

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: BPA Idaho Falls District 2019/2020 Wood Pole Replacement

Project No. (if applicable): 4077

Project Manager: Meadow Nelson, Project Manager – TEP-TPP-1

Location: Cassia and Bonneville Counties, Idaho

Transmission Line/ROW	Structure #	Township	Range	Section	County, State	Ownership/Land Use
West Burley - Heyburn	1/18	10S	23E	20	Cassia, ID	Private/Industrial
Minidoka PH - Unity	24/11	11S	23E	11	Cassia, ID	Private/Agricultural
Cattle Creek-Goshen	10/4	01N	39E	32	Bonneville, ID	Private/Range

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 poles and associated structural/electrical components (e.g., cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) at the locations specified in the Location section of this document. Replacement would be in-kind and would utilize the existing holes to minimize ground disturbance. If necessary, an auger would be used to remove any loose soil from the existing hole prior to new wood pole placement.

The proposed action would help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region. All work would 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/ Sarah T. Biegel

Date: May 13, 2019

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer- EC-4

Attachment(s):

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 would be conducted on BPA transmission line rights-of-way. The site locations primarily consist of private lands. Land uses consist of agriculture, industrial, and rangeland. The project areas are mostly flat to mountainous terrain. Vegetation consists of grasses and bare ground.

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>BPA conducted cultural resource field surveys for the proposed project on April 30, 2019, and initiated efforts consistent with the BPA Programmatic Agreement in Idaho. No cultural resources were identified within the Areas of Potential Effect. Shoshone Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation and the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation were consulted—no response.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The project would require minimal ground-disturbing activities. No prime or unique farmlands would be affected.</p>		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> There are no special-status species within the project area. No vegetation removal is expected; however, any disturbed areas outside of 15 feet from the poles would 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 special-status species and habitats were identified within the project area. No suitable habitat is present in project area for listed wildlife species.</p>		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)	<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: No impact to water resources. 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 would be similar to existing structures and 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: No impact since construction noise would be temporary and localized.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: Project activities would not impact human health or safety. The proposed action would help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region.

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 letters would 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 13, 2019