

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Bothell-Sno-King No. 1 and No. 2 Transmission Line Upgrades

Project No.: P00094

Project Manager: Michael Marleau TEP-TPP-1

Location: Snohomish County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.13 Upgrading and rebuilding existing powerlines

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to collaborate with Seattle City Light (SCL) in upgrading two co-owned 3.5 mile-long transmission lines in Snohomish County, Washington. The Bothell-Sno-King No. 1 and No. 2 are 230-kilovolt (kV) transmission lines; SCL owns the first 3 miles of each line extending from Bothell Substation south to Maltby Road, and BPA owns the final 0.5 mile extending west along the south side of Maltby Road to Sno-King Substation. The upgrades would include replacing the conductors and 14 transmission line structures. The new conductor would increase the line rating from 1600 amps to 3000 amps, which would allow more current to flow through the lines. However, the lines would continue operate at 230-kV.

SCL would conduct all activities related to reconductoring its 3-mile portion of the two transmission lines and BPA would reimburse SCL for a portion of those costs. SCL anticipates that reconductoring their portion of the transmission lines would not require any ground disturbance since they would utilize existing access roads and install the new conductors on existing structures.

BPA would reductor its 0.5 mile stretch of lines as well as replace 14 structures with a combination of new lattice steel structures, steel monopole, and wood-pole structures capable of supporting the new conductors.

BPA's activities would occur within their existing fee-owned right-of-way (ROW), and would include removing and replacing existing structures, which are a combination of wood-pole structures, steel monopoles, and lattice steel towers. BPA would also replace associated structural components, guy wires and anchors, and counterpoise, improve existing access roads (no new road construction would be required), establish temporary material storage areas and conductor pulling/tensioning sites, remove existing vegetation, and revegetate disturbed areas.

Structures along the Bothell-Sno-King No. 1 line, which include three lattice steel towers, one steel monopole, and one two-pole wood structure, would be replaced near their current locations. However, structure 3/3 (lattice steel tower) would be moved about 390 feet back on line (to the southeast) and one additional lattice steel tower would be installed about 275 feet ahead on line (to the northwest) of Structure 3/3's current position.

Structures along the Bothell-Sno-King No. 2 line, which include seven wood monopoles, one three-pole wood structure, and one steel monopole, would be replaced about 10 feet north of their current

locations. Additionally, some structures would be 5 to 13 feet taller to increase the transmission line clearance over street lights and electrical distribution lines along Maltby Road and 39th Avenue SE.

Construction work areas around the structures in the Bothell-Sno-King No. 1 line would be about 100 feet by 100 feet, while work areas around the structures in the Bothell-Sno-King No. 2 line would be about 50 feet by 50 feet. Ground disturbance would include about 0.5 acre of grading within the aforementioned work areas to create level work spaces (landings). Additionally, some vegetation would be crushed or matted in place where grading is unnecessary.

About 1 mile of existing access roads would also be rebuilt or improved to provide access to the transmission line structures; no new access roads would be constructed. The majority of access road work would require grading and rocking to a width of 16 feet; minor re-alignments of existing access roads may also be necessary. The total disturbance from access road work would be about 1.5 acres.

Excess soil generated from the project would be hauled offsite for proper disposal. Material storage and staging areas would be set up near the Sno-King Substation and possibly within the right-of-way.

Construction is proposed to begin in summer 2016.

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/ Justin Moffett

Justin Moffett
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: March 4, 2016

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: Bothell-Sno-King No. 1 and No. 2 Transmission Line Upgrades

Project Site Description

The project site is located on BPA fee-owned land adjacent to the Sno-King Substation near the City of Bothell, Washington. Portions of the ROW are east of 39th Avenue SE are leased for horse grazing. Existing vegetation consists of reed canarygrass, spirea, bentgrass, fescue, scotch broom, and Himalayan blackberry. Several emergent wetlands occur within the project area. The surrounding landscape consists of residential development and open space. The nearest residences are about 500 feet south of the transmission lines.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. Historic and Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> BPA determined that the Bothell-Sno-King No. 1 and No. 2 transmission lines are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places; however the proposed undertaking will not adversely affect this eligibility. No other cultural resources were identified within the project area. Consequently, on January 21, 2016 BPA submitted a determination of effect to the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), Snoqualmie Indian Tribes, and Tulalip Tribes stating the proposed undertaking would have <i>No Adverse Effect</i> on cultural resources. As of February 24, 2016 neither DAHP nor the tribes had responded to BPA's determination. Therefore BPA assumes DAHP concurs with its determination.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u> In the event any archaeological material is encountered during project activities, the following actions should be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead, a BPA archaeologist, appropriate BPA project staff, interested tribes, DAHP, and the appropriate county, 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.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> About 2 acres would be disturbed by project activities.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Erosion control measures would be used during construction to minimize impacts. Excess material would be contoured to match surrounding terrain, track-walked, seeded and mulched.		

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

Explanation: No federal/state special-status plant species are known to occur in the project area. Ground disturbance would primarily occur in previously disturbed areas.

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

Explanation: No federal/state special-status wildlife species are known to occur in the project area. Ground disturbance would primarily occur in previously disturbed areas.

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

Explanation: There are no water resources in the vicinity of the work sites.

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: BPA completed a wetland delineation of the project area which identified eight wetlands within the project area. With the exception of installing two helical guy anchors in a wetland, all wetlands will be avoided.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: Project activities do not have the potential to impact groundwater or aquifers, including public and private water wells or springs.

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

Explanation: Proposed action is located adjacent to existing facilities on BPA fee-owned land and would not alter or affect existing land use. The eastern portion of the project area is leased to a private landowner and used to graze horses.

Mitigation:

- BPA will coordinate with the leasee to limit construction impacts on grazing operations.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: Proposed action is located adjacent to existing facilities and the minor changes in structure height and locations would not measurably alter or affect visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: Any fugitive dust or vehicle emissions generated during project implementation would be temporary and negligible.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: Construction would last approximately 8 weeks and would occur during daylight hours (7am-4pm). The closest residence is approximately 500 feet south of the transmission lines. At that distance noise generated by the construction equipment would be sufficiently attenuated so as not to disturb the residents.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: Proposed action is located within existing facilities and would 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.

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:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: BPA notified adjacent landowners of its plan to rebuild the transmission lines in June 2014. BPA will provide another notification 45-60 days prior to initiating construction.

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

Signed: /s/ Justin Moffett
Justin Moffett

Date: March 4, 2016