

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Benton-Franklin #1 and Benton-Franklin #2 Wood Pole Replacement

Project Manager: Todd Wehner

Location: Franklin County, Washington; BPA's Pasco District

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

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to replace four wood pole structures and associated structural/electrical components (e.g. cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) on the Benton-Franklin #1 and Benton-Franklin #2 transmission lines. These four structures do not meet BPA's clearance standards for vegetation.

See table below for structure names and locations on the transmission lines.

Transmission Line/ROW	Structure #	Township	Range	Section	County, State
Benton-Franklin #1	4/3, 4/4	11N	29E	18	Franklin, WA
Benton-Franklin #2	4/3, 4/4	11N	29E	18	

Replacement would be with taller poles and would 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. Current access roads will be sufficient for TLM crews to safely perform their work. Structures being replaced are all in easements on privately-owned property. These structures are located within or adjacent to an orchard.

The proposed action would allow safe and timely access to the transmission line which would 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/ Shawn Barndt
Shawn L. Barndt
Environmental Scientist

Concur:

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

Date: September 2, 2015

Attachment:
Environmental Checklist

cc: (w/ enclosures)
Wilfong, Greg – TFPF-PASCO

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.

Proposed Action: Benton-Franklin #1 and Benton-Franklin #2 Wood Pole Replacement

Project Site Description

These structures are located within or adjacent to an orchard.

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> WA SHPO concurrence on no adverse effect determination received March 16, 2015. <i>The Umatilla, Nez Perce and Yakama Tribes</i> were consulted—no responses were received.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 SHPO and the environmental project lead must be notified. ▪ Crews and equipment are to use existing access roads to and from each work site. ▪ Limit access road maintenance to the existing road prism. 		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Minimal soil disturbance (two 100x100 foot areas), erosion control measures would be used.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special status species present. Area of disturbance is frequently disturbed by agriculture operations.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special status species or designated habitat present. Area is previously disturbed by agriculture and road development.</p>		

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



Explanation: No water bodies present in project area.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: None present

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No wells or use of groundwater proposed. Spill prevention measures would be present on site.

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



Explanation: Temporary agricultural impacts during construction; landowners will be compensated for crop damage, as needed.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: New wood-poles would not be noticeably different than existing poles.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Small amount of dust and vehicle emissions due to construction. Dust will be of minor concern due to the timing of construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Temporary construction noise. Operational noise would not change.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No known soil contamination or hazardous conditions.

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:

Coordination with property owners has occurred. No Concerns.

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

Signed: /s/ Shawn L. Barndt
Shawn L. Barndt/KEPR-Pasco

Date: September 2, 2015