

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: City of Port Angeles Transmission Structure Removal and Replacement at Port Angeles Substation

Project No.: LURR-20230365

Project Manager: Ralette Churchwell, TERR-OLYMPIA

Location: Clallam County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.9 Multiple use of powerline rights-of-way; B4.13 Upgrading and rebuilding existing powerlines

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow the City of Port Angeles (the City) to remove and replace wood monopole structures on the City's 69 kilovolt (kV) transmission line located on BPA fee-owned property immediately north of Port Angeles Substation in Port Angeles, Clallam County, Washington. The City would remove three existing, approximately 50-foot tall, wood monopole structures and replace them with two new wood monopole structures of approximately the same height. The two new structures would be located approximately 8 feet north of the Port Angeles Substation fence and shifted slightly east and west from the current structure locations.

Existing wood poles would be removed by excavating around the bases and lifting the poles out of the ground. The new poles would be installed in holes augured to a depth of approximately seven feet. Excavated soils would be temporarily stockpiled onsite and then used for backfill or spread evenly around the bases of the structures. Once the new structures are in place, the existing conductor and fiber would be reattached. The proposed action is anticipated to temporarily disturb approximately 0.1 acres, which would eventually stabilize as vegetation is reestablished and would return to pre-existing conditions following completion of the proposed action. Completion of the project would require the use of an excavator, truck-mounted auger, crane, and bucket truck.

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/ Walker Stinnette

Walker Stinnette

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

2/5/2024

Date

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: City of Port Angeles Transmission Structure Removal and Replacement at Port Angeles Substation

Project Site Description

The proposed action would occur at BPA's Port Angeles Substation in Port Angeles, Clallam County, Washington (Township 30 North, Range 6 West, Section 14). The project site is located within a narrow right-of-way north of the substation yard and south of East Park Avenue that consists of gravel and regularly mowed weeds, grasses, and forbes. The project site is underlain by the Clallam soil series, which is not hydric. No wetlands or waters are present within or near the project site. The project site is in an urban area surrounded by commercial and residential land uses.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: BPA conducted a desktop review of the Area of Potential Effects (APE), and no historic or cultural resources were identified within the APE. Therefore, on December 22, 2023, BPA simultaneously determined that the proposed undertaking would result in no historic properties affected (BPA CR Project No.: WA 2024 009; DAHP Log No.: 2024-01-00007) and initiated National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 consultation with the following parties:

- Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe
- Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe
- Makah Nation
- Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe
- Quinault Indian Nation
- Skokomish Indian Tribe
- Suquamish Tribe
- Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP)

Concurrence was received from DAHP and Quinault Indian Nation on January 2, 2024. No other comments were received.

Notes:

- A cultural resources monitor provided by the City shall be present to monitor any ground-disturbing activities during implementation of the proposed action.
- In the unlikely event that cultural material is inadvertently encountered during implementation of the proposed action, work shall 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: The proposed action would temporarily disturb approximately 0.1 acres from removal and replacement of the structures and soil compaction and rutting due to vehicle and equipment use. Excavated soils would be temporarily stockpiled onsite, and then used for backfill or spread evenly around the bases of the structures. Temporarily disturbed soils would eventually stabilize as vegetation is reestablished and would return to pre-existing conditions following completion of the proposed action. The City would be responsible for implementing standard construction best management practices (BMPs) to minimize soil erosion, sedimentation, and fugitive dust. The proposed action would not impact geology.

3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would crush, strip, or bury approximately 0.1 acres of regularly mowed, low-growing weeds, grasses, and forbs along the margins of East Park Avenue. Temporarily disturbed areas would eventually revegetate and would return to pre-existing conditions following completion of the proposed action. There are no documented occurrences of any special-status plant species near the project site, and no suitable special-status species habitat is present. Therefore, the proposed action would have no effect on special-status plant species or habitats.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Minor and temporary wildlife disturbance could occur from construction noise. However, wildlife species that could be present in the area would likely be habituated to this level of disturbance given surrounding land uses. There are no documented occurrences of any special-status wildlife species near the project site, and no suitable special-status species habitat is present. Therefore, the proposed action would have no effect on special-status wildlife species or habitats.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No water bodies, floodplains, or fish habitat are located within or near the project site. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact water bodies or floodplains and would have no effect on special-status fish species or habitat.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands are located within or near the project site. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Excavation is unlikely to reach depths of groundwater, and the proposed action would not generate or use hazardous materials that could contaminate groundwater or aquifers. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action could temporarily and intermittently impact residential and commercial land uses due to construction noise and traffic flow on East Park Avenue due to traffic restrictions. Land use impacts would be temporary and would only occur during daylight hours (approximately 7 AM to 7 PM). The City would be responsible for implementing BMPs to safely manage traffic, if required during construction. There would be no permanent change in land use, and the proposed action would not impact any specially-designated areas.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would result in a perceptible change in the appearance of the City's transmission line. During construction, the presence of construction equipment and general construction activities, including vegetation disturbance, would cause temporary visual impacts. The new transmission structures would be the same height and appearance as the existing structures; although the total number of structures would be reduced by one. This visual change would be consistent with the existing visual quality of the area. The project site is not located in a visually sensitive area.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would generate minor and temporary dust and vehicle emissions in the local area. Standard construction BMPs would be implemented to minimize dust. There would be no long-term change in air quality following completion of the proposed action.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would generate minor and temporary noise from the use of vehicles and equipment during construction, which could be audible from nearby residential and commercial properties. Noise impacts would be temporary and would only occur during daylight hours (approximately 7 AM to 7 PM). There would be no permanent change in ambient noise following completion of the proposed action.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All standard safety protocols would be followed throughout implementation of the proposed action to minimize risk to human health and safety. Therefore, the proposed action would not be expected to impact human health and safety.

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: The proposed action would occur on BPA fee-owned property. The City would be responsible for any adjacent landowner notification, involvement, or coordination that could be required.

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

Signed: /s/ Walker Stinnette
Walker Stinnette
Environmental Protection Specialist

2/5/2024
Date