

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: North Bend Transmission Line Maintenance (TLM) District Priority Poles & Access Road Maintenance Project, P03027

PP&A No.: 4196

Project Manager: Sarah Hall – TEPL-TPP-1

Location: Lane, Douglas, and Coos counties, Oregon

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

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to replace 16 structures and improve access roads on the Fairview-Bandon No. 1, Reedsport-Fairview No. 1, Tahkenitch-Reedsport No. 1, Wendson-Tahkenitch No. 1, and Wendson Sub Tie No. 1 transmission lines. These lines are located in BPA's North Bend TLM District (Table 1). The proposed work is necessary to maintain or repair existing transmission line infrastructure and access roads. The proposed project would include the following work elements:

- Replacement of 16 wood pole transmission structures (in-kind)
- Reconstruction of 325 feet of existing access roads (re-shape subgrade and place rock)
- Improvement of 1.31 miles of existing access roads (re-grade surface and place rock), including maintenance of associated drainage features (water bars, cross drain culverts, drain dips)
- Construct/improve ten equipment landings (50 feet x 50 feet)

If needed, additional project work may include: grading and shaping of existing equipment landings and roads, installation of geotextile material, placement of crushed rock, compacting road surface, and maintenance of gates and drainage features.

The work would be done using conventional utility line and construction equipment and techniques, and would occur in the summer of 2019.

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, Jul. 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/ Oden Jahn
Oden Jahn
Physical Scientist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel
Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: June 20, 2019

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.

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Project Site Description

The proposed project is located in Lane, Douglas, and Coos counties, Oregon. All work locations are in upland areas between the Oregon Coast Mountain Range and the Pacific Ocean.

Table 1.

| Transmission Line/ROW | Structure(s) | Township/Range/Section | County, State | Land Ownership/Use |
|-------------------------|--------------|------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| Wendson Sub Tie #1 | 1/1, 1/2 | T18S, R11W, S16 | Lane, OR | BPA Fee/Substation |
| Wendson-Tahkenitch #1 | 20/5 | T21S, R12W, S14 | Douglas, OR | Private/Forestry |
| Tahkentich-Reedsport #1 | 4/15 | T21S, R12W, S34 | Douglas, OR | Private/Urban Commercial |
| Reedsport- Fairview #1 | 2/4 | T22S, R12W, S5 | Douglas, OR | Private/Forestry |
| | 4/1 | T22S, R12W, S17 & S20 | Douglas, OR | Private/Forestry |
| | 7/4 | T22S, R12W, S31 | Douglas, OR | State of Oregon/Forestry |
| | 10/1 | T23S, R12W, S7 | Douglas, OR | Private/Undeveloped |
| | 12/7 | T23S, R13W, S25 | Coos, OR | Private/Forestry |
| | 17/4 | T24S, R12W, S19 | Coos, OR | Private/Forestry |
| | 17/5 | T24S, R12W, S20 | Coos, OR | Private/Forestry |
| | 22/2 | T25S, R12W, S8 | Coos, OR | Private/Forestry |
| Fairview-Bandon #1 | 11/5, 11/6 | T28S, R12W, S21 | Coos, OR | Private/Forestry |
| | 20/1 | T28S, R13W, S32 | Coos, OR | Private/Forestry |
| | 23/1 | T28S, R14W, S35 | Coos, OR | Private/Forestry |

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 type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><u>Explanation:</u> BPA conducted a review of historic properties, and surveys for archaeological resources, that may occur in the proposed project areas. Determination letters were sent to tribes and the Oregon SHPO on May 13, 2019. On June 5, 2019, the Oregon SHPO concurred with BPA's determination of no adverse effect to archaeological resources. The Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua & Siuslaw Indians responded on June 13, 2019. They have requested that an archaeological monitor be present for work at structure 10/1 of the Reedsport-Fairview No. 1 transmission line.</p> <p>As expressed by the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua & Siuslaw Indians during the Section 106 consultation process, BPA updated its Inadvertent Discovery Plan to include the statement that no photographs of ancestral remains would be taken, and language has been included stating that work would not resume until a treatment plan is developed and agreed upon in consultation with the SHPO and appropriate Tribes is set in place.</p> <p>In the event that archaeological or historical materials are discovered during project activities, work in the immediate vicinity would stop, the area would be secured, and the BPA archaeologist and the environmental project lead would be notified. The BPA archaeologist would notify consulting parties. Work would not commence until the SHPO has cleared the area.</p> | | |
| 2. Geology and Soils | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><u>Explanation:</u> All wood pole replacements will be in-kind and be placed in the same location as the existing poles. Minor augering of the existing holes may be necessary. The proposed roadway improvements would reduce erosion and degradation of the existing access roads. All disturbed soils outside of the road prism would be seeded with a native seed mix appropriate for the region, and mulched, to further stabilize soils. No prime or unique farmlands would be affected. Therefore, the proposed action would have limited temporary impacts to geology and soils.</p> | | |
| 3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><u>Explanation:</u> Other than Tahkentich-Reedsport #1 structure 4/15, located in the City of Reedsport, all project activities would take place in upland areas within maintained transmission rights-of-way and access roads. These project areas exhibit considerably different vegetation than the surrounding dense forest vegetation, and lack suitable habitat characteristics for sensitive plant species found in this region, which tend to favor lowlands and wetlands. Thus, it is unlikely that Federal or State special-status plant species would occur within project areas. All disturbed soils would be seeded with a native seed mix appropriate for the region, and then mulched, immediately following construction. Therefore, the proposed action would not affect special-status plant species.</p> | | |
| 4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><u>Explanation:</u> No Federal/state special-status have been documented near the proposed project areas, and the work is in previously disturbed areas. Therefore, the project would not impact Federal/state wildlife species.</p> | | |
| 5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><u>Explanation:</u> There are no floodplains present within the proposed work area. Oregon Coast coho salmon are present in the general project area; however, the proposed project activities are in upland areas at least 350 feet from permanent and seasonal waterways with documented coho presence. No impacts to water, floodplains, or fish are expected to result from the proposed project.</p> | | |

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: Project areas are located in uplands and project activities do not have the potential to impact wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

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

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

Explanation: No change in land use is proposed as part of the project. No specially-designated areas were identified within the project limits. The project would not result in changes or impacts to land use or specially-designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: The project would not alter visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: Exhaust and dust from utility equipment may temporarily reduce air quality in the immediate project area.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: Construction noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: BPA personnel would develop a site-specific health and safety plan to address any hazards during the proposed work. The proposed work is necessary to ensure ongoing safe and reliable operation of the transmission line and to maintain power delivery 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, 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

BPA would contact adjacent and potentially affected landowners prior to project construction.

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
Oden Jahn
Physical Scientist

Date: June 20, 2019