

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Shelton-Fairmount Priority Pole Replacements

**Project No.:** 4905

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

**Location:** Jefferson and Mason 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) is proposing to replace deteriorating wood pole structures and any associated hardware and guys at specific locations in BPA's Olympia District. The seven structures proposed for replacement include Shelton-Fairmount #1 1/1, 2/2, 12/2, 14/5, 15/8, 34/3, and 44/3. For all structures, the work would include removing the existing wood pole structures (and guy wires if present) and replacing them with in-kind in the same location. Work areas would be about 50 feet by 50 feet at each of the structure replacement locations. BPA is also proposing to remove jumpers and associated wire from a switching structure inside Duckabush Substation. This would reduce the outage impacts on customers during this work and going forward. The planned work would require a single, overnight outage that is planned for August 2023. Existing access roads would be used to access the work areas.

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/ Jonnel Deacon

Jonnel Deacon

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange

Katey Grange

Date: July 17, 2023

NEPA Compliance Officers

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:** Shelton-Fairmount Priority Pole Replacements

## **Project Site Description**

Structures being replaced are in a mix of urban and forest land. No waterbodies or wetlands would be impacted in project work areas. Land ownership consists of private and tribal lands.

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

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Pursuant to its responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR 800, BPA initiated consultation with the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, the Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe, the Skokomish Indian Tribe, and the Suquamish Tribe on May 30, 2023. In the same letter, BPA determined that the project would have no adverse effect to historic properties. One historic property, the Shelton-Fairmount transmission line, is within the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the project, but the in-kind replacement of transmission poles is considered routine maintenance and does not constitute an adverse effect. DAHP concurred with the APE and the determination of no adverse effect on May 31, 2023. No other responses were received within 30 days.

In the unlikely event that cultural material is inadvertently encountered during the implementation of this project, BPA will require that work be halted in the vicinity of the finds until they can be inspected and assessed by BPA and in consultation with the appropriate consulting parties.

### **2. Geology and Soils**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Localized soil disturbance would occur during wood pole replacement. 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: Minimal disturbance to vegetation is anticipated. There would be no effect to ESA-listed plant species. No impacts to state or federally sensitive species are anticipated.

Project activities would be limited to the already impacted access road and transmission line right-of-way and would not substantially alter existing plant communities.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: In general, the project would have a small impact to wildlife and habitat related to temporary disturbance associated with elevated equipment noise and human presence. The project would have no impacts to state or federally listed sensitive species.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project area is not located within a floodplain and there are no nearby water bodies that support resident, anadromous, or ESA-listed fish. Erosion control best management practices combined with the distance to the nearest waterbody would ensure that sedimentation would not enter into any water body.

#### **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No with conditions

Explanation: No wetlands are documented within the project area. No impacts to wetlands are anticipated.

#### **7. Groundwater and Aquifers**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No use of groundwater proposed. Maximum depth of disturbance would be about 12 feet below ground surface.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No change in land use. No specially-designated areas.

#### **9. Visual Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would be performed within existing transmission line right-of-way. Replacement of the wood pole and associated components would be in kind and replaced in the same location; therefore, there would not be a change to the visual quality of the area.

## 10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

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

## 11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be temporary construction noise. Operational 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 in the region. The outage would be coordinated with Mason County PUD and their customers.

### 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: All activities have been coordinated with landowners and Mason PUD utility customers.

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

Signed: /s/ Jonnel Deacon    Date: July 17, 2023  
Jonnel Deacon  
EPR-Chemawa