

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: East Omak-Oroville No. 1 and East Omak-Tonasket No. 2 Transmission Line Property Transfer

Project Manager: Jay Largo - TPCV-TPP-4

Location: Okanogan County, WA

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.24 Property transfers

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to transfer ownership of the East Omak-Oroville No. 1 and East Omak-Tonasket No. 2 double-circuit 115-kV transmission lines, associated easements, and three disconnect switches to Okanogan Public Utility District No.1 (Okanogan PUD). Okanogan PUD has requested BPA transfer ownership of these facilities and easements to allow operation and maintenance of these lines that interconnect the PUD's substations within their service area.

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, Jul. 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/ Tish Eaton

Tish Eaton
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Tish Eaton

Katey C. Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: November 14, 2019

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: East Omak-Oroville No. 1 and East Omak-Tonasket No. 2 Transmission Line Property Transfer

Project Site Description

While the transmission lines cross through the Okanogan River valley between Omak and Tonasket, the lines are primarily located on old river terraces about 500 to 700 feet in elevation above the river. There is one transmission line crossing of the Okanogan River (which may provide habitat for ESA-listed fish) in line mile 17. Land use includes agricultural and open space with some low-density rural residential areas near Omak. Landownership is primarily private with a few parcels managed by the Bureau of Land Management and Washington Department of State Lands. Shrub-steppe vegetation is common in areas not used for agriculture.

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"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Because the transmission lines were built in 1982 and do not meet the age requirements for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places, a determination of no potential to effect was made by BPA Archaeologist on October 30, 2019. Additionally, the property transfer does not include the sale of BPA-owned land.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The proposed action would not involve construction or ground disturbing activities; therefore, there would be no impact to soils.		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No federally-listed plant species are known to be present within the transmission line corridor. The proposed action would not involve construction or ground disturbing activities; therefore, there would be no impact to plants.		
4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The proposed action would not involve construction or ground disturbing activities; therefore, there would be no impact to wildlife.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The proposed action would not involve construction or ground disturbing activities; therefore, there would be no impact to water bodies, floodplains, or fish.		

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: The proposed action would not involve construction or ground disturbing activities; therefore, there would be no impact to wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: The proposed action would not involve construction or ground disturbing activities; therefore, there would be no impact to groundwater or aquifers.

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

Explanation: There would be no change to land use at the site and there are no specially-designated areas in the vicinity.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: There would be no change to the visual quality in the area adjacent to the existing transmission lines.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: There would be no impacts to air quality.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: There would be no noise impacts.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: There would be no impacts 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: No landowner notification or coordination would be necessary since this would be a facility property transfer between BPA and Okanogan PUD. Landowners would likely not notice the transfer of ownership.

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

Signed: /s/ Tish Eaton
Tish Eaton, ECT-4

Date: November 14, 2019