

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: North Bend Danger Poles, Access Road Maintenance Project FY 2016

Project No.: 395562

Project Manager: Clint Stanton, Access Road Engineer – TFLF-TPP-3

Location: Coos County, OR

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.) on the structures listed in Table 1. The existing structures are a two-pole, H-frame wood pole transmission structure that have degraded to the point that they are no longer safe and reliable. The work may include creating a 50- by 50-foot earthen landing adjacent to the structure to allow equipment staging for pole removal and replacement. The new poles for the structure would either be placed back in the existing holes, or an auger attached to a backhoe would be used to drill new holes approximately five feet ahead or back on line from the existing poles. This would allow for the new pole holes to be drilled before the line outage, since this process can be time consuming and the outage is of limited duration. During the line outage, the existing poles would then be removed and the new poles installed in the existing or pre-drilled holes. Ground disturbance for the pole replacement would not extend beyond a 100-foot radius around the existing pole structure. The proposed action would help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region. All work would be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA standards. The projects are further grouped into three subgroups as follows:

Fairview-Bandon

This project provides for the improvement of access roads on the Fairview-Bandon No. 1 transmission line corridor in the vicinity of structures 6/6 and 19/1 in Coos County, Oregon, approximately 8 miles west of Cedar Point, Oregon. The road work includes improving 1,257 lineal feet of access road and constructing four landings (6,000 sq. ft. in total) for a total of 765 tons of 3" minus base rock. Work also includes the installation of six rock water bars. Miscellaneous work items include cut areas to provide removal and placement of fill material for landings and road construction.

Reedsport-Fairview

This project provides for the improvement of access roads on the Reedsport-Fairview transmission line corridor in the vicinity of structures 7/3, 33/2 and 36/2 in Coos County, Oregon, approximately 2 miles west of Sumner, Oregon. The road work includes improving 564 lineal feet of access road, new construction of 195 lineal feet of access roads, and constructing six landings (6,200 sq. ft. in total) for a total of 525 tons of 3" minus base rock. Work also includes the installation of one rock water bar. Miscellaneous work items include cut areas to provide fill material for landings and removal of material to create a wider entrance for a spur road.

Wendson-Tahkenitch

This project provides for the improvement of access roads on the Wendson-Tahkenitch No. 1 transmission line corridor in the vicinity of structures 8/1, 8/2, 9/3, and 11/4 in Lane County, Oregon,

approximately 2 miles west of Westlake, Oregon. The road work includes improving 2,972 lineal feet of access road and constructing seven landings (10,500 sq. ft. in total) for a total of 1,710 tons of 3” minus base rock. Work also includes the installation of eight rock water bars and two drain dips. Miscellaneous work includes the removal and placement of material to accommodate road and landing construction.

Table 1 - North Bend Danger Poles Project Locations

Name	Mile	Structure	Land Ownership	Township	Range	Section	County
Fairview-Bandon	6	6	Private	28S	11W	6	Coos
Fairview-Bandon	19	1	Private	28S	13W	33	Coos
Reedsport-Fairview	7	3	Private/ OPRD	22S	12W	31	Douglas
Reedsport-Fairview	33	2	Private	27S	12W	6/5	Coos
Reedsport-Fairview	36	2	Private	27S	12W	16	Coos
Wendson-Tahkenitch	8	1	Private	19S	11W	20	Lane
Wendson-Tahkenitch	8	2	Private	19S	11W	20	Lane
Wendson-Tahkenitch	9	3	Private	19S	11W	20	Lane
Wendson-Tahkenitch	11	4	Private	19S	11W	20	Lane

The above described road maintenance activities are proposed to be conducted during 2016. If prior to, or during, construction activities the proposed action may result in adverse impacts to resources that are not described within this categorical exclusion, coordination with the appropriate agencies and a reevaluation of effects may be warranted.

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/ John Wiley

John Wiley

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: June 16, 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: North Bend Danger Poles, Access Road Maintenance Project FY 2016

Project Site Description

Biologists from Otak, Inc. conducted site visits on March 1-4, 2016 in order to field verify habitat conditions for listed species and to evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed project within the action area. The projects are located in rural Coos, Douglas and Lane Counties, OR. Land use within the project vicinity includes forested areas, rural residential, and existing BPA roadway and transmission line infrastructure. Site elevations range from approximately 300-1,000' above sea level.

The project sites are located within or adjacent to privately held managed forest lands and/or within the BPA Transmission line ROW. None of the sites occur within or adjacent to waterbodies or wetlands. Vegetation is typical for low elevation forested/private timber areas of the OR Coast Range, with a mix of native and non-native herbaceous and shrub species, second to third growth Douglas-fir forests and other native tree species at each project location.

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"/>
Based on the results of a desktop analysis of the proposed undertaking which considered the nature of the proposed action, its location and setting, relatively small portions of each segment, previous archaeological inventories conducted and archaeological features recorded in that area, as well as on-going consultations with OR SHPO discussing when Section 106 consultation is appropriate; BPA determined that this proposed undertaking has no potential to impact cultural resources. In the event that archaeological or historical materials are discovered during project activities, work in the immediate vicinity must stop, the area would be secured, and the SHPO and the environmental project lead must be notified. Work would not commence until the SHPO has cleared the area. (Pers comm. Brian O'Donnchadha, June 13, 2016)		
2. Geology and Soils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Explanation:

The work may include creating a 50- by 50-foot earthen landing adjacent to the structure to allow equipment staging for pole removal and replacement. The new poles for the structure would either be placed back in the existing holes, or an auger attached to a backhoe would be used to drill new holes approximately five feet ahead or back on line from the existing poles. Ground disturbance for the pole replacement would not extend beyond a 100-foot radius around the existing pole structure. No prime

or unique farmlands would be affected. Where necessary, erosion control measures would be implemented to prevent erosion of soils. Therefore, the proposed action would have limited impacts to geology and soils.

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



Explanation:

Limited disturbance to vegetation may occur during construction and repair of the proposed project elements. The areas proposed for construction are limited to the immediate areas around poles proposed for replacement, and areas which have been previously disturbed and support primarily early successional native and non-native species, including grasses, herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.

Table 2. Special-Status Plant Species Documented to Occur within Coos, Douglas and Lane Counties

Species	USFWS Status	County Documented to Occur	Determination
Western lily (<i>Lilium occidentale</i>)	Endangered	Coos	No effect. No wetland habitats would be disturbed.
Gentner's Fritillary (<i>Fritillaria gentneri</i>)	Endangered	Douglas	No effect. No native oak woodland habitats would be disturbed.
Kincaid's Lupine (<i>Lupinus sulphureus</i> ssp. <i>Kincaidii</i>)	Threatened	Douglas/Lane	No effect. No prairie habitats would be disturbed.
Rough Popcornflower (<i>Plagiobothrys hirtus</i>)	Endangered	Douglas	No effect. No wetland habitats would be disturbed.
Bradshaw's Desert-parsley (<i>Lomatium bradshawii</i>)	Endangered	Lane	No effect. No prairie habitats would be disturbed.
Golden Paintbrush (<i>Castilleja levisecta</i>)	Threatened	Lane	No effect. No prairie habitats would be disturbed.
Nelson's Checker-mallow (<i>Sidalcea nelsoniana</i>)	Threatened	Lane	No effect. No wet prairie or wetland habitats would be disturbed.
Water Howellia (<i>Howellia aquatilis</i>)	Threatened	Lane	No effect. No wetland or pond habitats would be disturbed.
Willamette Daisy (<i>Erigeron decumbens</i>)	Endangered	Lane	No effect. No prairie habitats would be disturbed.

No special-status plant species or their habitats were observed during the field surveys and no suitable habitat exists for these species within the areas proposed for disturbance. Therefore, the proposed action would have no effect on special-status plant species and limited impacts to other native and non-native

vegetation.

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



Explanation:

Biologists from Otak, Inc., conducted a site visit on March 1-4, 2016, to field verify habitat conditions for listed species and to evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed project within the project vicinity. No suitable habitat for special-status wildlife species was documented to occur within the project area. An official federally-listed species list was requested from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (IPaC) on June 8, 2016, for species that occur within Coos, Douglas, and Lane Counties, OR. Due to the scattered nature of the proposed project sites, a county-wide list was requested. The IPaC list indicated that the following species have the potential to occur within each county.

Table 3 - Special-Status Wildlife Species Documented to Occur within Coos, Douglas, and Lane Counties

Species	USFWS Status	Designated Critical Habitat	County Documented to Occur	Determination
Marbled murrelet (Brachyramphus marmoratus)	Threatened	Final designated	Coos, Douglas	No effect. No impact to suitable nest trees or habitat. No impact to designated critical habitat.
Northern Spotted owl (Strix occidentalis caurina)	Threatened	Final designated	Coos, Douglas	No effect. No impact to suitable or capable habitat. No impact to designated critical habitat.
Short-Tailed albatross (Phoebastria (=diomedea) albatrus)	Endangered	-	Coos, Douglas	No effect. No suitable coastal habitat. Species not known to inhabit inland environments.
Western snowy plover (Charadrius nivosus ssp. nivosus)	Threatened	Final designated	Coos, Douglas	No effect. No suitable coastal dune habitat. No impact to designated critical habitat.
Streaked Horned Lark (Eremophila alpestris strigata)	Threatened	Final designated	Lane	No effect. No suitable grassland or bare soil habitat. No impact to designated critical habitat.
Yellow-billed Cuckoo (Coccyzus americanus)	Threatened	Proposed	Lane	No effect. No impacts to mature cottonwood riparian habitats. No impact to designated critical habitat.
Fender's Blue Butterfly (Icaricia icarioides fender)	Endangered	Final designated	Lane	No effect. No impacts to prairie habitats. No impact to designated critical habitat.
Oregon Silverspot Butterfly (Speyeria zerene Hippolyta)	Threatened	Final designated	Lane	No effect. No impacts to prairie habitats. No impact to designated critical habitat.

Oregon spotted frog (<i>Rana pretiosa</i>)	Threatened	Proposed	Douglas, Lane	No effect. No impacts to stream or wetland habitats. No impact to designated critical habitat.
Columbian white-tailed deer (<i>Odocoileus virginianus leucurus</i>)	Endangered	-	Douglas	No effect. No effect to riparian or floodplain or open forested habitats.

The project actions would not result in any impacts to special-status wildlife species or their habitats. No habitat for other native wildlife species would be affected as the proposed activities occur in previously disturbed areas or areas of poor quality wildlife habitat (compacted soils, disturbed vegetation). Therefore, the project would have no impacts to federally-listed wildlife or other wildlife species.

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



Explanation:

Two special-status fish species are documented to occur within Coos, Douglas, and Lane Counties. No in-water work or work that could result in impacts to any waterways is proposed. The work as proposed is exempt from Corps Section 404 and DSL permit applications. Therefore, the project would have no effect to waterbodies, floodplains, or fish.

Table 4 - Special-Status Wildlife Species Documented to Occur within Coos, Douglas, and Lane Counties

Species	USFWS Status	Designated Critical Habitat	County Documented to Occur	Determination
Bull trout (<i>Salvelinus confluentus</i>)	Threatened	Final designated	Coast Range of Douglas	No effect. No in-water work proposed. No impact to designated critical habitat.
Coho Salmon (<i>Oncorhynchus kisutch</i>) Oregon Coast ESU	Threatened	Final designated	Coast Range of Douglas, Lane, Coos	No effect. No in-water work proposed. No impact to designated critical habitat.

6. Wetlands



Explanation:

NWI coverage maps indicate that no wetlands are present within the immediate footprint of any proposed project element. Work would be limited to upland environments; therefore, the proposed action would have no impacts to wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation:

The proposed work is limited to shallow soils and previously disturbed areas. There would be no impacts to groundwater or aquifers.

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



Explanation:

No change in land use and no specially designated areas were identified within the project limits. There would be no impacts to land use or specially designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation:

There are limited residences within visual range of the work limits. The proposed project feature is consistent with existing roads. There would be no impacts to visual resources.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation:

Dust generated from project activities is expected to be minimal and temporary in nature.

11. **Noise**



Explanation:

Noise generated from construction is expected to be localized and temporary in nature.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation:

Project activities 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: Land ownership within the project limits is privately held. The Access Road Engineer would contact adjacent and potentially affected landowners prior to project construction.

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

Signed: /s/ John Wiley
John Wiley EP-4
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: June 16, 2016