Olympia District Environmental Scientist

Date: July 1, 2019