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United States Government **Department of Energy**

Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: July 21, 2011

REPLY TO ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Mark Kjelland
Project Manager – TEP-TPP-2

Proposed Action: Grand Coulee-Bell No. 3/Grand Coulee-Westside No. 1 double circuit 230-kV transmission line insulator replacement and access improvement project

Budget Information: Work Order #00255064

PP&A Project No.: PP&A 1946

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.3, Routine maintenance activities…for structures, rights-of-way, infrastructures such as roads, equipment… routine maintenance activities, corrective….are required to maintain… infrastructures…in a condition suitable for a facility to be used for its designated purpose.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Location: The proposed Grand Coulee-Bell No. 3/Grand Coulee-Westside No. 1 double circuit 230-kV transmission line insulator replacement and access improvement project is located in Grant, Lincoln, and Spokane counties, Washington, in BPA's Spokane Operations and Maintenance District. Townships, Ranges, and Sections crossed by the proposed project are listed below:

Township		Range		Sections
26	N	34	E	3-5,10-13
26	N	35	E	17,18,20-24
26	N	36	E	19-24
26	N	37	E	19-24
26	N	38	E	19,20,23,24,26-29
26	N	39	E	19-24
26	N	40	E	19-24
26	N	41	E	13-16,19-21
26	N	42	E	12.-18
26	N	43	E	7-9,16-18
27	N	32	E	3-5,10-12
27	N	33	E	7,16-18,21-23,25,26
27	N	34	E	30-32
28	N	30	E	2,11,13,14,24
28	N	31	E	19,26-30,35,36
28	N	32	E	31,32

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA is proposing to replace worn insulators along the 83-mile Grand Coulee-Bell No. 3 230-kV double circuit transmission line. Work would be conducted on energized lines using live-line and bare-hand techniques as well as standard techniques requiring an outage. Insulators, which are located at the attachment points between the conductor and the transmission line towers, would be accessed using a specialized heavily insulated line truck, a standard line truck, or helicopter. For crews to access towers with the specialized truck, some existing access roads within the ROW may need to be improved by clearing, grading, widening, and rocking. Areas around the towers (landings) may also need to be graded and or rocked to allow for safe positioning of both specialized and standard line trucks. Heavy equipment used on the proposed project may include, but is not limited to, a mower, grader, roller, and dump truck.

Findings: BPA has determined that the proposed action complies with Section 1021.410 and Appendix B of Subpart D of the Department of Energy (DOE) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Regulations (57 Fed. Reg. 1512.2, April 24, 1992). The proposed action does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal. The proposal is not connected [40 C.F.R. 1508.25 (a)(1)] to other actions with potentially significant impacts, is not related to other proposed actions with cumulatively significant impacts [40 C.F.R. 1508.25 (a)(2)], and is not precluded by 40 C.F.R. 1506.1 or 10 C.F.R. 1021.211. Moreover, the proposed action would not (i) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health; (ii) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities; (iii) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that pre-exist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; or (iv) adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources.

With the actions identified on the attachment, this proposed action meets the requirements for the Categorical Exclusion referenced above. We therefore determine that the proposed action may be categorically excluded from further NEPA review and documentation.

/s/ Laura Roberts
Laura Roberts
Biological Scientist

Concur: */s/ Katherine S. Pierce* Date: *July 21, 2011*
Katherine S. Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment: Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Grand Coulee-Bell No. 3/Grand Coulee-Westside No. 1 Double Circuit 230-kV Transmission Line Insulator Replacement and Access Improvement Project

Work Order #: 00255064 **PP&A Project No.:** PP&A-1946

Prepared by: Laura Roberts **Routing:** KEP-4 **Date:** 7/20/2011

This project has been found to not adversely affect the following environmentally sensitive resources, laws, and regulations:

Environmental Resources	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect with conditions
1. Cultural Resources	x	
Stay on existing access roads. Do not disturb any historic farm equipment. Avoidance Area 72/2, no ground disturbance 30-100 ft AOL of 72/2.		
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s)		x
A known population of Spalding's silene occurs beneath BPA's Grand Coulee-Bell No. 3 transmission line. Mapped by surveyors in 2002, the population is located directly under the southern-most wire, approximately 125 ft west of tower 36/2 and 70 ft north (down slope) of the access road. No road work or landings are required to access structure 36/2. Linemen will access structure 36/2 from the east using existing access roads.		
3. Floodplains or wetlands	x	
4. Areas of special designation	x	
5. Health & safety	x	
6. Prime agricultural lands	x	
7. Special sources of water	x	
8. Consistency with state and local laws and regulations	x	
9. Pollution control at Federal facilities	x	

10. Other [x] [ ]

WEED CONTROL: Construction equipment cleaning: All track-driven equipment, all earthmoving equipment of any kind, and all other heavy equipment typically employed for road construction will be thoroughly pressure washed for dirt and weed seeds before being allowed access to the construction sites.

SOILS MANAGEMENT: Erosion control best management practices (BMPs) utilized on this project are to be consistent with the Washington State Department of Ecology, Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington, September 2004, Chapter 7. Publication 04-10-076.

Dust control: Utilize water for dust control. Water truck(s) in sufficient number to adequately control dust should be available should the need arise. If water is unavailable or if water is not providing adequate control, an approved chemical dust palliative will be used, such as calcium or magnesium chloride, polyacrylamide, or SoilSement.

1. Limit the amount of soil exposed by grading at any given time,

2. Stabilize recently bladed or constructed roads with aggregate,

3. Soil that is to be stored for reuse as backfill, restoration, or for disposal is to be managed in order to prevent erosion by wind or water. This requirement applies to all soils on site, whether at final grade or not.

Restoration seeding: Stabilize and seed any exposed areas using seed mix below unless alternate seeding regime is required by individual landowner. Broadcast seeding rates are given (lbs/ac)..

Permanent Seed Mix: Upland

English Name	Mixture (lbs/ac)*
Bluebunch wheatgrass (N) or beardless wheatgrass (N)	16
Hard fescue (I) or sheep fescue (I)	4
Big bluegrass (N)	2
Native legume (N)	4
TOTAL	**26 lbs/acre**

*Expressed as Pure Live Seed (PLS)
(N) = Native plant species
(I) = Introduced, non-native plant species