

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Transmission Line Wood Pole Replacements and Access Road Maintenance within Bonneville Power Administration’s The Dalles District.

PP&A Project No.: 3191

Project Manager: Scott Williams, Line Foreman III – TFDF-The Dalles

Location: Various transmission lines located in Wasco and Sherman Counties, Oregon.

Transmission Line/ROW	Structure #	Township	Range	Section	County, State	Ownership
DeMoss – Fossil #1	6/9	1S	18E	17	Sherman, OR	Private
	6/12, 6/13	1S	18E	16	Sherman, OR	Private
	7/1, 7/13	1S	18E	16	Sherman, OR	Private
Big Eddy - Redmond	33/3	5S	14E	11	Wasco, OR	Private
Big Eddy - DeMoss #1	1/1, 1/3, 1/4, 2/1	1N	14E	06	Wasco, OR	Private
	5/9	1N	14E	02	Wasco, OR	Private
	6/3	1N	14E	1	Wasco, OR	Private
	7/4	1N	15E	06	Wasco, OR	Private
	8/1	1N	15E	01	Wasco, OR	Private
	8/6, 9/2	1N	15E	08	Wasco, OR	Private
	9/6	1N	15E	17	Wasco, OR	Private
	12/2, 12/5	1N	15E	15	Wasco, OR	Private
	12/18	1N	16E	36	Wasco, OR	Private
	22/4, 22/5 22/15 22/16	1N	17E	06	Wasco, OR	Private
	23/7	1N	17E	05	Wasco, OR	Private
	24/2	1N	17E	04	Wasco, OR	Private

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

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to replace deteriorating wood-pole structures (including, cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) along the specified 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. Cross arms and braces may be also replaced at other locations along the line.

Minor maintenance of landing and access roads within their existing road and landing prisms may be required to improve access within the transmission line corridor. No unauthorized construction activities will occur in any water body including streams, ponds, or wetlands. Access road maintenance may include blading, shaping, rocking and construction of waterbars and drain dips.

The proposed action 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: 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/ Fred Walasavage

Fred Walasavage

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: *May 4, 2015*

Attachment(s):

Environmental Checklist

Effects Determination for T&E Species

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.

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Project Site Description

The project activities will be conducted on BPA Transmission line rights of way. The site ownership consists of private and Federal lands (USCOE and BPA). The project area is mostly flat and vegetation consists primarily of non-native and invasive species. Land use in the general area is commercial and vacant property.

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"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Explanation:</u> OR SHPO's concurrence on no adverse effect determination <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. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The project will require minimal ground disturbing activities. No prime or unique farmlands will be affected. All disturbed areas outside of the roadways, landings and 15 feet from the poles will be reseeded.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No trees will be removed; about one acre of grasses/shrubs will be disturbed (mostly non-native or invasive species). Disturbed areas will be reseeded.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No suitable habitat present in project area for listed wildlife species.</p>		

5. **Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish**
(including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)



Explanation: None present in project area.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: None present in project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The proposed work is in upland areas; maximum depth of disturbance would be about 10 feet below ground surface.

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



Explanation: No change in land use and no specially designated areas identified.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: New wood poles will be similar to existing structures would not be noticeably different than existing structures. Access road work would be consistent with existing roads.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Any fugitive dust or similar during project implementation is expected to be temporary and minimal.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Construction noise will be temporary and localized.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: Project activities 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.

Explanation, if necessary:

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

Explanation, if necessary:

- 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.

Explanation, if necessary:

- 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.

Explanation, if necessary:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: Notification letters will be sent by the BPA Realty Specialist to all landowners prior to work.

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

Signed: /s/ Fred Walasavage
Fred Walasavage
Environmental Protection Specialist

Date: May 4, 2015