

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Boundary – Nelway No. 1 Structure 1/8 urgent wood pole replacement.

**PP&A No.:** 4519

**Project Manager:** Robert Zeller – TFSF – BELL

**Location:** Pend Oreille County, 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 replace a wood pole structure and associated structural/electrical components (e.g. cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) on the Boundary – Nelway No. 1 transmission line in the Spokane district. The existing pole would be removed utilizing a backhoe and the new pole would be placed in the existing location. The project would require a boom truck, bucket truck, and a backhoe. The project site would be accessed using existing roads and no access road or landing improvements would be needed.

**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/ Sarah T. Biegel                      Date: August 18, 2020  
Sarah T. Biegel  
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:** Boundary – Nelway No. 1 Structure 1/8 Urgent Wood Pole Replacement

### **Project Site Description**

The project area is confined to the areas immediately adjacent to Boundary - Nelway No. 1 Structure 1/8. The project area is predominantly western red cedar and hemlock dominated forest managed for timber located in Pend Oreille, Washington about 0.5 miles west of Boundary Dam in the BPA Spokane district.

Proposed maintenance activity would be performed in the existing transmission line right-of-way, on land managed by the Colville National Forest.

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

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: : BPA initiated consultation with the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), the Kalispel Tribe of Indians, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CCT), and the United States Forest Service – Colville National Forest on August 10, 2020. DAHP and CCT provided concurrence with the Area of Potential Effect (APE) via email dated August 10, 2020. BPA sent a no adverse effect to historic resources determination on August 13, 2020 and DAHP concurred on August 13, 2020. No additional response was received.

#### **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 impacted. No impacts to state or federally-sensitive species are anticipated. Project activities would be limited to the already impacted right-of-way and would not substantially alter existing plant communities.

In addition, on National Forest System lands managed by the Colville National Forest, BPA would comply with the *Standard Operating Procedures for limiting the spread of invasive species and fire prevention as directed in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA)*.

#### **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.

Notes: The following minimization measures would be implemented to minimize impacts to wildlife and their habitat.

- Drive on existing access roads.
- Reduce work area footprint to the least necessary to safely do the work.
- Crush vegetation in place of removal.

#### **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 would be used to ensure sedimentation into any water body does not occur.

#### **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands are within the project area.

#### **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: Explanation: No change in land use would occur and project activities would not impact existing land uses.

For the project in the Colville National Forest, the Memorandum of Understanding between the Bonneville Power Administration United States Department of Energy and the United States Forest Service United States Department of Agriculture Regarding Transmission Facilities and Access to Those Facilities on National Forest System Lands Standard Operation Procedures listed below would be implemented:

- **Section V** Transmission Facilities
- **Section X** Fire control communication and coordination
- **Appendix E** Fire Prevention and Suppression

## 9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would be performed within existing transmission line right of ways. Replacement of the wood pole 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 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.

### **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 and the environmental specialist would coordinate with the Colville National Forest 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/ Adrienne Wojtasz  
Adrienne Wojtasz, EPR-Bell-1  
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: August 18, 2020