

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Keeler-Allston No. 1 Impairment Remediation Project

PP&A No.: 6907

Project Manager: Debbie Miller – TELC-TPP-3

Location: Washington County, Oregon

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

Description of the Proposed Action:

BPA proposes to correct four impairments on the Keeler-Allston No. 1 500-kilovolt transmission line. The impairments exist where the conductor can expand and sag, during certain operating conditions, to where it is too close to the ground surface and can potentially create unsafe conditions or cause an outage. Correction of these impairments is necessary to safely operate the Keeler-Allston No. 1 line at its rated capacity within the expected range of operating conditions.

The impairments would be corrected by excavation, using bull dozers, excavators, dump trucks, or other conventional equipment. Excavated material would be hauled off for disposal; however, some sites may be suitable for on-site disposal. Exposed soils would be revegetated or restored to the landowner's specifications. Construction is proposed for summer through early fall 2027.

In total, the excavation area and volume would be about 0.89 acres and 1,260 cubic yards of material, respectively; however, the actual volume is expected to increase once the soil and rock are excavated from the current environment and become less dense.

Span	Township	Range	Section	Area (Square Feet)	Cut Volume (Cubic Yards, In Situ)	Debris Disposal
5/2-5/3	1N	2W	34	1,784	51	Off-site
37/5-38/1	6N	3W	10	13,060	461	Off-site
39/2-39/3	7N	3W	3	3,206	120	Off-site
43/3- 43/4	7N	3W	10	20,612	628	Off-site

Project activities would also include approximately two miles of access road work, including constructing 1.20 miles of ditch, 0.46 mile of roadside clearing, 1.7 miles of mowing, and one equipment landing. As part of the road work, three rock water bars, four drain dips, two gates, and 100 feet of barbed wire fence would be installed.

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/ Oden Jahn

Oden Jahn

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

Date: September 23, 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: Keeler-Allston No. 1 Impairment Remediation Project

Project Site Description

The project area is set within the Valley Foothills of the Willamette Valley Ecoregion and Coast Range Ecoregion in Northwest Oregon. Three impairments are located on private lands, and one is on BPA fee-owned land near Allston Substation. All impairments are in a transmission line corridor that is minimally developed, but nearby land uses include agricultural, rangeland, commercial forestry, and rural residential. Elevations in the project area range from approximately 400 to 660 above sea level.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: BPA initiated consultation with the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on May 12, 2026. BPA sent a determination of no historic properties affected on August 8, 2026, to the consulting parties. BPA received concurrence of its determination from the SHPO on September 2, 2026. No other comments were received during the 30-day response period.

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

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: Impairment remediation and other proposed construction activities are expected to cause temporary soil disturbances that increase the chance of project-related erosion. Site restoration would begin during, and immediately after, construction activities and would incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs). Therefore, the proposed action would have limited temporary impacts on geology and soils.

Notes: This project would incorporate the following BMPs, and others as needed:

- BPA would minimize the work area and route of access to the smallest necessary to safely complete the project.
- Soils would be prepared for revegetation by contouring, if necessary, to blend with existing topography, and by surface-roughening by tracking and/or contour furrows.
- Vegetative cover/stabilization would be re-established by seeding and mulching. An appropriate seed mix would be chosen based on site conditions and applied at the recommended rate and time, unless otherwise specified by landowner.
- Bonded fiber matrix or rolled erosion control products would be utilized for slopes greater than 2.5H:1V (40 percent).

- Wattles would be used where needed to reduce the velocity and spread the flow of rill and sheet runoff.
- Dust control would be used to prevent wind transport of dust from disturbed soil surfaces onto roadways, into drainage systems, and into surface waters.
- Staging, fueling, and materials storage sites would be at least 150 feet from any natural water body or wetland. All equipment fueling operations would utilize pumps, funnels, and absorbent pads. Engine, transmission, and hydraulic oil may be added as needed utilizing funnels and drip pans.
- If a fluid leak is discovered on a piece of construction equipment, drip pans and/or absorbent pads would be placed under the leak to prevent fluid contact with ground or soil surface. The piece of equipment would be removed from the project site within 24 hours and repairs performed prior to returning the equipment to the project.
- Spill containment and cleanup materials would be readily available in construction equipment, staging areas, and at work sites. Any spill response materials used would be replaced within 24 hours.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: No Federal or state special-status plant species are known to occur within a mile of the project area.

Vegetation including grasses, forbs, and sagebrush would be crushed or excavated during project construction. In the long term, vegetation would be reestablished with seeding after project construction. There are no documented occurrences of any special-status plant species near the project area, and no suitable special-status species habitat is present.

Notes: The following conservation measures would be implemented during this project:

- Machines, vehicles, and other equipment would be cleaned prior to working within the project area.
- Weeds or other unwanted vegetation would not be spread.
- Vehicles and equipment would stay within authorized work areas.
- Soil disturbance beyond the footprint of authorized roads, landings, and impairment remediation sites would be minimized.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: Columbian white-tailed deer are the only ESA-listed species that are potentially present in the project area (near Allston Substation only). Project activities may temporarily disturb individual Columbian white-tailed deer if present in the project area at the time of these activities. Therefore, BPA determined that the proposed project may affect but is not likely to adversely affect Columbian white-tailed deer. BPA made a determination that the project would be consistent with scope of activities and action area evaluated in the USFWS' Biological Opinion (BiOp) and letter of concurrence (LOC) regarding Bonneville Power Administration Routine Inspections and Right-of-Way Maintenance in Western Oregon, Ecosphere Project Code 2023-0041665-S7, dated January 14, 2025. There are no state special-status wildlife species are known to occur within a mile of the project area.

Non-sensitive wildlife that may utilize the project area could be affected by construction noise, use of equipment, and human activity; however, these impacts would be temporary, would only occur during daylight hours, and habitat would not be modified in a way that would preclude the future use of the project area.

Notes: The following conservation measures would be implemented during this project:

- Work would not occur between June 1 to July 1 during the Columbian white-tailed deer breeding season for all work occurring near Allston Substation associated with the impairment in the span 43/3- 43/4.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project activities are not expected to impact water bodies, floodplains, or fish.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project activities are located on existing roads and in upland areas and are not expected to impact wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project activities are not expected to impact groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no specially-designated areas in the project area.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Areas that would be excavated would be re-contoured to match the surrounding topography to minimize the long-term visual impact.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed project would utilize conventional equipment powered by petroleum fuels. Exhaust would temporarily impact air quality in the immediate vicinity while the equipment is in operation. Additionally, dust may be created by excavation activities and driving on unpaved access roads. Dust creation would be isolated to small areas and relatively short in duration. Water would be used for dust suppression if needed. Baseline air quality conditions are expected to return shortly after project activities cease.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: During project activities, use of vehicles and general construction activities would create noise above current ambient conditions. Work would take place during daylight hours, for approximately eight hours per day. The project would be relatively short in duration – not expected to last more than approximately a week in any one impairment location. The baseline operational noise of the transmission line would not change.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

- Explanation: Work crews would follow appropriate safety precautions. Final site conditions would be consistent with existing conditions.

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 notified, and continues to coordinate with, private landowners.

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

Signed: /s/ Oden Jahn Date: September 23, 2026
Oden Jahn
Physical Scientist (Environmental)