

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** PGE Urgent Pole Replacement at St. Johns Substation (*Update to Previous CX Issued July 11, 2023*)

**Project No.:** LURR-20230199

**Project Manager:** Billie Woodman, TERR-ROSS MHQA

**Location:** Multnomah County, Oregon

**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 allow Portland General Electric (PGE) to replace two of its wood pole structures located on BPA fee-owned lands near the St. Johns Substation in Multnomah County, Oregon. The proposed project would replace two failing wood pole structures at two locations. Typical equipment used for standard pole removal includes line and boom trucks and rubber tired backhoes.

Structure PL2098 (WL1) is a single wood pole structure that would be replaced with a ductile iron pole. The work area around W1 would be approximately 50 feet by 100 feet. Access to PL2098 would occur on an existing access road from North Time Oil Road.

Structure PL2101/PL2102 (WL2) is a two wood pole structure that would be replaced with two ductile iron poles adjacent to the existing poles and spaced closer together. Four new helical anchors would be installed to support the new structure; two ahead-on-line and two back-on-line. Helical anchors are drilled into the ground, impacting approximately one square foot of surface area. The work area around W2 would be 50 feet wide, and 150 feet long. Access to PL2101/2102 would occur on an existing access road from North Burgard Road.

**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/ Jeremy Doschka

Jeremy Doschka  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel August 8, 2023

Sarah T. Biegel                      Date  
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.

**Proposed Action:** PGE Urgent Pole Replacement at St. Johns Substation (Update to Previous CX Issued July 11, 2023)

## **Project Site Description**

Proposed routine maintenance activities would be conducted on the Portland General Electric (PGE) line located on BPA fee-owned property, north of St. Johns Substation in Multnomah County, Oregon. The substation is located in a highly developed industrial area approximately 0.8 mile east of the Willamette River and 0.5 mile west of the Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area. The proposed work would occur on previously-disturbed areas adjacent to the St. Johns Substation and PGE Rivergate Substation near a small wetland feature.

## **Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources**

### **1. Historic and Cultural Resources**

Potential for Significance:

Explanation: BPA initiated consultation with a determination of no historic properties affected on June 1, 2023. Consulting parties included the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon. Oregon SHPO responded via email on June 26, 2023, assigning the project SHPO Case No. 23-0857. No additional response was received within 30 days.

Notes:

- A cultural resources monitor from PGE would be present during all ground-disturbing activities.

### **2. Geology and Soils**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Localized soil disturbance would occur during the pole replacement and anchor work at the work areas. BPA would require that PGE implement standard construction erosion control measures, as necessary.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No special-status plant species or suitable habitat for special-status plant species are present within the project area. Weedy vegetation would be cleared from around the two pole structures and anchor locations prior to removal. Maintained grass areas and weedy/non-native vegetation would be disturbed as a result of the proposed project.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Minor and temporary wildlife disturbance could occur from construction noise; however, wildlife species that could be present in the area would likely be habituated to this level of disturbance given that the project location is located in an industrial area. The project site is located north of the St Johns Substation where vegetation consists of maintained grasses and weedy vegetation. There are no documented occurrences of any special-status wildlife species at the project site, and no suitable special-status species habitat is present.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No water bodies or special-status fish species are present within the project area, and the project area is not located within a floodplain. During construction, BPA would require that PGE implement standard construction erosion control measures, as necessary to prevent indirect impacts to off-site waterbodies, floodplains, special-status fish species, and habitats. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact water bodies, floodplains, fish, or fish habitat.

#### **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands are present within the project area; however, there is a wetland located within approximately 50 feet of the two pole replacement locations. Both pole replacement locations are located in areas of fill associated with construction of the St. Johns Substation and adjacent PGE Rivergate Substation. During construction, BPA would require that PGE implement standard construction erosion control measures, as necessary to prevent indirect impacts to nearby wetlands. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact wetlands.

#### **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.

#### **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. During construction, the presence of construction equipment and minor vegetation disturbance would cause temporary visual impacts. Replacement of wood poles and associated

components would be with ductile iron poles in the same location or replaced within the immediate vicinity of existing poles. Thus, there are no significant changes to the visual quality of the area.

## 10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

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

Potential for Significance: No

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

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 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: 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: The project site is located on BPA fee-owned property. No landowner notification, involvement, or coordination would be required.

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

Signed: <u>/s/ Jeremy Doschka</u>	<u>August 8, 2023</u>
Jeremy Doschka	Date
Environmental Protection Specialist	