

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Reston-Fairview No. 2 transmission line impairments

Project No. (if applicable): 2,805

Project Manager: Mark Kjelland, TELM-TPP-3

Location: Coos 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 address urgent ground clearance impairments at two locations on the 230-kilovolt Reston-Fairview No. 2 transmission line; beneath spans 13/3-14/1 and 15/1-15/2. An impairment is an area where the distance from the conductor to the ground surface is inadequate, per National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) standards. The proposed work is necessary to ensure the line meets current National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) standards.

The proposed action at both spans involves the removal of stumps and large woody debris within the impairment areas, along with excavation to a maximum depth of 10 feet of soil to ensure adequate transmission line conductor clearance from the ground below. The total proposed impairment clearance areas are 0.13 acres (13/3-14/1), and 0.03 acres (15/1-15/2). All work will occur in the existing, cleared right-of-way corridor on relatively flat terrain, using existing access roads. The project work areas are on privately-owned land actively managed for timber production. Equipment is likely to include a combination of the following: a dump truck, a bulldozer, a backhoe, an excavator and work trucks. The sites and redistributed material will be contoured to match surrounding terrain, seeded and mulched to prevent erosion and provide site stabilization.

The proposed work is necessary to ensure ongoing safe and reliable operation of the transmission line to minimize risk of outages and maintain power delivery in the region. Due to the urgent nature of the activity, BPA is proposing to perform the work before the end of 2014. All work will be in accordance with 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/ Makary A. Hutson

Makary A. Hutson

Biologist/Environmental Scientist

Concur:

/s/ Katheine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: November 5, 2014

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: Chief Joseph-Monroe Line access road test section

Project Site Description

Both impairments are in existing, cleared ROW on flat terrain on property managed for timber production. There are existing gravel access roads adjacent to both work sites.

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"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> A survey and Section 106 consultation was completed for the entire shared transmission line corridor for the Alvey-Fairview Line rebuild. No resources were identified in the vicinity of the proposed work areas.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Sites should be stabilized. Excess material should be contoured to match surrounding terrain, track-walked, seeded and mulched.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ESA- or special status plants are known to exist, nor were any identified in the impairment sites during surveys of the shared corridor.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The impairment in span 13/3-14/1 is adjacent to and may extend 100' feet into a BLM parcel designated Critical Habitat for the northern Spotted Owl (NSO). No off-ROW tree or vegetation removal will occur. The work will not change or impact the habitat conditions at the site. Work is scheduled between 10/22/14 and 11/30/14, after the NSO late breeding season. No NSO points were identified in the vicinity.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There are no water resources in the vicinity of the work sites.		
6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> All wetlands identified during the survey of the line corridor will be avoided.		
7. Groundwater and Aquifers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The proposed work is in an upland area.		

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

Explanation: Proposed action in existing ROW corridor will not impact land use.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: Proposed action in existing ROW corridor will not alter or effect visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**

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

11. **Noise**

Explanation: Construction noise will be temporary and localized.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: Proposed action in existing ROW corridor 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.

- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

- 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.

- 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.

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: Proposed maintenance action within BPA transmission line right-of-way and access roads. No additional landowner notification or coordination known.

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

Signed: /s/ Makary A. Hutson
Makary A. Hutson, KEPR-4

Date: November 5, 2014