

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: 2015 Wood Pole Replacements within Bonneville Power Administration's (BPA) Idaho Falls District

Project No. (if applicable): 3,089

Project Manager: Mark Hadley, Line Foreman III – TFIF-Idaho Falls

Location: BPA's Idaho Falls District. Project locations are listed below:

Transmission Line/ROW	Structure #	Township	Range	Section	County, State	Ownership/Land Use
Swan Valley-Goshen #1	24/8	2N	40E	08	Bonneville, ID	Private/Ag.
	24/5	2N	40E	07		Private/Ag
Unity-Heyburn #1	7/1	10S	3E	14	Minidoka, ID	Private/Ag
Minidoka Power House-Unity #1	17/7	11S	24E	12	Cassia, ID	Private/Range

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.) along the subject transmission lines. Replacement will be in-kind and will utilize the existing holes to minimize ground disturbance. If necessary, an auger will be used to remove any loose soil from the existing hole prior to new wood pole placement. Cross arms and braces may be changed out at other locations throughout the subject lines. New landing construction or access road development is not planned at these locations. Minor maintenance of landing and roads within their existing road and landing prisms may be required. All work will be completed prior to April 7, 2015 so conflicts with agricultural practices can be avoided.

The proposed action will help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region. All work will be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code 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/ Philip W. Smith, for:
Fred Walasavage
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce
Katherine S. Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: *December 2, 2014*

Attachment(s):
Environmental Checklist
Effects Determination for T&E Species

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: Idaho Falls 2015 Wood Pole Replacements

Project Site Description

The project activities will be conducted on BPA Transmission line rights of way. The site locations primarily consist of agricultural crop lands. Pole replacement is required prior to planting seasonal crops.

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> According to the scope of the proposed work, the activity is not a type that would result in changes in the character or use of historic properties, if any such historic properties are located in the area of potential effects. Poles will be placed in existing locations. New landing construction is not planned or anticipated. Crews and equipment are to use existing access roads to and from each work site. The area is previously disturbed agriculture.</p> <p>In the event that archaeological or historic materials are discovered during project activities, work in the immediate vicinity must stop, the area will be secured and the SHPO and the environmental project lead must be notified.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The project will require minimal ground disturbing activities. No prime or unique farmlands will be affected.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The proposed work must use existing access roads and landings. No off-access road driving, staging, or landing or road improvements shall occur during this work. Upon review, it was determined that there is no suitable habitat within the project area for listed plant species.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Upon review, it was determined that there is no suitable habitat within the project area for listed wildlife species.</p>		

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



Explanation: None present in project area.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: None present in project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The proposed work is in an upland area.

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



Explanation: No change in land use and no specially designated areas identified.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The project will not significantly alter or effect visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Any fugitive dust or similar during project implementation is expected to be temporary and insignificant.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Construction noise will be temporary and localized.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: Project activities will 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 notification conducted by BPA Real Property Field Services.

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

Signed: Frederick Walasavage, KEP/Celilo

Date: November 13, 2014