

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: North Camas – Sifton No. 1 Span 6/1 Impairment Excavation

PP&A No.: 6903

Project Manager: Debbie Miller, TELC-TPP-3

Location: Clark County, WA

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B 1.3 Routine Maintenance

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to excavate the ground between structures 6/1 and 6/2 on the North Camas – Sifton No. 1 high voltage transmission line. The North Camas-Sifton No. 1 line runs approximately 8 miles trending northwest from North Camas Substation, owned and operated by Clark Public Utilities, in Clark County, WA, to BPA's Sifton Substation, near the community of Mill Plain, Washington, in Clark County.

The transmission line is 115 kV and is supported by both wood poles and steel lattice structures. In line mile 6 of the line as it trends northwest, between line mile/structure number 6/1 and 6/2, BPA has identified an impairment to the line. An impairment is a location where the distance between the energized conductor and the ground surface does not meet safety and reliability standards. In this location, which is near a residential area in the City of Camas, and adjacent to a local park, the local topography and the sag of the transmission line conductor are impairing the line.

BPA proposes to remove the impairment through excavation using heavy machinery. Topsoil would be scraped and stored on site for later regrading during site restoration. The underlying soil would be excavated and hauled away for off-site disposal. Approximately 40 cubic yards of material would be excavated and disposed, covering approximately 2,500 square feet. The depth of excavation would extend approximately 2 feet. Excavation would disturb an underground sprinkler system operated by the City of Camas. Upon meeting the appropriate grade, the salvaged topsoil would be replaced, the sprinkler system would be repaired, and the site would be stabilized with a soil amendment, hydromulch and seed. The area would be monitored to ensure that final vegetation goals are achieved.

Work would be conducted by a crew of 3 to 6 individuals, and include heavy equipment such as an excavator, grader, and dump truck, as well as light duty trucks and a hydroseed truck. Restoration work would be conducted in an appropriate seeding window to promote revegetation of the underlying soils.

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. ¹

/s/ Aaron Siemers

Aaron Siemers

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange

Katey C. Grange

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: October 29, 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 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: North Camas – Sifton No. 1 Span 6/1 Impairment Excavation

Project Site Description

The project is located in the North Camas-Sifton No. 1 transmission corridor, in a residential area within the town of Camas, in Clark County, Washington. The transmission line is supported by steel lattice towers in this area, and the corridor is approximately 100 feet wide. Vegetation includes common grasses and forbs. The project area and surrounding field is periodically mowed and managed by the City of Camas. A playground is located approximately 300 feet to the southeast. A paved walking and running path is present along the perimeter of the field, as well as residential housing and a city road.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: To evaluate potential impacts to historic and cultural resources, Bonneville Power Administration developed an area of potential effects (APE) and conducted background research as well as an intensive field survey of the APE. The site has been heavily disturbed by community development and the soccer field. On July 14, 2025, BPA initiated consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The consulting parties included the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, and the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). BPA distributed the APE and made a determination that the proposed project would result in no historic properties affected. None of the consulted parties responded during the comment period.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: BPA proposes to excavate and regrade the area to remove the ground impairment. Approximately 40 cubic yards of material would be excavated and disposed off-site. The soils would be regraded to blend in with existing contours and stabilized with hydroseed and mulch. Maximum excavation depth would range from 2 to 4 feet and would not encounter or effect local geologic formations.

Notes:

- Disturbed soils would be treated with a soil amendment to encourage successful revegetation, seeded, and stabilized with hydromulch and tackifier. The area would be monitored periodically to ensure that revegetation goals are met.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Common local grasses and forbs would be impacted by the proposed project. The project site is a field which is periodically cut and managed by the local homeowner's association and has an underground sprinkler system. Excavation and regrading would disturb these plants present in the area. However, BPA would stabilize and revegetate disturbed soils upon project completion and monitor the site to ensure revegetation goals are met.

In accordance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) BPA obtained an official species list from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on September 2, 2025. No ESA-protected plants are listed in the project area, therefore, the project would have "No effect" to ESA-listed plants.

No state-listed or special status plants are documented in the project area.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project is located in the City of Camas in a residential area. Wildlife such as birds or the occasional deer may be impacted by project activity, but the area is developed and disturbances related to human activity are common.

In accordance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA), BPA obtained an official species list from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on September 2, 2025. No ESA-protected wildlife or habitats are listed in the project area, therefore, the project would have "No effect" to ESA-listed wildlife.

No state-listed or special status species are documented in the project area.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No water bodies are present in the project area. The project is not located in a floodplain.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands are present in the project area.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Proposed excavation would be approximately 2 feet maximum depth and therefore would not occur at a depth that would intersect groundwater.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: The project area is owned by the City of Camas and managed by the local homeowner's association. It is currently used as a green space and for recreation. BPA has contacted the City of Camas and the homeowner's association to coordinate the proposed action and solicit comments on the construction and the restoration plan. Upon removal of the impairment, the area would be regraded to blend with existing contours, the existing sprinkler system would be replaced, and disturbed soils would revegetated to return the area to its current land use.

Notes:

- Disturbed soils would be stabilized and revegetated with hydroseed and tackifier and monitored to ensure success of the revegetation efforts.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: The proposed project would temporarily impact the visual quality of the area, disturbing the existing vegetation in the vicinity of the ground impairment. However, the visual impacts would be temporary, as the area would revegetate. In general, the project would not alter the existing visual profile, which consists of a green field within a high-voltage transmission corridor.

Notes:

- Disturbed soils would be stabilized and revegetated with hydroseed and tackifier and monitored to ensure success of the revegetation efforts.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary impacts to air quality would occur due to construction activity. However, impacts would be minor and would only occur during working hours.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary noise impacts would occur due to construction activity. However, impacts would be minor and would only occur during working hours.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA's contractor would develop and implement a Safety Plan to ensure the safety of workers and the general public during implementation of the project, including ensuring that all electrical safety clearances are maintained during construction. In general, the project would benefit human health and safety, as it removes an impairment to the transmission line's safety and reliability.

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 has contacted the City of Camas and the local homeowners associated and coordinated proposed project actions. Additional coordination would occur during construction and post-construction, as necessary.

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

Signed: /s/ Aaron Siemers

Aaron Siemers
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: October 29, 2025