

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Forest Grove-Tillamook No1 3/4 Structure Replacement

PP&A No.: 6946

Project Manager: James Barnhart, TEPL-TPP-1

Location: Washington County, Oregon

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

Description of the Proposed Action: The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing the replacement of structure 3/4 on the Forest Grove-Tillamook No 1 transmission line. The replacement would include associated hardware, guys, and a recently replaced Potential Transformer (PT) on the new structure. Structure 3/4 is currently composed of two wood poles and would be replaced with a single wood pole structure. The replacement structure and guy wires would be replaced in the same location as the existing structure. The work area would be approximately 50 feet by 50 feet and would utilize existing access roads. No new roads or road maintenance would be required.

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. 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/ Steven Selser
Steven Selser
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange
Katey C. Grange Date: December 12, 2025
NEPA Compliance Officer

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.

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Project Site Description

The project is located in northwestern Oregon within the Willamette Valley ecoregion and the Prairie Terraces sub-ecoregion. The Willamette Valley ecoregion is characterized by dry summers and mild and wet winters. The project area is part of a privately owned strip of land located between two densely built housing developments. The transmission line right-of-way (ROW) also acts as a green space for the community. The ROW is vegetated with various grasses and Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*). Adjacent to the project area is a wetland dominated by various grasses and species such as rose spirea (*Spiraea douglasii*) and bulrush (*Typha latifolia*).

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Pursuant to its responsibility under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR 800, BPA initiated consultation with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians on September 19th, 2025. It was determined the proposed project would result in no adverse effects to historic properties on September 19th, 2025. No comments were received from the consulted parties within 30 days.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Localized soil disturbance would occur during wood pole and guy wire replacement. Standard construction erosion control measures would be utilized as necessary to minimize soils from traveling outside of the work areas. The project area is also heavily vegetated, which would naturally provide some erosion and sediment control.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Disturbance to vegetation is anticipated with 50 feet of the existing structure. However, no impacts to state or federally sensitive species is anticipated. Project activities would be limited to the already impacted access road and transmission line ROW 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:

- Streaked Horned Lark (SHL) timing restrictions are between April 16 and August 15, if work is to be performed outside of this period there are no restrictions.
- If work is proposed within the breeding period identified above, the access to the structure location would need to be cleared by the BPA Environmental Representative 1 week prior to commencement of work.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There project area is not located near a water body that supports resident, anadromous or ESA-listed fish

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A wetland is located with the ROW and adjacent to the project area. However, no work would occur in the wetland and sediment would be contained in the work area and would not enter the wetland. Therefore, no wetlands would be impacted due to project activities.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Maximum depth of disturbance would be about 12 feet below ground surface and work is proposed to occur during the dry season when interactions with groundwater would be minimized.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No change in land use would occur. No specially designated areas are present in the work areas.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would be performed within existing transmission line ROW. Replacement of the wood pole and associated components would be similar and replaced in the same location; therefore, there would only be a minor change to the visual quality of the area.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would have temporary impacts 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 project would replace the old, damaged structure on the Forest Grove-Tillamook No1 transmission line and would help to maintain safe and reliable power in the region. Work areas would be monitored and secured to prevent ROW users from accessing work areas during installation.

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 Selser

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: December 12, 2025