

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Salem-Grand Ronde Structure 16/3 Wood Pole Replacement

**PP&A No.:** 3948

**Project Manager:** Sarah Hall – TEPL-TPP-1

**Location:** Polk County, Oregon

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

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to perform replacement of the third wood pole structure and associated structural/electrical components (e.g. cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) in line mile 16 of the Salem-Grand Ronde line in order to remediate an impairment. At this location, the distance from the conductor to the ground surface is inadequate, per National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) standards, resulting in a threat to line reliability and posing a risk to public health and safety. Replacement poles would be placed in existing holes following removal of current pole structures. The holes may be re-augered to assure proper depth placement. Replacement poles would be five to ten feet taller than the existing poles, which would raise the elevation of the line and increase the clearance between the ground and transmission line, remediating the impairment.

No unauthorized construction activities would occur in any water body including streams, ponds, or wetlands. All work would be in accordance with the NESC 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/ Emma Reinemann  
Emma Reinemann  
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange  
Katey Grange  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: July 23, 2019

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:** Salem-Grand Ronde No. 1 Structure 16/3 Wood Pole Replacement

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## Project Site Description

The project area consists of structure 16/3 of the Salem-Grand Ronde No. 1 115-kV transmission line in Polk County, Oregon. The pole is situated on a privately owned tree farm. A seasonal stream is located approximately 225 feet south of the structure.

## 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><u>Explanation:</u> Cultural consultation including a cultural survey was performed during a previous wood pole replacement at the structure in 2013. No cultural resources were identified in the project area, and since the area has already undergone Section 106 Consultation, it was not deemed necessary to initiate Section 106 Consultation for project activities.</p> <p>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.</p>		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Localized soil disturbance would occur. Standard construction erosion control measures would be utilized as necessary.</p>		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No Federal/state special-status plants or habitat present. The project area is located in a tree farm where vegetation is strictly managed. No farmed trees would be impacted by the project; therefore, there would be no impact to plants.</p>		
4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No Federal/state special-status species or habitat present. Project activities would be limited to the already impacted right-of-way and would not substantially alter the footprint or operational noise of the line; therefore, wildlife and associated habitat would not be affected.</p>		

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

Explanation: Erosion control best management practices would be used to ensure sedimentation into the nearby water body does not occur.

The project area is not located within a floodplain and there are no nearby water bodies that support resident, anadromous, or ESA-listed fish.

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: No wetlands are present in the vicinity of the proposed pole replacement location.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: No use of groundwater proposed. Maximum depth of disturbance would be about 12 feet below ground surface.

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

Explanation: No change in land use. No specially-designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: All work would be performed within existing transmission line right-of-ways. Replacement of wood poles and associated components would be replaced in the same location. Poles would be five to ten feet longer than the existing poles, which would not substantially alter the visual quality of the area.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: There would be a small amount of dust and vehicle emissions from construction activity.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: There would be temporary construction noise during daylight hours. Operational noise of the transmission line would not change.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: The proposed action would address an impairment and ensure that National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) standards are met.

### **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: BPA Realty personnel would perform landowner notifications within 30-days prior to project initiation and any concerns regarding proposed transmission line maintenance activities would be addressed.

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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/ Emma Reinemann  
Emma Reinemann – EPR-4  
Physical Scientist - Environmental

Date: July 23, 2019