

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Sacheen Alternate Station Service – Transformer Move Project (*Update to Previous CX issued November 1, 2021*)

**Project No.:** P04369

**Project Manager:** Cynthia Rounds – TIP-TPP-1

**Location:** Pend Oreille County, WA

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B1.3 Routine Maintenance; B4.6 Additions and modifications to transmission facilities.

**Description of the Proposed Action:** The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow the Pend Oreille Public Utility District (POPUD) to upgrade the existing secondary station service transformer at Sacheen Substation. To upgrade the transformer POPUD would install a new 480/277 Y-Y pad mount transformer, a new CT cabinet, a new service disconnect outside of the substation fence, new underground trenching, approximately 350 ft of conduit and new medium voltage cables on the north side of the substation. BPA would clear trees to accommodate trenching and installation of new medium voltage cables. The POPUD would create a small pad to house these new features and would fence around the new features. The new transformer would help to support recent upgrades at the Sacheen Substation. The station service transformer would be installed on an approximately 10 foot by 10 foot prefabricated concreted pad and accessed by existing substation paved road. This CX has been updated to change transformer type, trenching, and underground cabling.

The proposed action would maintain reliable power in the region. All work would be done in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA Standards.

**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 the current *DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Implementing Procedures*, 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.

*/s/ Adrienne Wojtasz*

Adrienne Wojtasz

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

*/s/ Sarah T. Biegel*

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: March 16, 2026

Attachment(s): Environmental Evaluation

# Categorical Exclusion Environmental Evaluation

This evaluation 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:** Sacheen Alternate Station Service – Transformer Move Project

## **Project Site Description**

The project is located in Eastern Washington surrounded by forested land. The project would occur on previously- disturbed ground that is currently lacking vegetation. No waterbodies or wetlands are near the project work areas. See table below for township, range, section number, county, and state information.

Township	Range	Section	County, State
T31N	R44E	20	Pend Oreille, WA

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

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The BPA contract archaeologist completed background research and an intensive field survey of the proposed project area and determined that the project actions would result in No Adverse Effect to Historic Properties. No previously-recorded archaeological resources were located in the project area. One historic property, the Sacheen Substation, was identified during survey. However, the proposed project activities would not diminish any of the standards under which the substation is considered eligible and would not result in an adverse effect. The determination and report was sent to the consulting parties on September 28th, 2021. The Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and the Spokane Tribe of Indians concurred with BPA's determination on October 12th and September 30th, 2021, respectively. No other responses were received.

Notes: Should any cultural resources be discovered during project activities, then all project work must stop, and the Environmental Protection Specialist should be notified immediately.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: Soils would be disturbed primarily for the installation of a new pad and medium voltage cables.

Notes: The following minimization measures would be implemented.

- During construction all appropriate Best Management Practices (BMP) would be used to implement site specific erosion and sediment control. All disturbed areas would be stabilized and seeded.

### **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. The site would be restored to pre-project condition.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would have minimal impact to wildlife and habitat related to temporary disturbance associated with ground disturbance, elevated noise, and human presence. The project would have no effect to ESA-listed species. No impacts to state special-status species or habitats are anticipated.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: There would be no ground disturbing activities in any river, stream, or other waterbody along the project and no riparian vegetation would be impacted. The project would have no effect to ESA-listed fish species.

Notes: The following minimization measures would be implemented to prevent sediment or contaminants from reaching any waterbodies.

- Erosion control measures would be implemented to prevent sedimentation or dust.
- Appropriately stocked spill response kits would be located on vehicles and landing zones used on this project.

### **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground disturbing activities are anticipated in wetlands. Erosion control measures would be implemented to prevent sedimentation.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No impacts to ground water or aquifers are anticipated as the ground disturbance would not be deep enough to penetrate groundwater.

Notes: The following minimization measures would be implemented to minimize groundwater contamination potential.

- Appropriately stocked spill response kits would be located on vehicles, other equipment, and storage areas.

## 8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No change in land use would occur and project activities would not impact existing land uses.

## 9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed project would have minor impact to visual quality due primarily to the pad mounted transformer and associated fence as these would be new components to the area. This change would not be significant and would be visually consistent with the existing substation.

## 10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A small amount of vehicle emissions and dust may occur temporarily during construction.

## 11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Some temporary construction noise from construction activities would occur during daylight hours.

## 12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No or No with Condition

Explanation: No impacts to humans, health, and safety are anticipated.

### **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: The project area is on BPA-owned land, with no adjacent residences nearby that would warrant notification.

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  
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: March 16, 2026