

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: FY19 Ellensburg District Priority Pole Replacements
(Update to previous categorical exclusion issued on June 14, 2019)

PP&A No.: 4199

Project Manager: Meadow Nelson

Location: Benton and Yakima Counties, 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 replace deteriorating wood pole structures and associated structural/electrical components (e.g. cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) on the Chandler Tap to Grandview-Red Mountain #1 and Grandview-Red Mountain #1 transmission lines in the Ellensburg district.

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

Transmission Line/ROW	Structure #	Township	Range	Section	County, State
Chandler Tap to Grandview-Red Mountain #1	1/1, 1/2, 1/3, 1/4, 1/5, 1/6, 1/7	9N	26E	17	Benton, WA
	1/8, 1/9, 1/10, 2/1, 2/2, 2/3	9N	26E	8	
	2/6, 2/7, 3/2, 3/6, 3/7, 3/8	9N	26E	5	
Grandview-Red Mountain #1	1/3	9N	23E	1	Yakima, WA
	2/12	9N	24E	5	Benton, WA
	5/1	10N	24E	34	
	5/12	10N	24E	35	
	6/8, 7/3	10N	24E	36	
	8/3	10N	25E	31	
	10/3	10N	25E	33	
	10/5	10N	25E	34	
	11/6, 11/7	10N	25E	35	
	14/1	10N	26E	31	
	15/4	10N	26E	33	
	16/11	10N	26E	34	
	17/9	10N	26E	35	
	18/8	10N	26E	36	
18/12	9N	26E	1		

Replacement would be in-kind and would utilize the existing holes to minimize ground disturbance. On average, the impact area is 50x50 feet. If necessary, an auger would be used to remove any loose soil from the existing hole prior to new wood pole placement.

Access road maintenance would be limited to minor blading, grading, and rocking of access road segments that have become impassable. Majority of road maintenance would take place in the existing road prism. One segment of new construction is required for access to Chandler Tap to Grandview-Red Mountain #1 structure 1/3. The length of new construction is 300 feet. Appropriate erosion control best management practices (BMPs) would be implemented for this new construction.

Structures being replaced are in easements on privately-owned property and DNR lands. These structures are located within or adjacent to residential properties, pastures, dry land wheat farming, or similar type land uses.

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. 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/ Shawn Barndt
Shawn L. Barndt
Tri Cities RMHQ

Concur:

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

Date: December 3, 2019

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

cc: (w/ enclosures)
B. Thompson – TFWF-SCHULTZ

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: FY19 Ellensburg District Priority Pole Replacements

Project Site Description

These structures are located within or adjacent to residential properties, pastures, dry land wheat farming, or similar type land uses.

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> WA DAHP concurrence on no adverse effect determination was received May 9, 2019. The Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation were consulted, but did not respond during the 30-day period. The Washington Department of Natural Resources was also consulted, but did not respond during the 30-day period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the event that archaeological or historic materials are discovered during project activities, work in the immediate vicinity must stop, the area would be secured, and SHPO and the environmental project lead must be notified.• Crews and equipment are to use existing access roads to and from each work site.• Limit access road maintenance to the existing road prism.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Minimal soil disturbance for pole replacements (impact area is 50x50 feet); erosion control measures would be used where appropriate (i.e. road construction).</p>		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species present. Area of disturbance is frequently disturbed by agricultural operations.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species or designated habitat present. Area is previously disturbed by agriculture and road development.</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> No water bodies present in project area.</p>		

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| 6. Wetlands | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> None present. | | |
| 7. Groundwater and Aquifers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> No wells or use of groundwater proposed. Spill prevention measures would be present on site. Maximum depth of ground disturbance would be 10 feet. | | |
| 8. Land Use and Specially Designated Areas | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> Temporary agricultural impacts during construction; landowners would be compensated for crop damage, as needed. | | |
| 9. Visual Quality | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> New wood-poles would not be noticeably different than existing poles. | | |
| 10. Air Quality | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> Temporary and small amount of dust and vehicle emissions due to construction. Dust would be of minor concern due to the timing of construction. | | |
| 11. Noise | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> Temporary construction noise. Operational noise would not change. | | |
| 12. Human Health and Safety | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> No known soil contamination or hazardous conditions. The proposed action 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, 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: Coordination with property owners has occurred. No concerns have been expressed.

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

Signed: /s/ Shawn L. Barndt
Shawn L. Barndt, Tri Cities RMHQ

Date: December 3, 2019