

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Broadview-Garrison No. 2 Spacer Damper Replacement Project

**PP&A No.:** 4630

**Project Manager:** 366424

**Location:** Jefferson County, Montana

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

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to provide system reliability by replacing old and worn spacer dampers on the Broadview-Garrison No. 2 transmission line at transmission tower 176/1. Manned aerial carts that ride on the transmission line conductors would be used to change out the spacers. The carts would be placed on the transmission line by helicopter before the line crews access the carts to perform the work. New spacers would be flown in to the carts and delivered by helicopter. Once the old spacers are changed, they would be picked up by helicopter and transported to a pickup area before being sent to a recycling center. The work would be above ground with equipment picked up and dropped off on flatbed trucks on the ground and all vehicles would remain on existing access roads. The helicopter landing zone is located on BPA gravel access road to the north of structure 176/1. No ground disturbing activities are anticipated and existing access roads would be used. The proposed action would reduce potential fire risk and maintain reliable power to the region. All work would 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, 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/ Treicia Albert*

Treicia Albert

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

*/s/ Katey C. Grange*

Date: July 8, 2021

Katey C. Grange

NEPA Compliance Officer

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:** Broadview-Garrison No. 2 Spacer Damper Replacement Project

## **Project Site Description**

The project is located in western Montana along BPA's transmission line corridor in Jefferson County, surrounded by deciduous forest. The project would occur on lands managed by the US Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

## **Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources**

### **1. Historic and Cultural Resources**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed project activities to replace dampers on the transmission tower would have no potential to cause effect. The line was constructed within the last 50 years and does not fall into the period of significance outlined in the BPA Pacific Northwest Transmission System Multiple Property Submission (1938-1974). BPA Historian review has shown that, as that no landing work or other new ground disturbance would occur as a result of this undertaking, the proposed work would not impact the integrity of historic transmission lines.

### **2. Geology and Soils**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground disturbance is anticipated for the project.

### **3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No disturbance to vegetation is anticipated. There would be no effect to ESA-listed plant species. No impacts to state or other sensitive species are anticipated.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: The project takes place in the grizzly bear management zone 2 of the North Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE) conservation strategy for grizzly bears. Project activities would not impact habitat as there would be no ground disturbance, duration of the work would be one day within a maximum 6 hour timeframe, and all food storage rules per the NCDE conservation strategy would be adhered to. The project would have minimal impact to wildlife and habitat related to temporary disturbance associated with elevated noise and human presence. The project would have no effect to ESA-listed species. No impacts to state special-status species or habitats are anticipated.

Notes:

- Crews would be informed of procedures for safely working in grizzly bear country.
- Any attractants (e.g. food) would be contained in bear-resistant manner for the duration of the project.

**Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no ground disturbing activities in any river, stream, or other waterbody along the project and no riparian vegetation would be impacted. The project would have no effect to ESA-listed fish species.

**5. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no ground disturbing activities in wetlands.

**6. Groundwater and Aquifers**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No impacts to ground water or aquifers are anticipated due to the lack of ground disturbance.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No change in land use would occur and project activities would not impact existing land uses, and there would not be any recreational or operational disruptions.

**8. Visual Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would have a minimal impact to visual quality. Replacement spacer dampers would be similar to the existing spacer dampers, and consistent with other spacer dampers along the transmission line.

**9. Air Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A small amount of vehicular emissions and dust may occur temporarily during construction.

**10. Noise**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Some temporary construction noise from construction activities and helicopter use would occur during daylight hours. The operational noise of the transmission line would not change.

## 11. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No impacts to human health and safety are anticipated.

### **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: N/A

**Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.**

Explanation: N/A

**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: N/A

**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: N/A

### **Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description:

BPA environment staff have coordinated the proposed project activities with the Bureau of Land Management.

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

Signed: /s/ Treicia Albert

Treicia Albert

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: July 8, 2021