

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: FY22-24 Alvey District Priority Pole Replacements (*Update to previous CX issued on 12 May 2025*)

Project No.: 6279

Project Manager: Rusty Ludt, TEPL-TPP-1

Location: Lane County, Oregon

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.3 Routine Maintenance

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to replace three deteriorating wood pole structures and associated structural/electrical components (e.g. cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) on two transmission lines in the Alvey district: Lookout Point – Alvey No. 1 14/2 and Lookout Point – Alvey No. 2 14/1 and 15/8 in Lane County Oregon. This CX is an update to a previous CX issued on May 12, 2025, due to additional cultural resources information becoming available (see attached environmental evaluation).

Replacement would be in-kind and would utilize the existing holes to minimize ground disturbance. If necessary, an auger would be used to remove any loose soil from the existing hole prior to new wood pole placement. Work areas would be about 50 feet by 50 feet at each of the structure replacement locations.

Access road maintenance would be limited to minor blading, grading, and rocking of access road segments that have become impassable. All road maintenance would take place in the existing road prism.

The proposed action would allow safe and timely access to the transmission line, which would help reduce outage times and maintain the safety and reliability of power infrastructure in the region. All work would be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA standards.

The Federal Columbia River Transmission System Act directs BPA to construct, acquire, operate, maintain, repair, relocate, and replace the transmission system, including facilities and structures appurtenant thereto. (16 United States Code [U.S.C] § 838i(b)). The Administrator is further charged with maintaining electrical stability and reliability, selling transmission and interconnection services, and providing service to BPA's customers. (16 U.S.C § 838b(b-d)). The Administrator is also authorized to conduct electrical research, development, experimentation, tests, and investigation related to construction, operation, and maintenance of transmission systems and facilities. (16 U.S.C § 838i(b)(3)).

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. ¹

/s/ Steven Selser

Steven D. Selser

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange

Katey Grange

NEPA Compliance Officer Date: August 19, 2025

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

¹ BPA is aware that the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), on February 25, 2025, issued an interim final rule to remove its NEPA implementing regulations at 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500–1508. Based on CEQ guidance, and to promote completion of its NEPA review in a timely manner and without delay, in this CX BPA is voluntarily relying on the CEQ regulations, in addition to DOE's own regulations implementing NEPA at 10 C.F.R. Part 1021, to meet its obligations under NEPA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 *et seq.*

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: FY22-24 Alvey District Priority Pole Replacements (Update to previous CX issued on 12 May, 2025)

Project Site Description

Structures being replaced are in rural residential and agricultural land. No waterbodies would be near project work areas.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: On September 25, 2024, BPA initiated consultation with the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, the Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Indians, the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz, the Klamath Indian Tribe, and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). On September 25, 2024, SHPO concurred with BPA's delineation of the Area of Potential Effects (APE) and assigned SHPO No. 24-1769 to the consultation. On April 3, 2025, BPA determined that there would be no adverse effect to historic resources and sent the determination to the consulting parties along with the cultural resources survey report. On April 29, 2025, BPA received a letter from the Oregon SHPO stating there was a location in the APE with cultural resources present, Lookout Point-Alvey No. 2 15/8. On June 16, 2025, the Oregon SHPO determined the archaeological site at structure Lookout Point – Alvey No. 2 15/8 was eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, and SHPO recommended that an archaeological monitor be present when the pole is replaced. On July 14, 2025, BPA determined that there would be no adverse effect to historic resources at Lookout Point – Alvey No. 1 14/2 and Lookout Point – Alvey No. 2 14/1 and sent the determination to the consulting parties along with the cultural resources survey report. The 30-day comment period for the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 consultation expired. The project may proceed as planned for Lookout Point – Alvey No. 1 14/2 and Lookout Point – Alvey No. 2 14/1, with a determination of [§36 CFR 800.5(b)] – no adverse effect. No other comments were received from consulting parties.

Notes:

- Construction activities associated with the replacement of structure Lookout Point – Alvey No. 2 15/8 would be monitored by a qualified archaeologist, due to the presence of archaeological site APP-AS0-01. This precontact archaeological site has been determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, and the monitor would be present to ensure the minimalization of potential damage to this site.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Localized soil disturbance would occur during wood pole replacement and access road 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: Minimal disturbance to vegetation is anticipated. There would be no effect to ESA-listed plant species. No impacts to state or federally sensitive species are anticipated. Project activities would be limited to the already impacted access road and transmission line 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 with Conditions

Explanation: In general, the project would have a small impact to wildlife and habitat related to temporary disturbance associated with elevated equipment noise and human presence. The project would have no impacts to state or federally listed sensitive species with the implementation of the minimization measures identified below.

Notes:

Western Pond turtle timing restrictions (May 15-July 15) and conservation measures would be in place for structure: Lookout Point – Alvey No. 1 #14/2.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project area is not located within a floodplain and there are no nearby water bodies that support resident, anadromous, or ESA-listed fish. Erosion control best management practices combined with the distance to the nearest waterbody would ensure that sedimentation would not enter into any water body.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

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

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No use of groundwater proposed. Maximum depth of disturbance would be about 13 feet below ground surface and would likely not intersect groundwater for most structures. Pole wraps would be installed around the two structures in wetlands that may intersect with groundwater.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No change in land use. No specially-designated areas.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would be performed within existing transmission line right-of-way and access road prisms. Replacement of the wood pole and associated components would be in kind and replaced in the same location; therefore, there would not be a change to the visual quality of the area.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

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

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be temporary construction noise. 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: All activities have been coordinated with landowners.

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

Signed: /s/ Steven Selser
Steven D. Selser
EPR-CHEMAWA

Date: August 19, 2025