

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Fairview-Bandon No. 1 Span 12/2 Impairment Remedy and Road Improvements

**PP&A No.:** 3,376

**Project Manager:** Erich Orth, TEP-TPP-1

**Location:** Coos County, Oregon

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

B1.3 Routine Maintenance

**Description of the Proposed Action:** The Fairview-Bandon No. 1 115 kV transmission line runs from Fairview Substation to Bandon Substation in Coos County, Oregon. A recent survey of the transmission line identified an impairment to the line in line mile 12, where the distance between the electrical conductor and the ground surface does not meet industry safety and reliability standards.

To remedy the impairment, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) plans to replace two H-frame wooden utility pole structures in mile 12 of the line. The structures are located in the SE quarter of Township 28 south, Range 12 west, Section 21 in Coos County, Oregon. Both structures would be raised approximately 10 feet. Existing structure 12/2 would be removed and replaced by 75-80 foot poles. Guy wires and anchors would also be replaced. Existing structure 12/3 would be removed and replaced by 60-65 foot poles. The new wood pole structures would be replaced in the same locations as the existing structures. Approximately 21 inches of conductor would be removed at structure 12/2.

To access the structures and safely conduct the work, approximately 1,800 feet of road improvements would be required within the existing access road footprint. The landing at structure 12/2 would be improved, and a new landing at 12/3 would be constructed ahead on-line and back-on-line in a grass pasture.

All construction activity would be located in the BPA transmission ROW and easements on private land. Equipment would potentially include a blader, grader, dump truck, pick-up truck, and bucket truck. Disturbed, unrocked soils will be stabilized and revegetated with an appropriate seed mix.

**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/ Aaron Siemers*

Aaron C. Siemers

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

*/s/ Sarah T. Biegel*

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: *August 11, 2017*

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:** Fairview-Bandon No. 1 Span 12/2 Impairment Remedy & Road Improvements

### Project Site Description

Fairview-Bandon No. 1 Span 12/2 is located in Coos County, southwest Oregon. The project area is in the Coastal Range, in the mountainous Mid-Coastal Sedimentary ecoregion, characterized by moderate to steep slopes, sandstone and siltstone surficial geology, silty clay loam soils and Douglas-fir forests. The township, range, and section are noted below:

Township		Range		Section
28	S	12	W	21

The project area is rural, with forests, pasture land, and several rural residences nearby. Elevation ranges from about 300 to 500 feet. Lee Valley Road, a two-lane paved county road, runs approximately 200 feet to the southeast of structure 12/3, and a large rock quarry is present approximately 0.25 miles to the west.

The cleared project area contains grasses and ferns, bordered by Douglas-fir and assorted deciduous trees. Near 12/3, surface soils are poor, exposing weathered sandstone bedrock.

### 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"/>

Explanation:

BPA engaged in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office; the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians; the Coquille Indian Tribe; the Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Tribe of Indians; the Cowlitz Indian Tribe; the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde; and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. A cultural resources survey was conducted in the project area. BPA determined that the project would have no adverse effect on historic and cultural resources, which was documented in a letter dated July 10, 2017. On August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017, BPA received a letter of concurrence from the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. No other consulted party responded to BPA's letter of determination. As per the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act, BPA's Section 106 obligations have been fulfilled.

2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Explanation:

The project involves soil disturbance in the immediate vicinity of two wood utility pole structures, as well as road improvements and landing construction. Maximum excavation is estimated at 10 feet below ground surface. No significant impacts to geology and soils are anticipated. During construction, erosion control measures would be used to mitigate erosion, and the grade would be restored and seeded upon project completion.

3. **Plants** (including federal/state special-status species)



Explanation:

There are no special-status species present. Work would be conducted in an existing transmission line right-of-way (ROW) using existing access roads. Any un-rocked disturbed areas would be seeded with a geographic and climate appropriate seed mix.

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



Explanation:

See attached Effects Determination memo. No special-status species or designated habitat would be significantly impacted. Work would be performed in BPA transmission ROW and within an existing access road footprint. No unique habitat would be impacted by construction activities.

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



The project is not located in a floodplain. Typical erosion control BMPs would be implemented and no riparian habitat would be affected. The closest surface water body, Gray Creek, is located approximately 1,188 feet south of structure 12/2.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation:

No wetlands are present in the project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation:

No new wells or use of ground water are proposed and spill prevention measures would be present.

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



Explanation:

Existing land use would not be affected as work will be completed in existing transmission ROW. No specially designated areas are present.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation:

The utility structures would be raised approximately 10 feet but due to the elevation changes in the area, adjacent forest, and existing transmission line development, the project would not potentially impact the visual quality of the surrounding environment.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation:

Construction activities may result in some minor temporary dust and vehicle emissions but no significant impacts would occur.

11. **Noise**



Explanation:

Construction activities may result in some minor temporary noise but no significant impacts would occur.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation:

The project would not impact human health or safety. Standard construction site safety protocols would be implemented during project activities. In addition, impairment to the line in line mile 12, where the distance between the electrical conductor and the ground surface does not meet industry safety and reliability standards, would be remedied.

### **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: Not applicable to the scope of the project.

- 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: Not applicable to the scope of the project.

- 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: Not applicable to the scope of the project.

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**Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description: The proposed project is located on a BPA easement in private land. BPA would continue ongoing coordination with the landowners.

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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/ Aaron Siemers  
Aaron C. Siemers  
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: August 11, 2017