

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Big Eddy-Chenoweth, Chenoweth-Goldendale Transmission Line Wood Pole Replacements and Access Road Maintenance

PP&A Project No.: 3441

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

Location: Klickitat, WA; Bonneville Power Administration’s The Dalles District

Transmission Line/ROW	Structure #	Township	Range	Section	County, State	Ownership/Land-use
Big Eddy - Chenoweth No. 1	2/4	2N	14E	35	Klickitat, WA	Federal/Vacant
	3/9	2N	14E	26	Klickitat, WA	Private/Vacant
Chenoweth – Goldendale No. 1	5/4	2N	14E	11	Klickitat, WA	Private/Grazing

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 at three structures (including, cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) along the Big Eddy - Chenoweth and Chenoweth – Goldendale 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. Approximately 4,252 feet of existing access road will be improved through blading, shaping, rocking and adding water bars on the Big Eddy - Chenoweth line. This project area will also include the reconstruction of approximately 906 feet of road necessary to join BPA’s existing right-of-way access road. Reconstruction includes include blading, shaping and rocking in addition to widening existing road footprint where needed to allow for safe passage of equipment. No road work is proposed on the Chenoweth – Goldendale line.

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: May 27, 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.

Proposed Action: Big Eddy-Chenoweth, Chenoweth-Goldendale Transmission Line Wood Pole Replacements and Access Road Maintenance

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"/>
<p>▪ <u>Explanation:</u> BPA archeological approval and Washington SHPO concurrence on no adverse effect determination on May 24, 1016. . Yakama, Nez Perce, and Warm springs Tribes consulted—no response.</p> <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 outside of previously disturbed areas. No prime or unique farmlands will be affected. All disturbed areas outside of 15 feet from the poles and adjacent to roadways will be reseeded.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species are present.</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 are present. 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 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 would not be noticeably different than existing structures.

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 has been made to the landowner by the Transmission Line Forman in April 2016.

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
Environmental Protection Specialist
EP/Celilo

Date: May 27, 2016