

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Lexington-Longview No. 1 transmission structure rebuilds

Project Manager: Tina Edwards, TEPO-TPP-1

Location: Cowlitz County, Washington; BPA's Olympia Maintenance District

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

Description of the Proposed Action: Due to an active landslide, BPA is proposing to remove one transmission line structure and rebuild four structures along the Lexington-Longview No. 1 115-kv transmission line in Cowlitz County, Washington. The structures are H-frame wood pole structures; Structure 2/5 was directly affected by the landslide and will be completely removed so the line will span the landslide. Structures 2/4, 2/6, 2/7, and 2/8 will be rebuilt as taller structures to accommodate the new longer line span and line design.

Minor reconstruction of existing access roads and equipment staging areas (landings) will be required for access to the structure locations. Reconstruction may include mowing, leveling/blading, and addition of crushed gravel to the roads and landings. The poles of the existing structures will be cut off at ground level. New holes will be dug adjacent to the existing structure locations using a backhoe. The new taller poles will be placed and backfilled using the excavated material. Conductor stringing and tensioning equipment will be placed on existing access roads and landings on either end of the pole spans being replaced.

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

Transmission Line	Structure(s)	Township	Range	Section	Land Use
Lexington-Longview No. 1	2/4 to 2/8	8N	2W	4	Private timber

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
Olympia District Environmental Scientist

Concur:

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

Date: July 31, 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: Lexington-Longview No. transmission structure rebuilds

Project Site Description

All work would be done in existing managed transmission line right-of-way that crosses private industrial land (an adjacent gravel pit) and private timber lands. The terrain is hilly and steep in areas, and portions of the right-of-way have low growing brush.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. Historic and Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> A cultural resources survey and Section 106 consultation was completed for the project APE. No resources were identified in the vicinity of the proposed work areas. Washington DAHP agreed with BPA's determination of no effect to historic resources on 6/26/17, Log No.: 2017-06-04291-BPA. The Cowlitz Indian Tribe was contacted and provided with the survey of the project locations. No comments were received from the Cowlitz Tribe. If resources are discovered during construction activities, work would cease and the appropriate archaeological resources (BPA and WA DAHP) would be contacted.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<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. Plants (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. Wildlife (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. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> 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 activities. No in water work is authorized for any of the project sites. No FEMA-mapped floodplains are mapped within the project site.</p>		

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| 6. Wetlands | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> None of the proposed sites are located within, directly adjacent to, or within the influence of any wetlands. | | |
| 7. Groundwater and Aquifers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> 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 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> The project locations are confined to the existing transmission line ROW corridors. Surrounding land uses include private industrial and private timber properties. Project locations do not include any special designated areas. | | |
| 9. Visual Quality | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> 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 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> 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 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> The project is located away from any populated areas and places of residence. 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 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> 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:

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/managers concerning the proposed project.

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

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

Date: *July 31, 2017*