

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Grand Coulee TLM District FY 20 / 21 Wood Pole Replacements

Project No.: 4381

Project Manager: Rusty Ludt IV – TEPL-TPP-1

Location: Douglas and Lincoln Counties, 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) proposes to perform in-kind replacement of 18 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. Minor maintenance at landings is scheduled to be performed where necessary to facilitate safe access. Temporary cribbing may be utilized to level and stabilize line truck our-riggers.

Wood pole replacement locations are listed below:

| Transmission Line | Structure | TRS | County, State |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Grand Coulee-Okanogan No. 2 | 6/4, 6/5 | T29N R30E SEC19 | Douglas, WA |
| | 6/7, 6/8 | T29N R29E SEC18 | Douglas, WA |
| | 9/4 | T29N R29E SEC11 | Douglas, WA |
| | 10/8 | T29N R29E SEC3 | Douglas, WA |
| Grand Coulee-Chief Joseph No. 2 | 23/9 | T29N R27E SEC20 | Douglas, WA |
| Grand Coulee-Foster Creek No. 1 | 21/10, 22/1 | T29N R29E SEC29 | Douglas, WA |
| | 25/1 | T29N R29E SEC19 | Douglas, WA |
| Grand Coulee-Chief Joseph No. 1 | 14/9 | T29N R28E SEC23 | Douglas, WA |
| | 26/8 | T29N R26E SEC26 | Douglas, WA |

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/ Adrienne Wojtasz
Adrienne Wojtasz
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange
Katey C. Grange Date: July 25, 2022
NEPA Compliance Officer

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: Grand Coulee Grand Coulee TLM District FY 20 / 21 Wood Pole Replacements

Project Site Description

Proposed routine maintenance activities would be conducted along the Grand Coulee-Chief Joseph No. 1, Grand Coulee-Chief Joseph No. 2, Grand Coulee-Okanogan No. 2, and Grand Coulee-Foster Creek No. 1 transmission lines. Proposed maintenance activities would be performed in the existing transmission line right-of-ways and access road easements which are located in rural, agricultural and undeveloped areas. Land in the project area is owned and managed privately, by the State of Washington Fish and Wildlife, and Washington Department of Natural Resources.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA archeologists performed cultural resource surveys and analyzed the potential for the project to effect historic properties. Based on their findings BPA determined that the project would result in no adverse effect to historic properties. BPA sent consultation documentation detailing their assessment of the effects on June 16, 2022. On June 16, 2022 the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) concurred with BPA's APE and determination. The consultation period ended July 16, 2022. No additional responses were received.

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-ways and would not substantially alter the footprint or operational noise of the line; therefore, wildlife and associated habitat would not be permanently affected. Minor elevated noise and human presence may occur during the work period to cause a temporary disruption to area wildlife.

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 right-of-ways. 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 vehicle emissions and dust generated during construction.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

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

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would allow safe and timely access to the transmission line, which would help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power to 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 the project initiation and any concerns regarding proposed transmission line maintenance activities would be addressed. BPA realty has coordinated with WDFW and DNR regarding work proposed on publically-managed lands.

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

Signed: /s/ Adrienne Wojtasz
Adrienne Wojtasz – EPR-Bell-1,
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: July 25, 2022