

## Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Minidoka PH – Unity Wood Pole Replacement

**Project No. (if applicable):** 4077

**Project Manager:** Meadow Nelson, Project Manager – TEP-TPP-1

**Location:** Cassia, County, Idaho.

**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 replace deteriorating wood poles and associated structural/electrical components (e.g. cross arms, insulators, guy anchors, etc.) at structure 24/11 of the Minidoka PH – Unity transmission line. Replacement would be in-kind and would utilize the existing holes to minimize ground disturbance. If necessary, an auger would-be used to remove any loose soil from the existing hole prior to new wood pole placement.

The project would help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in 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, 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/ Katey Grange*

Date: January 9, 2020

Katey Grange

NEPA Compliance Officer – EC-4

Attachment(s):

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.

**Proposed Action:** Minidoka PH – Unity Wood Pole Replacement.

### Project Site Description

The project activities would be conducted on BPA Transmission line right-of-way. The site is located on private land. Adjacent land uses consist of agriculture and range. The project area is mostly flat with vegetation consisting primarily steppe shrubs and grasses.

Transmission Line/ROW	Structure #	Township	Range	Section	County, State	Ownership/Land Use
Minidoka PH - Unity	24/11	11S	23E	11	Cassia, ID	Private/Agricultural

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
<p><b>1. Historic and Cultural Resources</b></p> <p>On October 31, 2019, BPA submitted a Determination of No Adverse Effect to Historic Properties to the Idaho SHPO, the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation, and the Shoshone Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation. On November 13, 2019, the Idaho SHPO requested additional information, which BPA provided on December 12, 2019. Upon receiving this information, Idaho SHPO provided its concurrence with the determination of No Adverse Effect on December 12, 2019. No response was received from the other consulting parties.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>2. Geology and Soils</b></p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> The project would require minimal ground disturbing activities. No prime or unique farmlands would be affected.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)</b></p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> There are no special-status, including Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed, species within the project area. No vegetation removal is expected; however, any disturbed areas outside of 15 feet from the poles would-be reseeded.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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



Explanation No special-status, including Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed, species and habitats were identified within the project area. No suitable habitat is present in project area for listed wildlife species. Wildlife in the project area would experience temporary disturbance associated with elevated noise levels and construction vehicle presence.

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



Explanation: None present in project area.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: None present in project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No contact with groundwater. 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 would be similar to existing structures would not be noticeably different than existing structures.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Any fugitive dust or similar during project implementation is expected to be temporary and minimal.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: No impact since construction noise would be temporary and localized.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: Project activities would not impact human health or safety. The proposed action would help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region.

### **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.

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

Description: Notification letters will be sent by the BPA Realty Specialist to landowner prior to work.

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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  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Date: January 9, 2020