

# memorandum

DATE: May 13, 2010

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: KEPR-Bell-1

SUBJECT: Environmental Cleareance Memorandum

TO: Dustin Liebhaber  
Project Manager – TELP-TPP-3

**Proposed Action:** Installation of wood pole structure on the Rattlesnake-Garrison No. 1  
230-kV transmission line

**PP&A Project No: 1656**

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

- B1.13 Construction, acquisition, and relocation of onsite pathways and short onsite access roads and railroads.
- B1.3 Routine maintenance activities...for structures, rights-of-way, infrastructures such as roads, equipment...routine maintenance activities, corrective...are required to maintain...infrastructures...in a condition suitable for a facility to be used for its designed purpose.
- B4.6 Additions or modifications to electric power transmission facilities that would not affect the environment beyond the previously developed facility area including, but not limited to: switchyard rock grounding upgrades, secondary containment projects, paving projects, seismic upgrading, tower modifications, changing insulators, and replacement of poles, circuit breakers, conductors, transformers, and crossarms.

**Location:** The project is located in Missoula County, Montana between structure 4/1 of the Rattlesnake-Garrison 230-kV transmission line and Interstate I-90.

**Proposed by:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

**Description of the Proposed Action:**

An H-frame wood pole structure will be placed between structure 4/1 and I-90 so that the ground to conductor clearance will be increased to allow transportation of higher clearance equipment along this section of the interstate.

To support installation of the H-frame wood pole structure, an access road and equipment landing will be constructed. New road construction will begin from an existing paved road to the proposed wood pole location. Road construction may include blading, grading, shaping, installing geo-tech fabric and laying down rock surfacing on the road surface. Finished road width will be approximately 12 feet.

Landing construction may involve mowing vegetation, laying down geotech fabric and placing crushed rock material at the proposed wood pole location. The landing footprint will be limited to 100 feet ahead on line and 100 feet back on line and from center line approximately 50 feet on each side of the proposed wood pole structure location. Construction of the landing is necessary for the safe placement of equipment and support vehicles during wood pole installation activities.

Once the access road and landing has been constructed, an auger will be used to drill two holes to the required depth for wood pole installation. Once the required depth is achieved, the wood poles will be placed in the holes and the holes will be backfilled. A crane will be used to position the conductors to the required height as the crossarms, insulators and other needed equipment is installed on the wood pole structure. Once all necessary equipment has been installed, the conductors will be connected to the insulators.

The proposed action will allow safe transportation of higher clearance vehicles along this portion of the interstate. All work will be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA standards.

### **Analysis:**

#### **ESA Listed Species and Habitat**

In response to the Endangered Species Act (ESA), BPA has prepared an Effects Determination for the proposed project. A determination of "No Effect" was made for all ESA listed species, designated critical habitat and Essential Fish Habitat.

#### **Cultural Resources**

A cultural resources survey and inventory of the project area was completed in March 2009. On April 28, 2010, the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) conditionally concurred via email that the proposed action would have no adverse effect on historic properties but requested additional information so that a formal determination could be made.

On May 3, 2010, Sunshine Schmidt received a verbal concurrence with BPA's determination of No Adverse Effect to Historic Properties from the Montana State Historic Preservation Office.

**Findings:** BPA has determined that the proposed action complies with Section 1021.410 and Appendix B, of Subpart D, of the Department of Energy (DOE) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Regulations (57 Fed. Reg. 1512.2, April 24, 1992). The proposed action does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal. The proposal is not connected [40 C.F.R. 1508.25 (a)(1)] to other actions with potentially significant impacts, is not related to other proposed actions with cumulatively significant impacts [40 C.F.R. 1508.25 (a)(2)], and is not precluded by 40 C.F.R. 1506.1 or 10 C.F.R. 1021.211.

Moreover, the proposed action would not (i) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health; (ii) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities;

(iii) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that pre-exist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or un-permitted releases; or (iv) adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources.

With the actions identified on the attachment, this proposed action meets the requirements for the Categorical Exclusion referenced above. We, therefore, determine that the proposed action may be categorically excluded from further NEPA review and documentation.

/s/ Philip W. Smith for

Michael A. Rosales

Physical Scientist - Environment

Concur: /s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: May 13, 2010

Attachments:

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Effects Determination for T&E Species

### Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

**Name of Proposed Project:** Rattlesnake-Garrison I-90 crossing

**PP&A Project No.:** 1656

**Prepared by:** M. Rosales      **Routing:** KEPR-Bell-1      **Date:** 05/12/2010

**This project has been found to not adversely affect the following environmentally sensitive resources, laws, and regulations:**

Environmental Resources	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect with conditions
1. Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A cultural resource field survey was completed for this project. A “No Historic Properties Affected” determination was made and the SHPO verbally concurred on May 3, 2010.</li> <li>▪ 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.</li> </ul>		
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bull trout may inhabit streams that are within ½ mile of the transmission line. Project activities are not planned near water resources containing listed fish species; therefore, there will be “No Effect” to this listed species or critical/Essential Fish Habitat.</li> <li>▪ Canada lynx have the potential to be present within ½ mile of the transmission line. Project activities are not expected to alter or affect habitat conditions for their respective prey species or affect existing habitat and/or distribution. With respect to potential habitat conditions and possible future occupancy of the project area by Canada lynx, the proposed project is not expected to result in conditions that would preclude use by this species; therefore, this project will have “No Effect” on this listed species or its habitat.</li> </ul>		
3. Floodplains or wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water resources (streams, ponds, wetlands) are present within ½ mile of the project area. For this project, road repairs are not expected to affect these water resources but erosion control devices will be installed as needed to prevent sedimentation of these resources.		
4. Areas of special designation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime agricultural lands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Consistency with state and local laws and regulations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Pollution control at Federal facilities



10. Other



List supporting documentation attached (if needed):