

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Ross District, 2017 Priority Wood Pole Replacements

**Project Manager:** Jim Semrau, TEP-TPP-1

**Location:** Columbia and Washington, Counties, Oregon and Clark County Washington

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B1.3: Routine maintenance

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to replace a total of about 22 deteriorating wood-pole structures and associated hardware and guys along five different transmission lines in BPA's Ross District. For all structures, the work will include removing the existing wood-pole structures (and guy wires if present) and replacing them with in-kind structures in the same location.

Where needed, the project also includes improvements to existing access roads and landings associated with the above-mentioned transmission line rights-of-way that currently inhibit access at the specified locations for routine maintenance. Dependent on the structure location and access road conditions, the project may include surface improvements of existing road surfaces and landings (blading & rocking) as well as improvements and in-kind replacements of existing drainage features.

See table below for structure names and locations on the transmission lines.

Transmission Line	Structure(s)	Township	Range	Section	Land Use
Allston-Driscoll No. 2	11/2	7N	4W	17	Rural Residential
	17/4, 17/5	7N	5W	8	Rural Residential
Keeler-Oregon City No. 2	1/4, 1/5, 1/6	1N	2W	23	Industrial/ BPA
North Camas-Oak Park No. 1	1/4, 1/6	1N	4E	41	Agricultural
	1/7	1N	4E	6	Agricultural
St. Helens-Allston No. 1	9/3	5N	1W	6	Agricultural
	9/8	6N	2W	36	Agricultural
	14/4, 14/5, 14/6, 14/7	6N	2W	11	Private Timber
	15/5	6N	2W	3	Rural Residential
	16/5, 17/2	7N	2W	34	City of Rainier
	17/3	7N	2W	27	City of Rainier
Ross-Vancouver Shipyard No. 1	3/6, 3/7, 3/8	2N	1E	43	Residential

**Findings:** In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) 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, July 9, 1996; 61 FR 64608, Dec. 6, 1996, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011), BPA has determined that the proposed action:

- (1) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D (see attached Environmental Checklist);
- (2) does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- (3) has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

*/s/ Phil Smith for*  
Greg Tippetts EPR/Olympia  
Ross District Environmental Scientist

Concur:

*/s/ Stacy L. Mason*  
Stacy L. Mason  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: July 11, 2017

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

## 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.

**Proposed Action:** Ross District, 2017 Priority Wood Pole Replacements

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### Project Site Description

All work would be done in existing managed rights-of-way that cross BPA fee owned, private agricultural, private industrial, private timber, rural residential, and City of Rainier lands.

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. <b>Historic and Cultural Resources</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> A cultural resources survey and Section 106 consultation was completed for the project APEs. No resources were identified in the vicinity of the proposed work areas. Washington DAHP agreed with an effects determination from the survey report on 6/12/17, Log No.: 2017-01-00656-BPA. Additionally, Oregon SHPO received the survey report on 6/12/17 for project locations in Oregon. OR SHPO did not respond or comment on the report, and the 30 day comment period has expired. If resources are discovered during construction activities, work would cease and the appropriate archaeological resources (BPA and WA DAHP) would be contacted.</p>		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Sites would be stabilized upon completion of project activities. Where appropriate, storm water BMPs would be used during the project to protect the surrounding area from runoff and erosion issues.</p>		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Work would occur in areas maintained as an open transmission line corridor; no vegetation would be removed and no special-status species are present.</p>		
4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Work would occur in areas maintained as an open transmission line corridor with little wildlife habitat; no mapped special-status species are known to be present.</p>		
5. <b>Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish</b> (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> None of the proposed sites are located directly adjacent to any rivers, lakes, wetlands or other water resources. Where appropriate storm water BMPs would be used during the project to protect the surrounding areas from runoff and erosion issues. Sites would be stabilized upon completion of project</p>		

activities. No in water work is authorized for any of the project sites. No FEMA-mapped floodplains are mapped within the project site.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: None of the proposed sites are located within, directly adjacent to, or within the influence of any wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: Project activities do not have the potential to impact groundwater or aquifers, including public and private water wells or springs. All spills would be addressed immediately and follow BPA protocol for cleanup and regulatory notifications.

8. **Land Use and Specially Designated Areas**



Explanation: The project locations are confined to the existing transmission line ROW corridors. Surrounding land uses include BPA fee owned, private agricultural, private industrial, private timber, rural residential, and City of Rainier properties. Project locations do not include any special designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: Proposed action at existing facilities would not alter or effect visual quality. Structure replacements are in-kind and would not be visibly different from the existing structures.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: The project has a short duration and involves normal construction equipment activities. A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions is expected due to construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: The majority of the project sites are located away from any populated areas and places of high residential use. Noise disturbance would be limited to general construction equipment activities, would be for a short duration, and would occur during daylight hours.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No known hazardous conditions are known. Completion of this project would increase system stability and reliability to the service area.

### **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, if necessary:

- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation, if necessary:

- 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, if necessary:

- 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, if necessary:

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### **Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description: Notifications via mailed letters will be sent to all current landowners approximately 3-8 weeks prior to project initiation. The letters provide contact information for BPA to allow feedback from landowners concerning the proposed work.

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

Signed: */s/ Phil Smith for*  
Greg Tippetts KEPR/Olympia  
Olympia District Environmental Scientist

Date: *July 11, 2017*