A. Background
BLM Office: Alturas Field Office - LLCAN02000

NEPA File No.: DOI-BLM-CA-N020-2012-0022-CX

Proposed Action Title/Type: Right-of-Way Grant Renewal and Amendment

Location of Proposed Action: The right-of-way is located east of Tulelake, California, in Modoc County.

See attached map.

Description of Proposed Action:
The proposed action is to renew and amend right-of-way (ROW) grant CAS 571. The renewal of this ROW grant will insure consistency with current Bureau of Land Management regulations and will be in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. The amendment would allow for an overhead to underground conversion of a single span of PacifiCorp 12.5kV distribution line in order to correct a clearance issue with a US Bureau of Reclamation 500kV transmission line. Approximately 298.5 feet of overhead line will be buried in conduit at a depth of 36 inches. Existing poles will be utilized in running the conductor underground. Work will be performed with a backhoe or mini-excavator and will take place entirely within the 20 foot wide grant area. No staging areas are required to complete the work and none will be permitted. It is expected that it will take one week or less to complete the work and will occur immediately following the issuance of the new ROW grant. All vehicles, trailers, and equipment will be washed before entering public lands to reduce the spread of noxious weeds.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance
This action conforms to the Alturas Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Record of Decision (ROD), approved on April 17, 2008 because it is specifically provided for or is clearly consistent with the RMP objectives and decisions.

C. Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act
The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with H-1790-1-National Environmental Policy Act Handbook, Appendix 4, p. 151-152:

E. Realty
11. Conversion of existing right-of-way grants to Title V grants or existing leases to FLPMA Section 302(b) leases where no new facilities or other changes are needed.

13. Amendments to existing rights-of-way, such as the upgrading of existing facilities, which entail no additional disturbances outside the right-of-way boundary.
D. Signature
This categorical exclusion is appropriate for this action because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The Proposed Action has been scoped by an interdisciplinary team of specialists in the Alturas Field Office and there were no issues or unresolved conflicts identified. I have determined that the above described project is a categorical exclusion, in conformance with the Alturas RMP, and does not require further NEPA analysis.

__________________________  ______________
/s/ Timothy J. Burke       6/5/2012
Timothy J. Burke
Field Manager

E. Contact
For more information, contact Emily Jennings, at (530) 233-7907

Attachments:
Legal Description
Map

Review of Extraordinary Circumstances

The Department of the Interior Manual 516 2.3A (3) requires review of the following “extraordinary circumstances” (516 DM 2 Appendix 2) to determine if an otherwise categorically excluded action would require additional environmental analysis/documentation.

Would the proposed action: (YES or NO)

1) Have significant impacts on public health or safety.
   [ ] Yes   [X] No
   Date: 6/5/2012
   Comments:

2) Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.
   [ ] Yes   [X] No
   Date: May 29, 2012, DJS;
   Comments:
   May 29, 2012, DJS; This project will **not impact** any known historic properties or cultural resources.

5/31/2012; CS;
No recreation, wild and scenic rivers, or wilderness areas will be affected by the proposed grazing transfer. In 2012 the wilderness characteristics inventory was updated for this area, and no lands with wilderness characteristics were found within this small project area (Approximately 80 contiguous acres of public land in the area). There will be no further discussion or assessment of this issue. For further information see file folder (CA-NO-02-325 ) in the wilderness case files.
Comments: There are no drinking aquifers, prime farmlands, wetlands, or floodplains in the project area.

3) Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].
   [ ] Yes  [X] No
   Date: 6/5/2012
   Comments:

4) Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.
   [ ] Yes  [X] No
   Date: 6/5/2012
   Comments:

5) Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.
   [ ] Yes  [X] No
   Date: 6/5/2012
   Comments:

6) Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.
   [ ] Yes  [X] No
   Date: 6/5/2012
   Comments:

7) Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.
   [ ] Yes  [X] No
   Date: May 29, 2012, DJS;
   Comments: This project will not impact any known National Register Properties.

8) Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat.
   [ ] Yes  [X] No
   Date: 06/01/2012, ADK; 06/05/12; MPD;
   Comments: There are no BLM listed special status (T&E) plants in the project area. There are occurrences of BLM special interest plants (watch species) 1.5 miles to the SE. They are on a different soil type and have not been located or are expected within the ROW where ground disturbance will take place. The watch species are squarestem phlox (*Phlox muscoides*) and elegant daisy (*Erigeron elegantulus*).

9) Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.
   [ ] Yes  [X] No
   Date: 6/5/2012
Comments:

10) Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).
   [ ] Yes   [ X ] No
   Date: 6/5/2012
   Comments:

11) Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).
   [ ] Yes   [ X ] No
   Date: May 29, 2012, DJS;
   Comments:

12) Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).
   [ ] Yes   [X] No
   Date: 06/05/2012
   Comments: The CAS 571 ROW Grant Renewal and Amendment would have a low probability to contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species. A total of 6 noxious weed sites were inventoried in 2009 and 2010 within 1.5 – 3.8 miles east of the project area. In 2009, a total of 2 Scotch thistle sites were GPSed and in 2010, 1 Scotch thistle, 1 Canada thistle, 1 Bull thistle and 1 Perennial pepperweed sites were GPSed. All noxious weed sites were chemically treated after being inventoried. The approximate 300’ of ground disturbance would be surveyed for noxious weeds the following springs and if found all noxious weeds would be inventoried and treated by the BLM noxious weed crews.

Reviewers:

_________________________________________ Date
Botany/Riparian

_________________________________________ Date
Cultural Resources

_________________________________________ Date
Wildlife

_________________________________________ Date
Invasive Species

_________________________________________ Date
Recreation/Wilderness