

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Noxon-Hot Springs Structure 17/1 Foundation Stabilization

Project No. (if applicable): 3383

Project Manager: Gary Beck

Location: Sanders County, Montana

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

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to install a riprap filled trench between the Noxon-Hot Springs structure 17/1 and the encroaching Beaver Creek. This action would provide future structure foundation protection which would maintain the integrity of the structure.

Reviewing historical 1995 aerial photos, the stream bank was approximately 110 feet from the structure. Currently, the stream bank is 62 feet from the structure. As the creek continues to meander and erode the bank, the footing would eventually become undermined which could potentially collapse the steel structure. To maintain the current integrity of the structure and its foundation, mitigation efforts would consist of installing a riprap filled trench between the structure and the encroaching Beaver Creek. Prior to excavation, the top soil (duff layer) would be removed and stockpiled onsite for reuse. The trench once excavated would be 120-feet long, 4-feet wide, 8-feet deep, and would be backfilled with 1-foot to 3-foot size riprap. Excavated soil would be used to fill in the voids between the riprap. The stockpiled topsoil would then be placed on the the top 1-foot section of the trench to promote revegetation of the disturbed area. Any remaining excavated soil would be removed and stockpiled at the landowner's recommended location. Since this is an agricultural field, reseeding using a native seed mix would not be required. No instream work is required for this project.

The proposed action would maintain the current integrity of the transmission line structure which would reduce unplanned outages and provide uninterrupted electrical service to the region. All work would be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA work 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/ Michael A. Rosales

Michael A. Rosales

Physical Scientist-Environment

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: September 28-2016

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

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: Noxon-Hot Springs Structure 17/1 Foundation Stabilization

Project Site Description

The project is located on private property in an active agricultural field in Sanders County, Montana. All proposed actions would be performed in the existing transmission line right-of-way. No instream work would be performed.

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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Explanation:</u> A cultural survey was performed at the proposed project location. Report findings indicated no historic properties affected by the undertaking. MT SHPO concurred with BPA's No Historic Properties Affected determination for the proposed action. <u>Mitigation:</u> In the event that archaeological or historical materials are discovered during project activities, work in the immediate vicinity must stop, the area must be secured, and the MT SHPO, BPA archaeologist, and the environmental project lead would be notified. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Geology and Soils <p><u>Explanation:</u> Ground disturbance would be limited to the trench dimensions and would not impact the stream bank.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u> Erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMPs) would be implemented as necessary prior to any vegetation and ground-disturbing activities. As this is an active agricultural field, reseeded using a native seed mix would not be required.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species) <p><u>Explanation:</u> No suitable habitat is present within the project area for listed plant species as the project is located in an active agricultural field.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean and inspect all construction vehicles and equipment prior to entering project site to prevent introduction of invasive weeds onsite. Clean and inspect all construction vehicles and equipment prior to exiting project site to prevent spread of invasive weeds offsite. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. **Wildlife** (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)



Explanation: No federal/state special-status species are present in the project area.

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



Explanation: No instream work would be performed. No effect to aquatic species and/or habitat.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No wetlands were identified in the project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No use of groundwater proposed. Maximum depth of disturbance would be 8 feet below ground surface.

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



Explanation: No change in land use. No specially designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: Visual quality would not be affected.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Small amount of dust from vehicles would be temporary; existing air quality would not be affected.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Construction noise would be intermittent, temporary, and localized.

Mitigation: Construction would be limited to daylight hours. There are no residences or other sensitive noise receptors in the immediate vicinity.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: Project activities would not negatively affect human health or safety. The proposed project would maintain the current integrity of the transmission line structure, which would reduce unplanned outages and provide uninterrupted electrical service to the region; thereby, resulting in beneficial effects to human health and 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: BPA Realty has notified the landowner of the upcoming project. The landowner has no issues with the proposed work.

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

Signed: /s/ Michael A. Rosales
Michael A. Rosales EPR-Bell-1
Physical Scientist-Environment

Date: September 28, 2016