

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Flagpole Removal on Underwood Tap to Bonneville PH 1-Alcoa Nos. 1 & 2 ROW

Project No.: LURR-20250257

Project Manager: Brent Leslie, TERR-THE DALLES

Location: Skamania County, Washington

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

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow the property owner to remove a flagpole on BPA fee-owned property that has been identified as an encroachment between structures 5/4 and 5/5 on the Underwood Tap to Bonneville PH 1-Alcoa Nos. 1 & 2 transmission line corridor. The flagpole would be cutoff at the base with no ground disturbance occurring from removal.

BPA authorizes the use of and manages its fee-owned lands pursuant to its authority under sections 2(e) and 2(f) of the Bonneville Project Act. 16 U.S.C. § 832a(e)-(f).

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.

Jeremy Doschka
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

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.

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Project Site Description

The project site is located on BPA fee-owned ROW between structures 5/4 and 5/5 on the Underwood Tap to Bonneville PH 1-Alcoa Nos. 1 & 2 transmission line corridor line in Skamania County, Washington (Township 3 North, Range 7 East, Section 36). The flagpole is located in a residential yard consisting of grasses, weeds, and forbs about 8 feet away from Marks Road, which is paved. No wetlands or waterways are located within or adjacent to the project site. Outside of the project site, the surrounding area is primarily low-density residential with undeveloped forested areas to the west. The project site is located within a designated Urban Area of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (CRGNSA).

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: A BPA archaeologist reviewed the proposed action and determined that the project has no potential to cause effects to historic resources in an email dated April 27, 2026.

Notes:

- BPA would require the flagpole to be cut off at the base with no ground disturbance occurring during the removal.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance:

Explanation: No ground disturbance would occur as the flagpole would be cut off at the base.

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

Potential for Significance:

Explanation: There are no Federal or state special-status plant species or habitats at the project site. No ground disturbance would occur as the flagpole would be cut off at the base.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Minor and temporary wildlife disturbance could occur from noise generated by equipment used to cut the flagpole during the day. Wildlife would access adjacent habitat during disturbance and would return upon completion. There are no documented occurrences of any special-status wildlife species near the project site, and no suitable special-status species habitat is present.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No water bodies, floodplains, or fish-bearing streams are present within or near the project area. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact water bodies and floodplains and would have no effect on fish species or habitats.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands are present within or near the project site. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No impacts to groundwater or aquifers would occur as the flagpole would be cut off at the base.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would be consistent with current residential land use. The project site is located entirely within a designated Urban Area of the CRGNSA; therefore, the project would be exempt from the CRGNSA Management Plan.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project site is located in a low-density residential area and the removal of the flagpole would not negatively affect the visual quality of the area.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The removal of the flagpole would likely include the use of electric, hand-held tools. There would be no long-term change in air quality following completion of the proposed action.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Noise generated from removing the flagpole would occur during daylight hours and would likely produce noise at levels greater than ambient conditions; however, the noise would be very short in duration.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The applicant would be responsible for ensuring that all standard safety protocols would be followed to minimize risk to human health and safety. Therefore, the proposed action would not be expected to impact human health and safety.

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 proposed work would occur on BPA fee-owned property. No landowner notification, involvement, or coordination would be required.

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

Signed:

Jeremy Doschka
Environmental Protection Specialist