

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Port Angeles-Sappho No. 1 39/6 Structure Replacement

PP&A No.: 7126

Project Manager: Lisa Schmidt – TIPL-TPP-1

Location: Clallam County, WA

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

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to replace a deteriorating wood pole structure and associated hardware in BPA's Olympia District. The structure proposed for replacement is Port Angeles-Sappho No. 1 39/6. The work would include removing the existing wood pole structures and replacing it in kind in the same location. Trucks and equipment would be staged in the work area, which would be approximately 60 by 40 feet. Existing access roads would be used to access the work area and no additional ground disturbance beyond the existing pole holes is proposed. Fire wraps would also be added.

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 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/ Jonnel Deacon

Jonnel Deacon

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

Date: June 25, 2026

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.

Proposed Action: Port Angeles-Sappho No. 1 39/6 Structure Replacement

Project Site Description

The structure being replaced is located on private property in western Washington's Olympic Peninsula. The surrounding area is predominantly forested and undeveloped. All work would occur within the existing, maintained transmission right-of-way.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Pursuant to its responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR 800, BPA initiated consultation with the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, the Makah Nation, and the Quileute Tribe on June 9, 2026. DAHP concurred with the APE and the determination of no adverse effect on June 9, 2026. No other responses were received within 30 days.

In the unlikely event that cultural material is inadvertently encountered during the implementation of this project, BPA would require that work be halted in the vicinity of the finds until they can be inspected and assessed by BPA and in consultation with the appropriate consulting parties.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Localized soil disturbance within the previously-excavated hole would occur during wood pole replacement. 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: Minimal or no disturbance to vegetation is anticipated. If vegetation would be impacted, it would be crushed in place. There would be no effect to ESA-listed plant species. No impacts to state- or federally-listed sensitive species are anticipated. Project activities would be limited to the already impacted access road and transmission line right-of-way and would not substantially alter existing plant communities.

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

Potential for Significance: No

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, except for marbled murrelet and Northern spotted owl. The United States Fish and Wildlife (FWS) agreed with this not likely to adversely affect determination in a letter dated March 6, 2026 (consultation code FWS/R1/2026-0048860). Impact avoidance and minimization measures are noted below.

Notes:

- Daily timing restrictions (two hours after sunrise and two hours before sunset) would be used at dawn and dusk hours during the murrelet breeding season (April 1 to September 23) if a structure replacement is in or near murrelet habitat. This would apply to all construction-related activities including human presence, vehicle traffic, and road work. Pre-work meetings occurring within two hours of sunrise must occur off-site at a developed location.
- Absolutely no food scraps of any kind or project-related trash of any kind can be left exposed and unattended for any amount of time. No food may be fed to or left for wildlife. All food and project-related trash must be transported off-site after each workday. The BPA environmental lead would inspect the work area and provide trash management recommendations anytime they are on-site and find trash or food being improperly managed.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would not impact water bodies that support resident, anadromous, or ESA-listed fish. Erosion control best management practices combined with the distance to the nearest waterbody (2,100 feet) would ensure that sedimentation would not enter into any water body.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands are documented within the project area.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No use of groundwater proposed. Maximum depth of disturbance would be about 12 feet below ground surface.

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 area.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would be performed within existing transmission line right-of-way. Replacement of the wood pole and associated components would be in kind and replaced in the same location; therefore, there would not be a change to the visual quality of the area.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would have a temporary impact 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 proposed action would help maintain reliable power 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: All activities have been coordinated with landowner.

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

Signed: /s/ Jonnel Deacon Date: June 25, 2026
Jonnel Deacon
Physical Scientist (Environmental)