

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** FY23 Expedited Priority Wood Pole Replacements Standard Removal

**PP&A No.:** 4912

**Project Manager:** Rusty Ludt IV – TELP-TPP-1

**Location:** Linn, Lane, Coos, and Washington Counties in Oregon, and Douglas, and Spokane Counties in Washington

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

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to perform in-kind replacement of 46 wood pole structures and associated structural/electrical components (e.g. cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) along several transmission lines. Replacement poles would be placed in or adjacent to existing holes following removal of current pole structures and may be re-augured to assure proper depth placement. Typical equipment used for standard pole removal includes: line and boom trucks, and rubber tired backhoes. Under this standard removal process, poles would not be removed if within a wetland, nor would poles be removed where a migratory bird or other species timing restriction applies. Wood pole replacement locations and responsible Transmission Line Maintenance (TLM) District(s) are listed in the table below.

Transmission Line	TLM District	Structure	TRS	County, State
Albany-Lebanon No.1	Alvey	4/1	T11S R3W SEC20	Linn, OR
Bandon-Rogue No. 1	N. Bend	6/1	T29S R14W SEC30	Coos, OR
Eugene-Alvey No. 2	Alvey	7/7	T18S R4W SEC14	Lane, OR
Grand Coulee-Foster Creek No. 1	Grand Coulee	9/1, 9/2, 9/5, 9/7	T29N R29E SEC22	Douglas, WA
		15/1, 15/2	T29N R28E SEC23	
		20/4, 20/6	T29N R27E SEC23	
		21/7, 21/8	T29N R27E SEC22	
		25/2	T29N R27E SEC19	
		27/2	T29N R26E SEC26	
Grand Coulee-Okanogan No. 2	Grand Coulee	3/9	T29N R30E SEC33	Douglas, WA
		4/2, 4/3, 4/7	T29N R30E SEC28	
		5/1, 5/2	T29N R30E SEC29	
		5/7, 5/8, 6/3	T29N R30E SEC20	
		6/6, 7/1, 7/6	T29N R30E SEC18	
		8/3, 8/8, 9/2	T29N R29E SEC12	
		9/5	T29N R29E SEC11	

**Continued from above-**

Transmission Line	TLM District	Structure	TRS	County, State
Grand Coulee-Okanogan No. 2	Grand Coulee	10/4	T29N R29E SEC2	Douglas, WA
		12/6, 12/7, 12/8, 13/1	T30N R29E SEC33	
		14/6	T30N R29E SEC20	
		15/2, 15/4	T30N R29E SEC19	
		15/8, 16/1, 16/2, 16/3, 16/4	T30N R29E SEC18	
Green Bluff Tap to Bell-Trentwood No. 2	Bell	2/7	T26N R44E SEC16	Spokane, WA
Timber Tap to Forest Grove-Tillamook No. 1	Chemawa	10/4	T3N R5W SEC15	Washington, OR

The proposed action would maintain reliable power in the region. All work would be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA standards.

**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/ Kevin George  
 Kevin George  
 Environmental Protection Specialist

/s/ Katey Grange  
 Katey Grange  
 NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: May 12, 2023

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:** FY23 Expedited Priority Wood Pole Replacements Standard Removal

## **Project Site Description**

Proposed routine maintenance activities would be conducted along the Albany-Lebanon No. 1, Bandon-Rogue No. 1, Eugene-Alvey No. 2, Grand Coulee-Foster Creek No. 1, Grand Coulee-Okanogan No. 2, Green Bluff Tap to Bell-Trentwood No. 2, and Timber Tap to Forest Grove-Tillamook No. 1 transmission lines. Proposed maintenance activities would be performed in the existing transmission line right-of-ways, which are located in rural, developed, and agricultural areas. Land in the project areas is privately owned and managed.

## **Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources**

### **1. Historic and Cultural Resources**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA initiated consultation and made a determination of no adverse effect to historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act on April 4 and April 7 for project locations in Oregon. Letters were sent to the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO); Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians; Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon; Coquille Indian Tribe; Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians; Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde; and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. The Oregon SHPO concurred with the determination made on April 4 in a letter sent to BPA on May 2, 2023. No response was received from any other party.

BPA initiated consultation and made a determination of no adverse effect to historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act on April 11 and 12 for project locations in Washington. Letters were sent to the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Spokane Tribe of Indians, Coeur d'Alene Tribe, Kalispel Tribe of Indians. The DAHP concurred on April 20, 2023. No response was received from any other party.

Other than historic transmission lines, no cultural resources were identified during the review of the project locations in Oregon or Washington.

Notes: In the event any archaeological material is encountered during project activities, stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead, archaeologist, and project manager.

## **2. Geology and Soils**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Localized soil disturbance would occur during wood pole replacements and landing improvements. 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: No known Federal/state special-status plants are present in the project area. Vegetation would be crushed and left in place, rather than bladed, where possible. Any disturbed areas outside the road prism would be reseeded with an appropriate seed mix.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project area does not include habitat for any Federal or State special-status species. There would be no effect to ESA-listed species in the area. Project activities would be limited to the already impacted right-of-way and would not substantially alter the footprint or operational noise of the line; therefore, wildlife and associated habitat would not be affected.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No in-water work is proposed for this project. There are no fish in the vicinity of the project area. Standard construction erosion control measures would be utilized to ensure sediment and other contaminants do not enter bodies of water; therefore, water bodies, floodplains, and fish would not be affected by the proposed project activities.

## **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands are present in the vicinity of the project area.

## **7. Groundwater and Aquifers**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No use of groundwater proposed and excavation would not extend to a depth that would intersect groundwater.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No specially-designated areas were identified within the project area. Land use would not change as a result of project activities.

## 9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would be performed within existing transmission line rights-of-way. Replacement of wood poles and associated components would be in-kind and replaced in the same location.

## 10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would have a small, temporary impact on air quality from a small amount of vehicle emissions and dust generated during construction.

## 11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Some temporary construction noise would occur during daylight hours. The operational noise of the transmission line would not change.

## 12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: The proposed action would allow safe and timely access to the transmission line which would help reduce outage times and 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: BPA Realty personnel would perform landowner notifications 30-days prior to project initiation and any concerns regarding proposed transmission line maintenance activities would be addressed.

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

Signed: /s/ Kevin George

Kevin George – EPI-4  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Date: May 12, 2023