

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** FY19 Maupin-Redmond No. 1 21/6, Redmond District Priority Pole

**PP&A No.:** 4998

**Project Number:** P03307

**Project Manager:** Jodie Anderson – TELP-TPP-1

**Location:** Wasco, 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 replace structure 21/6 on the Maupin-Redmond No. 1 transmission line with in-kind replacement of a wood pole and associated structural/electrical components (e.g. cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) in the Redmond Transmission Line Maintenance (TLM) District. 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 approximately 5 feet ahead or back on line from the existing structure, following removal of the current pole structure. BPA would drill the pole holes and then install and remove the structure. A portion of the access road that would be used to access the site was constructed under another project recently and no road work is required.

This structure was identified as a potential risk to human safety and system reliability and would be replaced in order to remain in compliance with NERC, WECC and BPA's work standards and guides. 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 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 1021.102 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; 89 FR 34074, April 30, 2024; 90 FR 29676, July 3, 2025 [Interim Final Rule]) and *DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Implementing Procedures* (dated June 30, 2025), BPA has determined the following:

- 1) The proposed action fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021;
- 2) The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion; and
- 3) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal (see attached Environmental Evaluation).

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review. <sup>1</sup>

/s/ Greg Tippetts

Greg Tippetts

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange

Katey C. Grange

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: September 16, 2025

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

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<sup>1</sup> 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 the interim final rule to revise DOE NEPA regulations implementing NEPA at 10 C.F.R. Part 1021 and NEPA Implementing Procedures (dated June 30, 2025), 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:** FY19 Maupin-Redmond No1 21/6, Redmond District Priority Poles

### **Project Site Description**

The corridor in the proposed project area is approximately 440 feet wide and lies in private property east of the Cascades and north of Bend within the Columbia Plateau ecoregion of Wasco County, Oregon. The structure to be replaced is on the Maupin-Redmond No. 1 transmission line. The transmission line corridor is shared with the Celilo-Sylmar No 1 transmission line. The landscape in the project area is sparsely vegetated by grasses. Smaller population levels of forbs and shrubs dot the landscape. Small patches of living, cut down and dried out juniper exist further away from the project area. Land use surrounding and running through the ROW is rangeland. The landscape is heavily grazed and shows signs of compaction by cattle. Several intermittent waterways and small wetlands exist further away from the project area. The closest stream, Tenmile creek, is several hundred feet to the east of the structure to be replaced and is non fish bearing.

Transmission Line/ROW	Structure/Roadwork	Township	Range	Section	Ownership
Maupin-Redmond No. 1	21/6	ORT8S	R15E	SEC5	private

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

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

Potential for Significance: Yes

##### **Explanation:**

BPA initiated consultation with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon (CTWSRO), the Burns Paiute Tribe, the Klamath Tribe, and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), on October 4, 2019. Oregon SHPO provided concurrence with the Area of Potential Effect (APE) on October 29, 2019. BPA also received responses from the Klamath Tribes on October 4, 2019, and the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon on October 17, 2019. No other responses were received by BPA. A pre-contact lithic scatter was identified within the APE and BPA sent a determination of adverse effect to historic properties (35WS518) on January 12, 2023, and completed a signed Memorandum of Agreement on August 12, 2025. As mitigation for the adverse impact, BPA would fund the CTWSRO to conduct a cultural resources survey on a parcel of land that they own.

Note:

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

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

Potential for Significance: No

**Explanation:** Wood pole replacements would be in-kind and would be placed near the existing pole location. Localized soil disturbance would occur during wood pole replacement. The ground near the structure is relatively flat and no landing work is planned. No additional access road work is planned. 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: Project activities would be limited to the already impacted ROW and would not substantially alter existing plant communities. No Federal special status or state listed plants are present.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Construction on the project would likely disturb any wildlife in the area due to the presence of humans and additional noise. However, disturbance would be temporary and limited to the already impacted ROW and would not substantially alter the long-term footprint or operational noise of the line; therefore, wildlife and associated habitat would not be affected in the long term.

### **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 planned in or near the non-fish bearing waterways east of the project area. These waterways include Tenmile Creek, and one seasonally dry waterway. All stormwater would be infiltrated on-site, and work would take place during the dry season. The work location is in arid North-Central Oregon. Standard construction erosion control measures would be utilized to ensure sediment and other contaminants do not enter bodies of water.

### **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No in-water work is planned in or near the seasonally dry wetland located to the north of the project area. Furthermore, work is planned to occur during summer when water table levels will be lower and there is less risk of disturbing wetlands. Standard construction erosion control measures would be utilized to ensure sediment and other contaminants do not enter wetlands.

### **7. Groundwater and Aquifers**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project activities are not expected to increase any impacts to groundwater or aquifers. The maximum depth of disturbance would be about 12 feet below the ground surface. Spill prevention measures would be utilized during construction activities to avoid creating a pathway for groundwater contamination.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Because vegetation is sparse in and nearby the project area, restoration efforts that utilize seed and straw could temporarily increase forage for grazing cattle and local wildlife. However, land use in the project area would not be permanently altered. The project area is not located in a specially-designated area.

### **9. Visual Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would be performed within existing transmission line ROW. Replacement of wood poles and associated components would be in-kind and near the previous pole locations. The project would be consistent with the existing visual quality of the area.

## **10. Air Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Short-term impacts to air quality could occur from dust generated by construction activities and vehicle emissions. However, contractors and TLM would be required to manage dust generation, and impacts from increased vehicle use would be temporary and limited.

## **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. The project area is also remote, on private land, and it's located away from recreational sites and most human activity.

## **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 has coordinated with the landowner.

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

/s/ Greg Tippetts

Greg Tippetts  
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: September 16, 2025