

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Ellensburg-Moxee Line Impairment Correction

PP&A No.: 2740

Project Manager: Thomas Murphy, TELP-TPP-3

Location: Kittitas County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.6 Additions and modifications

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to raise the height of an H-frame wood pole structure to remove a critical line impairment on the BPA Ellensburg-Moxee 115-kV transmission line between structures 5/6 and 5/7. An impairment is an area where the distance from the conductor to the ground surface is inadequate, per National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) standards, resulting in a threat to line reliability and posing a risk to public health and safety. The proposed work is necessary to ensure the line meets current National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) standards.

The proposed action is to raise the height of structure 5/7 approximately 18-feet by replacing wood poles in the same location. Cross-bar supports would also be added to the rebuilt structure. All work will occur in the existing, cleared right-of-way corridor on flat to moderate slopes using existing access roads. The action is on privately-owned land. Equipment is likely to include a combination of the following: a dump truck, a bulldozer, a backhoe, an excavator, and work trucks. The sites and any redistributed material will be contoured to match surrounding terrain, seeded, and mulched to prevent erosion and provide site stabilization.

The proposed work is necessary to ensure ongoing safe and reliable operation of the transmission line to minimize risk of outages and maintain power delivery in the region. Due to the urgent nature of the activity, BPA is proposing to perform the work in summer 2015. All work will be in accordance with NESC 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/ Caitlin SH Colson
Caitlin SH Colson
Program Analyst

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason
Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: June 15, 2015

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

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 proposed work will occur on a relatively flat landing along a rolling hillside. The project area is comprised of debris and gravelly sediments with shrub steppe vegetation, and is located between a residential neighborhood and undeveloped land.

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"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> A survey and Section 106 consultation was completed for the span between structures 5/6 and 5/7. No resources were identified in the vicinity of the work site. SHPO concurrence on a finding of No Historic Properties affected was received on 5/14/2015.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The proposed work will create a small disturbance area surrounding the wood pole structure. Site will be stabilized and excess material will be contoured to match the surrounding terrain, track-walked, seeded, and mulched.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ESA- or special status species are known to exist in the vicinity of the work site.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ESA- or special status species are known to exist in the vicinity of the work site.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There are no water resources in the vicinity of the work site.		
6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There are no wetlands in the vicinity of the work site.		

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: The proposed work is in an upland area.

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

Explanation: Proposed action in existing ROW corridor will not impact land use.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: Proposed action in existing ROW corridor will not alter or effect visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: Any fugitive dust or vehicle emissions generated during project implementation will be temporary and negligible.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: Construction noise will be temporary and localized.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: Proposed action in existing ROW corridor 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: The proposed work will occur within BPA transmission line right-of-way and access roads. The land owner will be notified.

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

Signed: /s/ Caitlin SH Colson
Caitlin SH Colson, KEP-4

Date: June 15, 2015