

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Canby Tap-Malin and Malin-Hilltop Transmission Line Wood Pole Replacements

PP&A Project No.: 3340

Project Manager: Richard Heredia – TEP-TPP-1

Location: Bonneville Power Administration’s Redmond District

Canby Tap – Malin-Hilltop 1	5/7, 5/8	42N	09E	22	Modoc, CA	Private/Range
Malin-Hilltop 1	30/3	43N	07E	06	Modoc, CA	USFS/Timber

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 three deteriorating wood-pole structures (including, cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) along the specified line. 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.

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

Date: March 2, 2016

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 within the BPA transmission line rights-of-way. The site locations are on private and federal lands. The project area consists of mostly flat terrain. Vegetation consists of grasses and steppe shrubs.

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"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> California SHPO concurred on “no adverse effect determination” in a letter dated February 17, 2016. Klamath and Pitt River Tribes, Fort Bidwell Indian Community, Smith River Rancheria, and USFS were consulted—no response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In the event of an inadvertent discovery, work will immediately cease and the SHPO and BPA archaeologist will be notified. 		
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 vegetation is planned to be disturbed.</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 is present in project area for listed wildlife species. The work will entail minimal human disturbance and will require a short duration of several days of work.</p>		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> None present in project area.</p>		

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: None present in project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: The proposed work is in an upland area; 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 and would not be noticeably different..

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: Any fugitive dust or vehicle emissions created 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.

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

- 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.

- 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.

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: Notification to landowners has been made by the BPA Realty Specialist.

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: March 2, 2016