

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Chief Joseph – Monroe No. 1 Structure 43/6 Landing and Insulator Replacement

Project No.: 4807

Project Manager: Brent Thompson - TFWF-SCHULTZ

Location: Chelan 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 perform landing work and insulator replacement on Chief Joseph – Monroe No. 1 structure 43/6 in the Okanogan - Wenatchee National Forest. The project would entail about 50 feet of minor road grading and filling to reduce ruts within the access road and landing construction. The grading would not impact the native soil beneath the fill that exists on the road and landing. New rock would be placed on top of the road and would not exceed 3 inches in depth. Equipment utilized would include two dump trucks, 4000 gal water truck, water trailer for fire suppression, one backhoe and two 550 diesel trucks and six-to-eight workers.

Transmission Line	Structure	TRS	County, State
Chief Joseph – Monroe No. 1	43/6	T25N R20E SEC06	Chelan, 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: June 13, 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: Chief Joseph – Monroe No. 1 Structure 43/6 Landing and Insulator Replacement

Project Site Description

Proposed project area occurs in central Washington and is located in predominantly secondary growth forested lands. Proposed maintenance activities would be performed in the existing transmission line right-of-ways and access road easements which are located in the Okanogan – Wenatchee National Forest.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The BPA archaeologist completed background research for the proposed project area and determined that the project would result in No Historic Properties Affected. No previously recorded archaeological resources were located within the Area of Potential Effect (APE), additionally the slope within the APE is greater than 30 percent and the landings for the towers were excavated into the slope so as to provide a level surface. The Chief Joseph-Monroe No. 1 Transmission Line was constructed and energized in 1972, and is considered an eligible historic built resource. However, the replacement of insulators is considered normal and in-kind work and will not affect the integrity of the line.

BPA sent consultation documentation detailing their assessment of effects on May 10th, 2022. On May 10th, 2022 the United States Forest Service – Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation concurred with BPA's determination. On May 10th and June 13th, 2022 the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) concurred with BPA's APE and determination. No responses were received from the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation.

Should any cultural resources discovered during project activities, then all project work must stop, and the Environmental Protection Specialist should be notified immediately. No additional review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act is required for this action at this time.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Localized soil disturbance would occur during access road and landing zone leveling. 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. If necessary vegetation would be crushed and left in place.

In addition, on National Forest System lands managed by the Okanogan – Wenatchee 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 with conditions

Explanation: In general, the project would have minimal impacts to local wildlife and habitat related to temporary disturbance associated with elevated noise and human presence. The project would have no impacts to ESA-listed species or state sensitive species categorized as “Critically Imperiled” or “Imperiled”.

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: 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 ground disturbing activities are anticipated in wetlands or other waterbodies that occur along the project. Erosion control measures would be implemented to prevent sedimentation from entering any water resources in the 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 change in land use would occur and project activities would not impact existing land uses.

For those portions of the project crossing the Okanogan – Wenatchee 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: The project would have minimal impact to visual quality and would be visually consistent with the existing transmission right-of-way.

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 and environmental specialist have coordinated the proposed project activities with the Okanogan – Wenatchee National Forest prior to project initiation and any concerns regarding proposed transmission line maintenance activities have been 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: June 13, 2022