

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Grand Coulee TLM District FY 21 Wood Pole Replacements

**Project No.:** 4593

**Project Manager:** Rusty Ludt IV – TEPL-TPP-1

**Location:** Lincoln 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 4 wood pole structures and associated structural/electrical components (e.g. cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) along The Wagner Lake Tap to Wilbur Tap transmission line. Replacement poles would be placed in or adjacent to existing holes following removal of current pole structures, and may be re-augured to assure proper depth placement. Minor maintenance at landings is scheduled to be performed where necessary to facilitate safe access. Temporary cribbing may be utilized to level and stabilize line truck out-riggers.

Wood pole replacement locations are listed below:

Transmission Line	Structure	TRS	County, State
Wagner Lake Tap to Wilbur Tap	2/6	T26N R32E SEC12	Lincoln, WA
	10/2, 10/3, 10/5	T25N R32E SEC23	Lincoln, WA

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, 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/ Adrienne Wojtasz*

Adrienne Wojtasz

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

*/s/ Katey Grange*

Katey C. Grange      Date: June 27, 2023

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:** Grand Coulee Grand Coulee TLM District FY 21 Wood Pole Replacements

## **Project Site Description**

Proposed routine maintenance activities would be conducted along the Wagner Lake Tap to Wilbur Tap transmission line. Proposed maintenance activities would be performed in the existing transmission line right-of-ways and access road easements which are located in rural, agricultural and undeveloped areas. Land in the project area is privately owned.

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

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA initiated consultation with the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and the Spokane Tribe of Indians (STI), on October 13, 2022. DAHP and the STI provided concurrence with the Area of Potential Effect (APE) via an email dated October 13, 2022. BPA sent a no adverse effect to historic properties determination on May 17, 2023, and DAHP and the STI concurred on May 22 and 26, 2020. No additional response was received within 30 days.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Localized soil disturbance would occur during wood pole replacements and landing improvements. 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 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)**

Potential for Significance: No

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-ways and would not substantially alter the footprint or operational noise of the line; therefore, wildlife and associated habitat would not be permanently affected. Minor elevated noise and human presence may occur during the work period to cause a temporary disruption to area wildlife.

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

Potential for Significance: No

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**

Potential for Significance: No

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

## **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 right-of-ways. Replacement of wood poles and associated components would be in-kind and replaced in the same location.

## **10. Air Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would have a small, temporary impact on air quality from vehicle emissions and dust generated during construction.

## 11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Some temporary construction noise would occur during daylight hours. The operation 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 to 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 personnel would perform landowner notifications 30-days prior to the project initiation and any concerns regarding proposed transmission line maintenance activities would be addressed.

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

Signed: /s/ Adrienne Wojtasz

Adrienne Wojtasz – EPR-Bell-1,  
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: June 27, 2023