

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Transmission Line Wood Pole Replacement and Access Road Maintenance

**PP&A Project No.:** 3,368

**Project Manager:** Scott Williams, Line Foreman III – TFDf-The Dalles

**Location:** Bonneville Power Administration, The Dalles District.

Transmission Line/ROW	Structure #	Township	Range	Section	County, State	Ownership/Use
Big Eddy - Redmond	31/4	04S	14E	27	Wasco, OR	Private/Range
	31/9	04S	14E	35	Wasco, OR	Private/Range

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B1.3 Routine maintenance

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to replace deteriorating wood-pole structures (including, cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.). Replacement will be in-kind and will utilize the existing holes to minimize ground disturbance. If necessary, an auger will be used to remove any loose soil from the existing hole prior to new wood pole placement. Cross arms, braces, or switches may also be replaced.

Minor maintenance of landing and access roads within their existing road and landing prisms may be required to improve access within the transmission line corridor. No unauthorized construction activities will occur in any water body including streams, ponds, or wetlands. Access road maintenance may include blading, shaping, rocking and construction of waterbars and drain dips.

The proposed action will help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region. All work will 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, July 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/ Phil Smith for  
Fred Walasavage  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel  
Sarah T. Biegel  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: April 12, 2016

Attachment(s):  
Environmental Checklist  
Effects Determination for T&E Species

## 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:** Wood Pole Replacement, Big Eddy - Redmond line

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### Project Site Description

The project activities will be conducted on BPA Big Eddy - Redmond transmission line. The site locations are under private ownership. The project area is mostly flat to rolling terrain. Vegetation along side the corridor consists of grasses and steppe shrubs.

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. <b>Historic and Cultural Resources</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Oregon SHPO concurrence of “no adverse effect” determination received on March 29, 2016. The following stipulation is required by BPA archeologist:</p> <p>Structure 31/4. All equipment will access from the North in the established access road. All maintenance vehicles will be set up on the North (Back On Line side) of the structure. No activities will extend into the South side of the structure (Ahead on Line) outside of the 15’ work area needed for pole replacement activities to the south for this work.</p> <p>Yakama, Nez Perce, and Warm Springs Tribes were also consulted—no response.</p> <p>In the event of an inadvertent discovery, work will immediately cease and the SHPO and BPA archaeologist will be notified.</p>		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The project will require minimal ground disturbing activities. No prime or unique farmlands will be affected. All disturbed areas outside of the roadways, landings and 15 feet from the poles will be reseeded.</p>		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species present. No vegetation removal is expected; however, any disturbed areas outside of the roadways, landings and 15 feet from the poles will be reseeded.</p>		

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



Explanation: No special-status species present. No suitable habitat is present in project area for listed wildlife species. The work will also entail minimal human disturbance over a several day time period.

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



Explanation: None present in project area.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: None present in project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The proposed work is in an upland area; maximum depth of disturbance would be about 10 feet below ground surface.

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



Explanation: No change in land use and no specially designated areas identified.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: New wood poles will be similar to existing structures and would not be noticeably different than existing structures. Access road work would be consistent with existing roads.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Any fugitive dust or similar during project implementation is expected to be temporary and minimal.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Construction noise will be temporary and localized.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

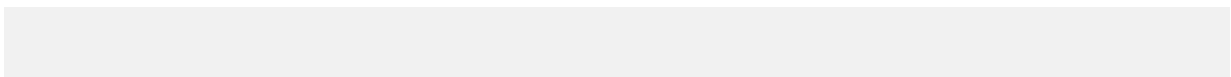


Explanation: Project activities will not impact human health or safety.

### **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.



- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

- 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.

- 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.

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**Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

The landowner has been notified by the BPA Reality Specialist.

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

Signed: /s/ Phil Smith for  
Fred Walasavage

Date: April 12, 2016