

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: April 15, 2011

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEPR-Bell-1

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Michael Stolfus
Lineman Foreman III – TFKF-Kalispell

Kurt Marsh
Lineman Foreman I – TFKF-Kalispell

Proposed Action: Wood pole replacement and minor access road maintenance along various transmission line rights-of-way in Bonneville Power Administration's (BPA) Kalispell District.

PP&A Project No: 1839 (Garrison-Anaconda #1), 1840 (Hot Springs-Rattlesnake #1), 1841 (Rattlesnake-Garrison #1), 1842 (Columbia Falls-Kalispell #1), 1843 (Kalispell-Kerr #1), 1844 (Libby-Bonnors Ferry #1), 1845 (Columbia Falls-Trego #1)

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

Location: Various transmission lines located in Montana (Deer Lodge, Sanders, Missoula, Granite, Flathead, Lake and Lincoln counties) within the Kalispell District (refer to Project Location Attachment for transmission lines and corresponding structure locations).

Proposed by: BPA

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 line. 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. Landing construction is not planned or anticipated at these locations. Specific transmission lines and corresponding structure locations are listed below:

Access road maintenance will be limited to minor blading, grading and rocking of access road segments that have become impassable. All road maintenance will take place in the existing road prism.

The proposed action will allow safe and timely access to the transmission line, which 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: 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: April 15, 2011

Attachment:

Project Location

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Project Location

Transmission Line	Structure	Township	Range	Section	County
Garrison-Anaconda #1	28/6	5N	10W	20	Deer Lodge
	28/7, 29/6	5N	10W	29	
	29/7	5N	10W	32	
Hot Springs-Rattlesnake #1	11/2, 11/4	20N	22W	18	Sanders
	24/3, 24/4	18N	21W	7	Missoula
	48/3	15N	20W	24	
	49/3, 49/6	15N	20W	25	
	54/1	14N	19W	19	
	57/2	14N	19W	33	
Rattlesnake-Garrison #1	37/8	11N	14W	25	Granite
	40/4	11N	13W	32	
	43/1, 43/2	10N	13W	10	
	50/8	10N	12W	35	
Columbia Falls-Kalispell #1	8/6	29N	20W	20	Flathead
Kalispell-Kerr #1	4/2	28N	21W	23	Flathead
	8/8	27N	21W	15	Lake
	24/2	25N	21W	19	
	25/4	25N	21W	30	
Libby-Bonnars Ferry #1	4/8, 5/1	31N	30W	25	Lincoln
	37/6	32N	34W	26	
Columbia Falls-Trego #1	7/1	30N	21W	26	Flathead
	10/1	30N	21W	17	
	11/1	30N	22W	12	
	41/2	33N	25W	1	

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: FY11 Kalispell District Wood Pole Replacement projects

PP&A Project No.: 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845

Prepared by: M. Rosales **Routing:** KEPR-Bell-1 **Date:** 04-08-2011

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"> ▪ Landing construction is not planned or anticipated at any of the locations listed. If landing construction becomes necessary for wood pole removal at sites not previously surveyed, an on-site cultural monitor will be required during construction activities. ▪ Crews and equipment are to use existing access roads to and from each work site. Any access road maintenance performed will be limited to the existing road prism. ▪ 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. 		
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bull trout and White sturgeon may inhabit streams that are within ½ mile of the various transmission lines. Designated critical habitat streams include Warm Springs Creek, Grant Creek, Rattlesnake Creek, Flint Creek, Harvey Creek, Quartz Creek, Pipe Creek, O'Brian Creek, Callahan Creek, Jocko River, Flathead River, Blackfoot River, Clark Fork River, Kootenai River, Stillwater River, Upper Stillwater Lake and Flathead Lake. Project activities are not planned near water resources containing listed fish species; therefore, there will be "No Effect" to listed fish species or critical/essential fish habitat. ▪ Canada lynx, grizzly bear and gray wolf have the potential to be present within ½ mile of the various transmission lines. 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 these species, the proposed project is not expected to result in conditions that would preclude use by either of these species; therefore, this project will have "No Effect" on listed animal species or habitat. <p>No other listed species or critical habitat, identified in the county species lists, occur within ½ mile of the project area.</p>		
3. Floodplains or wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At locations adjacent to surface water/wetlands, erosion control devices will be installed to prevent sedimentation of waterways during road improvements. By using erosion control devices, planned work will have "No Effect" on water quality or wetland habitat.		
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

7. Special sources of water

8. Consistency with state and local laws and regulations

9. Pollution control at Federal facilities

10. Other