

memorandum

DATE: August 11, 2014

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEPR-Bell-1

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Gary Beck
Project Manager – TEP-TPP-1

Proposed Action: 2014 Kalispell District Transmission Line Maintenance Projects

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.3 Routine maintenance

Location: Various transmission lines located in Sanders, Lake, Missoula, Flathead, and Lincoln counties, Montana. Refer to Project Location Attachment for transmission lines and corresponding structure locations.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (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. Pole 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, if needed, will be limited to an area not to exceed 100 feet wide by 200 feet long at each structure proposed for replacement.

Access road maintenance will be limited to minor blading, grading, and rocking of short 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'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). 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.

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

Concur: */s/ Katherine S. Pierce* _____

Katherine S. Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: *August 11, 2014* _____

Attachments:

Project Location
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions
Effects Determination for T&E Species

Project Location Attachment

Transmission Line	Structure	TRS Info	County
Hot Springs-Rattle Snake No. 1	16/2	T19N, R22W, SEC4	Sanders
Hot Springs-Rattle Snake No. 1	19/7	T19N, R22W, SEC23	Sanders
Hot Springs-Rattle Snake No. 1	23/9	T18N, 21W, SEC6	Sanders
Hot Springs-Rattle Snake No. 1	29/4, 29/5	T17N, R21W, SEC3	Sanders
Hot Springs-Rattle Snake No. 1	31/3	T17N, R21W, SEC11	Sanders
Hot Springs-Rattle Snake No. 1	32/7	T17N, R21W, SEC13	Sanders
Hot Springs-Rattle Snake No. 1	35/2, 35/3	T17N, R20W, SEC29	Lake
Hot Springs-Rattle Snake No. 1	40/6	T16N, R20W, SEC11	Lake
Hot Springs-Rattle Snake No. 1	41/1	T16N, R20W, SEC14	Lake
Hot Springs-Rattle Snake No. 1	42/1	T16N, R20W, SEC23	Missoula
Hot Springs-Rattle Snake No. 1	49/3	T15N, R20W, SEC25	Missoula
Columbia Falls-Kalispell No. 1	2/4	T30N, R20W, SEC22	Flathead
Columbia Falls-Kalispell No. 1	6/1, 6/2	T29N, R20W, SEC9	Flathead
Libby-Bonnors Ferry No. 1	33/5	T31N, R33W, SEC18	Lincoln
Libby-Bonnors Ferry No. 1	35/3	T31N, R33W, SEC6	Lincoln
Columbia Falls-Trego No. 1	29/2	T32N, R23W, SEC7	Flathead
Columbia Falls-Trego No. 1	38/8, 39/1, 39/2	T33N, R24W, SEC8	Flathead

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: 2014 Kalispell District Transmission Line Maintenance Projects

Work Order #: 343023 (Hot Springs-Rattle Snake No. 1), 343019 (Columbia Falls-Trego No. 1), 319121 (Libby-Bonnors Ferry No. 1), 343020 (Columbia Falls-Trego No. 1)

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"> ▪ A cultural survey was performed at all FY14 wood pole replacement locations, associated landings and proposed road improvement locations. Report findings indicated no historic properties affected by undertaking. MT SHPO concurred with BPA's No Adverse Effect/No Historic Properties Affected determination for all FY14 projects listed in this CX. ▪ 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 secured and the SHPO and the environmental project lead will be notified. 		
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listed fish species may inhabit streams that are within 0.5 miles of the various transmission lines. 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. ▪ Listed animal species may be present within 0.5 miles 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 listed animal species, the proposed project is not expected to result in conditions that would preclude use by any listed animal species; therefore, this project will have "No Effect" on listed animal species or habitat. 		
3. Floodplains or wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At locations adjacent to surface water/wetlands, erosion control devices will be utilized to prevent sedimentation of waterways during road maintenance or structure replacements therefore there will be "No Effect" on surface 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 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List supporting documentation attached (if needed):

Signed: /s/ Michael A. Rosales
Michael A. Rosales, KEPR-Bell-1

Date: August 1, 2014