

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Pilot Butte-Lapine Transmission Line Wood Pole Replacement, Redmond District

PP&A Project No.: 3462

Project Manager: Richard Heredia – TEP-TPP-1

Location: Deschutes County, OR; Bonneville Power Administration's Redmond District

Transmission Line/ROW	Structure #	Township	Range	Section	County	Ownership/Land Use
Pilot Butte-LaPine	7/2	18S	12E	34	Deschutes	USFS/Forest
	15/7	20S	12E	06	Deschutes	USFS/Forest
	16/1	20S	11E	12	Deschutes	USFS/Forest
	18/5	20S	11E	23	Deschutes	USFS/Forest
	20/8, 21/2, 21/4, 21/5	30S	11E	24	Deschutes	USFS/Forest
	24/3, 24/5	21S	11E	17	Deschutes	USFS/Forest
	25/1, 25/4	21S	11E	20	Deschutes	USFS/Forest
	28/6, 28/8	22S	11E	05	Deschutes	USFS/Forest
	30/2	22S	11E	18	Deschutes	USFS/Forest

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-pole structures (including cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) along the Pilot Butte-Lapine Transmission Line. Replacement will be in-kind and will utilize the existing holes where practical 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.

Minor maintenance of landing and access roads within their existing road and landing prisms may be required to allow for safe working conditions. 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: August 10, 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 on BPA Transmission line rights of way. The site locations primarily consist of Federal lands (USFS). The project area is mostly flat and vegetation consists of pine forest, 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 BPA archeological approval and Oregon SHPO concurrence on no adverse effect determination on July 16, 2016. Klamath Tribes, Burns Paiute Tribe, and Warm Springs Tribes consulted—no response. Inadvertent discovery form should be provided and explained to the road contractor. In the event of an inadvertent discovery, work will immediately cease and the SHPO and BPA archaeologist will be notified.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Geology and Soils <u>Explanation:</u> The project will require minimal ground disturbing activities. No prime or unique farmlands will be affected.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species) <u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species present. No vegetation removal is expected; however, any disturbed areas outside of the roadways, landings and 15 feet from the poles will be reseeded.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats) <u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species present. No suitable habitat is present in project area for listed wildlife species.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs) <u>Explanation:</u> None present in project area.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: None present in project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: No contact with ground water. 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 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: 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

The landowner has been notified by the BPA Reality Specialist. The USFS was notified of planned pole replacements at the USFS/BPA meeting, on February 3, 2016. Both the Deschutes and Chemult Forest Service Ranger Districts were present. No issues were raised for FY16 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 – EP-CELILO

Date: August 10, 2016