

Categorical Exclusion Documentation

A. Background

BLM Office: Prineville Field Office

NEPA Log #: DOI - BLM - OR – P060 - 2011 -0047 - CX

Project/Lease/Serial/Case File #: ORE-0-000225

Proposed Action Title: PacifiCorp linear right of way renewal.

Location: This portion of their existing transmission line has 12.66 acres of public land in Crook County and 6.48 acres in Deschutes County between Prineville and Redmond, Oregon. This section of the line begins about a mile and one half East of Redmond and continues East approximately 5 air miles toward Prineville, ending approximately 10 air miles Southwest of Prineville.

Willamette Meridian, Oregon

T. 15 S., R. 13 E., Sec. 12, SWSW, N2SW, N2SE, SENE;

T. 15 S., R. 14 E., Sec 3, NENE;

T. 15 S., R. 14 E., Sec 5, SESW, SWSE;

T. 15 S., R. 14 E., Sec 7, S2NW, SWNE, N2NE;

T. 15 S., R. 14 E., Sec 8, N2NW;

Description of the Proposed Action: Renew existing linear right-of-way for a 115 kV transmission line 50 feet wide and approximately 3.16 miles in length for a 30 year term

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: The Upper Deschutes Record of Decision (ROD) and Management Plan
Date approved (ROD): September 2005.

The proposed action is in conformance with the above plan because it is specifically provided for in the following land use plan decisions: Page 135, Transportation and Utilities, “Provide new or modified rights-of-way for transportation/utility corridors and communication/energy sites to meet expected demands and minimize environmental impacts”. Also, on page 135, Guidelines, Item 1, “BLM administered lands will continue to be available for rights-of-way, including multiple use and single use utility/transportation corridors, following existing routes, and roads”.

C. Compliance with NEPA

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 Departmental Manual 516 DM 11.9,E. Realty, (9) “Renewals and assignments of leases, permits, or rights-of-way where no additional rights are conveyed beyond those granted by the original authorizations”. (516 DM 11.9, dated 1/30/2008).

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply. See attached CX Extraordinary Circumstances Documentation checklist.

D. Signature

I considered that this electric 115kV transmission line right-of-way was originally granted in 1951, and have found that it has had no significant affect, either individually or cumulatively, on the human environment.

Authorizing official: Molly M. Brown
 Molly M. Brown, Field Manager, Deschutes Resource Area

10/11/11
 Date

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this review, contact: Julie Freeman, Land Law Examiner, Prineville Field Office, 3050 NE 3rd Street, Prineville, OR 97754, telephone (541) 416-6701.

CX EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION		YES	NO
The proposed categorical exclusion action will:			
2.1	Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
Rationale: All proposed activities would follow established Occupational Safety and Health Administration rules concerning health and safety.			
2.2	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.		X
Rationale: This electric transmission line is not within a park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmark; sole or principal drinking water aquifer; prime farmland or wetlands. There are no public lands within this existing Right of Way that contain Wilderness Characteristics due to their small size and unnatural character.			
2.3	Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].		X
Rationale: The above project has been reviewed and found to be in conformance with one or more of the following BLM plans: Upper Deschutes Record of Decision (ROD) and Resource Management Plan (RMP): September 2005. This proposed action is in conformance with the above plan because it is specifically provided for in the following land use plan decision: page 135, Transportation and Utilities, "Provide new or modified rights-of-way for transportation/utility corridors and communication/energy sites to meet expected demands and minimize environmental impacts". Also, on page 135, Guidelines, Item 1, "BLM administered lands will continue to be available for rights-of-way, including multiple use and single use utility/transportation corridors, following existing routes and roads".			
2.4	Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
Rationale: Past proposed electrical transmission line Rights-of-Way have shown no highly			

uncertain, potentially significant, unique or unknown risks.		
2.5	Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.	X
Rationale: Electrical Transmission line Rights-of-Way have been authorized for many years throughout the BLM with various authorities. There is no evidence that this action has potentially significant environmental effects. This management activity does not commit the BLM to pursuing further actions, and as such would not establish a precedent or decision for future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		
2.6	Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.	X
Rationale: This proposed action is specifically provided for in land use plan decisions. Similar past activities have had no significant direct, indirect or cumulative effect.		
2.7	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.	X
Rationale: The BLM has conducted surveys for cultural resources in the project area, and determined that the proposed action would not result in significant impacts to cultural resources.		
2.8	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 for these species.	X
Rationale: This proposal is to renew an existing electrical transmission line which has been in place since 1951. The scope of the project would not change the overall habitat function of the stand or result in the loss of critical habitat.		
2.9	Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.	X
Rationale: This proposed action conforms to the direction given for the management of public lands in the Prineville District ROD/RMP, which complies with all applicable laws, such as the Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act and others.		
2.10	Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).	X
Rationale: This proposed action would not affect low income or minority populations.		
2.11	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).	X
Rationale: Cultural clearances have been completed in this area and no sacred sites were identified.		
2.12	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).	X
Rationale: If granted, a term and condition of the ROW is that the holder is to control the spread of noxious weeds within the boundaries of the ROW for the life of the ROW. The area is most likely heavily disturbed, and weeds are most likely present. The usual practices apply to minimize spread: Take care where vehicles are parked and where staff is working/walking. Take care to check personnel, tools and vehicles for plant parts before leaving the site. Minimize soil disturbance as much as possible.		

