

memorandum

DATE: February 2, 2012

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEP-CELILO

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Mark Hadley
Lineman Foreman III – TFIF-Idaho Falls

Proposed Action: Wood pole replacement along the Minidoka Power House-Unity No. 1 and Unity-Heyburn No. 1, 138-kV transmission line rights-of-way.

PP&A Project No.: 2192

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 designated purpose.

Location: The project area is located in Cassia County, Idaho, in Bonneville Power Administration's (BPA) Idaho Falls District. The projects lands are comprised of private ownership and are used for agricultural purposes. Project locations are listed below:

Project Location				
Township	Range	Section(s)	Line Name	Structures
11S	24E	11	Minidoka PH-Unity	17/12, 18/3
11S	23E	11	Unity - Heyburn	1/9

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 lines. A total of five wood poles will be replaced on various structures along the Minidoka Power House-Unity No. 1 and Unity-Heyburn No. 1 138 kv 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. New landing construction or access road improvements are not planned or anticipated at these locations. 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'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) as amended at 61 FR 36221-36243, July 9, 1996;

61 FR 64608, Dec. 6, 1996, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011). 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, has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion, 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 unpermitted releases, (iv) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, or (v) 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.

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/ Joseph C. Sharpe, for:

Frederick J. Walasavage
Environmental Protection Specialist

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

Date: February 2, 2012

Attachment:
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Minidoka Power House-Unity No. 1 and Unity-Heyburn Wood Pole Replacements

Work Order #: 297315 & 297321

This project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts on the following environmentally sensitive resources. See 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B for complete descriptions of the resources. This checklist is to be used as a summary – further discussion may be included in the Categorical Exclusion Memorandum.

<u>Environmental Resources</u>	<u>No Potential for Significance</u>	<u>No Potential, with Conditions (describe)</u>
1. Historic Properties and Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New landing construction is not planned or anticipated at any of the locations listed in the project location attachment. If new landing construction becomes necessary for wood pole removal at sites not previously surveyed, an onsite cultural monitor will have to be present 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. <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. T & E Species, or their habitat(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime or unique farmlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Other (describe)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Supporting documentation in the official project file:
Effects Determination for Threatened and Endangered Species

Signed: /s/ Frederick J. Walasavage

Date: February 2, 2012