

Categorical Exclusion Determination
Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Urgent: Martin Creek – Drain 9/4 Wood Pole Replacement

PP&A No.: 4,361

Project Manager: Walter Ludt – TEPL-TPP-1

Location: Douglas, 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) proposes to perform in-kind replacement of wood pole structure 9/4 and associated structural/electrical components (e.g., cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) on the Martin Creek – Drain No. 1 line due to damage at the base of the pole. The proposed action would reduce the risk of outages and safety concerns caused by downed power lines. Additionally, the proposed project would allow safe and timely access to the transmission lines which would reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region.

The replacement pole would be placed in existing holes following removal of current pole structures, and may be re-augered to assure proper depth placement. Improvements to the existing landing would be needed to provide a level surface to safely access the structure. The proposed pole replacement and access road work would be done using conventional utility line and construction equipment and techniques.

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/ Michelle Colletti

Michelle Colletti
Physical Scientist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Date: March 31, 2021

Sarah T. Biegel
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: Urgent: Martin Creek – Drain 9/4 Wood Pole Replacement

Project Site Description

The project site is located within the transmission line right of way and on private land. The primary land use is timber production.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No or No With Conditions

Explanation: Background research conducted on the Oregon SHPO database on March 30, 2021, showed that no previously recorded cultural resources are within the APE. Aerial photograph and map research showed that the APE is located on a slope, with the landing likely cut into the slope. This APE is considered to have a low probability of containing significant cultural resources. Therefore, it is BPA's determination that this action would have no potential to affect historic properties.

Martin Creek-Drain No. 1 Transmission Line was originally energized on May 23, 1948, and is considered eligible to the NRHP as a contributing segment to the Multiple Property Documentation for the Bonneville Power Administration Pacific Northwest Transmission System (Kramer 2012). BPA Historian review has shown the in-kind replacement of the pole would not impact the integrity of the historic Martin Creek-Drain No. 1 transmission line.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The wood pole replacement would be in-kind and placed in the same location as the existing pole. Localized soil disturbance would occur during wood pole replacement and landing improvements activities. 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: No Federal/state special-status plants are present. Project activities would be limited to the already impacted right 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: No Federal/state special-status species present. 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 not be affected.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: No Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed and resident fish species inhabited waterbodies are within ½-mile of project site. By implementing the following mitigation measures while working near water bodies, there would be “No Effect” on water bodies, floodplains, and fish.

Note:

- No ground-disturbing vegetation management methods would be implemented near water resources, thus minimizing the risk for soil erosion and sedimentation near water bodies.
- Erosion control devices would be utilized to reduce sedimentation of any nearby water resources.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project area is located in uplands and project activities do not have the potential to impact wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project activities are not expected to impact groundwater or aquifers. The maximum depth of disturbance would be about 12 feet below ground surface.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No changes in land use are proposed as part of the project. The project would not result in changes or impacts to land use or specially-designated areas.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

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

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Exhaust and dust from utility and construction equipment may temporarily reduce air quality in the immediate project area.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Construction noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours. Operational noise of the transmission line would not change.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA personnel would develop a site-specific health and safety plan to address any hazards during the proposed work. The proposed work is necessary to ensure ongoing safe and reliable operation of the transmission line and to maintain power delivery 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: BPA Realty would contact adjacent and potentially affected landowners prior to project construction.

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

Signed: /s/ Michelle Colletti
Michelle Colletti, EPR-4
Physical Scientist

Date: March 31, 2021