

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Sammamish-Maple Valley #1 230kV Insulator Replacement and Reconductoring

PP&A No.: 4181

Project Manager: Kelly Miller, TEP-TPP-1

Location: King County, WA

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

Description of the Proposed Action: The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to perform urgent work on the Sammamish-Maple Valley #1 230kV transmission line between structure 8/6 and Maple Valley Substation. The work would include replacing conductor hardware and insulators on all structures between Sammamish-Maple Valley #1 Structure 8/6 and Maple Valley Substation. The work would also include replacing the conductor between structures 16/2 and 18/2.

Several structures in this portion of the line are equipped with outdated and obsolete insulators, which are very unsafe because there is no way to test if the insulator is still functioning properly. Replacing conductor hardware and insulators would include the use of bucket trucks and light duty trucks. Work would include replacing existing conductor hardware and insulators with similar or in-kind parts. Replacing the conductor would be done using a combination of line trucks, bucket trucks, trailers, and light duty trucks. The areas back on line from 16/2 and ahead on line from 18/2 are well-suited for pulling and tensioning sites, so no ground disturbance would be required. No culverts or any other type of road feature that require ground disturbance would be added.

All of the above activities would take place in the existing right-of-way or adjacent to the right-of-way, would be conducted above ground, and therefore would not require tree clearing or ground disturbance.

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/ Jonnel Deacon
Jonnel Deacon EPR-4
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel
Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: May 7, 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: Sammamish-Maple Valley #1 230kV Insulator Replacement and Reconductoring

Project Site Description

The work area occurs on BPA fee-owned land in a residential and suburban area near the town of Issaquah, WA. The area is mostly level and is comprised of sub-developments, parks, and paved roads.

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 archaeologist reviewed the proposed work to be carried out on the Sammamish-Maple Valley line on March 6, 2019. The work consists of in-kind conductor hardware and insulator replacement with some re-conductoring. No ground disturbance would occur as part of this work. All access roads are extant; and no lay-down areas are required. All work would occur in existing steel-lattice structures.</p> <p>As a result, this work has no potential to affect historic properties and no additional review under Section 106 of the NHPA is required.</p> <p>If resources are discovered during construction activities, work would cease and the appropriate archaeological resources (BPA and WA DAHP) would be contacted.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No ground-disturbing activities are proposed.</p>		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Work would occur in areas maintained as an open transmission line corridor. No special-status species are present.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Work would occur in areas maintained as an open transmission line corridor. No mapped special-status species or designated habitats are present.</p>		

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



Explanation: Structure 27/3 is currently located 730 feet west of the Cedar River. The access road maintenance and conductor hardware and insulator replacement would not require any ground-disturbing activities and would not remove any vegetation. There would be no in-water work required. A no effect determination addressing ESA-listed aquatic species and essential fish habitat was completed for the project.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No mapped wetlands occur at, or within, the area of influence of the work sites and no ground disturbance is included in the work.

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. Any spills would be addressed immediately and follow BPA protocol for cleanup and regulatory notifications.

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



Explanation: The project locations are within existing transmission line rights-of-way and would not change existing land uses. Project locations do not include any specially-designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The proposed work includes replacing equipment with similar or in-kind equipment. Any visual changes would be minor and would be consistent with the existing transmission line use in the area.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: The project has a short duration and involves normal construction equipment activities. A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions is expected due to construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Noise disturbance would be limited to general construction equipment activities, would be for a short duration, and would occur during daylight hours.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No known hazardous conditions are expected. Completion of this project would increase system stability and reliability to the service area as well as increase the safety of nearby residents and linemen.

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 Realty Services has been in contact with landowners/managers along the project corridor to allow feedback concerning the proposed project. Public meetings were held on March 6, 2019, April 24, 2019, and May 2, 2019, to provide additional information and answer questions.

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

Signed: /s/ Jonnel Deacon
Jonnel Deacon – EPR-4
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: May 7, 2019