

## Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Snohomish 2017 Priority Pole Replacements Phase 2

**Project No.:** 3639

**Project Manager:** Cynthia Rounds

**Location:** Skagit and Snohomish County, Washington

Transmission Line/ROW	Structure #	Township	Range	Section	Ownership/Land Use
Murray-Custer #1	2/2	31N	6E	18	Private / Rural Residential
Murray-Custer #1	3/3	31N	6E	7	Private / Rural Residential
Murray-Custer #1	3/4	31N	6E	7	Private / Rural Residential
Murray-Custer #1	5/5	32N	5E	36	Private / Rural Residential
Murray-Custer #1	17/1	33N	5E	8	Private / Rural Residential
Snohomish-Beverly Park #4	4/4	28N	5E	9	Private / Agricultural
Snohomish-Beverly Park #3	4/5	28N	5E	9	Private / Agricultural
Snohomish-Beverly Park #3	4/6	28N	5E	9	Private / Agricultural
Snohomish-Beverly Park #3	4/7	28N	5E	9	Private / Agricultural
Snohomish-Beverly Park #3	4/8	28N	5E	9	Private / Agricultural
Snohomish-Beverly Park #3	5/2	28N	5E	8	Private / Residential

**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 poles and associated structural/electrical components (e.g. cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) at the locations specified in the Location Section of this document. 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. New landing construction or access road development is not planned at these locations. Minor maintenance of landing and roads within their existing road and landing prisms may be required.

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/ Chad Browning

Chad Browning

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: June 19, 2017

Attachment: 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:** Snohomish 2017 Priority Pole Replacements Phase 2

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### Project Site Description

Most structures are located on grass and shrub right-of-way surrounded by privately-owned rural residential and agricultural properties.

### 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <u>Explanation:</u> The area was previously surveyed and reviewed by Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) within the last 5 years. BPA archaeologist reviewed all the previous survey reports and determined no historic properties would be affected.</li><li>▪ <u>Mitigation:</u> In the event any archaeological material is encountered during project activities, stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead, archaeologist, and project manager; interested tribes; DAHP; and the appropriate local, state and Federal agencies. Implement reasonable measures to protect the discovery site, including any appropriate stabilization or covering. Take reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the discovery site, including restricting access.</li></ul>		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project will require minimal ground-disturbing activities. No prime or unique farmlands will be affected.		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No federal or state special-status plant species are recoded in the project area.		
4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No federal or state special-status wildlife species or habitats are recoded in the project area.		

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



Explanation: No in-water work is proposed for this project; however, Puget Sound Chinook, Puget Sound steelhead, bull trout and their critical habitat are found in waterways approximately 40-260 feet from the Snohomish-Beverly Park #3 4/6; 4/7. Due to the slope and vegetation conditions at these locations and the minimal amount of soil disturbance required, project activities would not lead to erosion and sedimentation issues to these rivers.

Additionally, construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented throughout the project to ensure localized soil disturbance does not cause sedimentation issues into any waterway. For the above reasons, it was determined that the proposed work would have “No Effect” on Puget Sound Chinook, Puget Sound steelhead, bull trout, or these species’ critical habitat.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: Any work in the vicinity of wetlands would take place under Nationwide Permit (NWP) 12 with no pre-construction notification required. NWP 12 General, Regional, and Water Quality conditions would apply.

Mitigation: Use temporary matting during construction if the ground is too saturated to support transmission line equipment. Do not allow petroleum products, sediment, or other deleterious materials to enter any wetlands. Ensure spill containment and cleanup materials are readily available at the project site, staging areas, and in construction vehicles.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The proposed work is not anticipated to impact groundwater.

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 would be similar to existing structures and thus, would not be noticeably different than existing structures.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Any fugitive dust or similar air quality impacts during project implementation are expected to be temporary and minimal.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Construction noise from typical utility line equipment will be temporary and localized.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: Project activities will not impact human health or safety. In fact, the proposed action 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, if necessary:

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

Explanation, if necessary:

- ☒ 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, if necessary:

- ☒ 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, if necessary:

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#### **Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description: Notification letters will be sent by the BPA Realty Specialist to all landowners prior to work.

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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/ Chad Browning

Chad Browning  
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: June 19, 2017