

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Bell TLM District FY19 Identified Wood Pole Replacements for FY20 construction

**Project No. (if applicable):** 4108

**Project Manager:** Tina Edwards – TEPL-TPP-1

**Location:** Spokane County, 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) proposes to perform in-kind replacement of seven wood pole structures and associated structural/electrical components (e.g. cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) along several transmission lines. Replacement poles would be placed in or adjacent to existing holes following removal of current pole structures, and may be re-augered to assure proper depth placement. Wood pole replacement locations are listed below:

Transmission Line	Structure	TRS	County, State
Green Bluff Tap	6/1	T27N R44E SEC33	Spokane, WA
	6/4	T27N R44E SEC28	Spokane, WA
Bell-Trentwood No 1	11/4	T26N R44E SEC35	Spokane, WA
	11/7	T26N R44E SEC2	
Bell-Trentwood No 2	11/4, 11/6	T26N R44E SEC35	Spokane, WA
	11/7	T26N R44E SEC2	

Approximately 0.5 miles of access road improvements would be required for this project in order to reach structures 6/1 and 6/4 of the Green Bluff Tap No. 1 transmission line. Access road maintenance should include blading, shaping, grading, and adding rock. One new gate would be installed and one gate would be replaced.

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, 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/ Emma Reinemann*

Emma Reinemann

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

*/s/ Katey Grange*

Date: July 16, 2020

Katey Grange

NEPA Compliance Officer

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

Proposed routine maintenance activities would be conducted along the Green Bluff Tap and Bell-Trentwood No. 1 and 2 transmission lines. Proposed maintenance activities would be performed in the existing transmission line right-of-ways and access road easements which are located in privately owned rural, agricultural, and residential areas. An intermittent stream is present near (about 50 feet) Green Bluff Tap structure 6/1. There are no other water bodies nor wetlands in the vicinity of the project area.

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

<b>Environmental Resource Impacts</b>	<b>No Potential for Significance</b>	<b>No Potential for Significance, with Conditions</b>
<b>1. Historic and Cultural Resources</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Explanation:

BPA initiated Area of Potential Effect (APE) consultation with the Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation (DAHP), East Valley School District, Kalispell Tribe of Indians, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, Spokane Tribe of Indians, Coeur d'Alene Tribe, and Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation on August 5, 2019, and reinitiated with the same parties on November 18, 2019 due to changes in the APE. The project area was surveyed by a BPA archaeologist. No cultural resources were identified during the survey and BPA determined that the project would have no adverse effect to historic properties. DAHP concurred with BPA's determination of no adverse effect on April 20, 2020.

Note: In the event any archaeological material is encountered during project activities, 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. Implement reasonable measures to protect the discovery site, including any appropriate stabilization or covering. Take reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the discovery site, including restricting access.

<b>2. Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Explanation: Localized soil disturbance would occur during wood pole replacements, landing improvements and access road maintenance activities. Standard construction erosion control measures would be utilized as necessary.

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

Explanation: No known Federal/state special-status plants are present in the project area. Vegetation would be crushed and left in place, rather than bladed, where possible. Any disturbed areas outside the road prism would be reseeded with an appropriate seed mix.

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

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 right-of-way and would not substantially alter the footprint or operational noise of the line; therefore, wildlife and associated habitat would be temporarily disturbed by noise during construction, but there would be no long term effect.

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

Explanation: No in-water work is proposed for this project. There are no fish in the vicinity of the project area. Standard construction erosion control measures would be utilized to ensure sediment and other contaminants do not enter bodies of water; therefore, water bodies, floodplains, and fish would not be affected by the proposed project activities.

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: No wetlands are present in the vicinity of the project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: No use of groundwater proposed and excavation would not extend to a depth that would intersect ground water.

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

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**

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

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: The project would have a small, temporary impact on air quality from a small amount of vehicle emissions and dust generated 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: The proposed action would allow safe and timely access to the transmission line which would help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power 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:

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**Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description: BPA Realty personnel have informed landowners of proposed project activities.

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

Signed: /s/ Emma Reinemann                      Date: July 16, 2020  
Emma Reinemann – EPR-4  
Physical Scientist (Environmental)