

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

**Henry Lake - Sipres 230-kV Transmission Line
Structure 11/4R Relocation
Weld County, Colorado
Project No. 2016-101**

A. Brief Description of Proposal: Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) proposes to replace and relocate Structure 11/4R, a 100 foot tall steel monopole structure and appurtenances on the Henry Lake - Sipres 230-kV Transmission Line. Structure 11/4R is located on private land 0.6-miles north of the Henry Lake Substation and 2.5 miles northwest of the town of Lochbuie, Colorado. Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. (Tri-State), submitted to WAPA a Right-of-Way Use Application whereby Tri-State requested an undercrossing of the Erie - Hoyt and Sipres - Henry Lake 230-kV Double Circuit Transmission Lines with Tri-State's new Greenhouse - Henry Lake 230-kV Transmission Line. In order to accommodate the undercrossing, WAPA's transmission Structure 11/4R requires removal, relocation approximately 25 feet due east of its present location, and replacement with an in-kind steel monopole that is an additional 10 feet taller than the existing structure.

B. Number and Title of the Categorical Exclusion Being Applied: (See text in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D.)

B4.9 Multiple use of powerline rights-of-way

Granting or denying requests for multiple uses of a transmission facility's rights-of-way (including, but not limited to, grazing permits and **crossing agreements for electric lines**, water lines, natural gas pipelines, communications cables, roads, and drainage culverts).

B4.6 Additions and modifications to transmission facilities

Additions or modifications to electric power transmission facilities within a previously disturbed or developed facility area that would not affect the environment beyond the previously developed facility area. Covered activities include, but are not limited to, including, but not limited to, switchyard rock grounding upgrades, secondary containment projects, paving projects, seismic upgrading, tower modifications, load-shaping projects (such as the installation and use of flywheels and battery arrays), **changing insulators, and replacement of poles**, circuit breakers, conductors, transformers, and crossarms.

C. Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410 (b): (See full text in regulation and attached checklist.)

(1) The proposed action fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix A or B to Subpart D.

For classes of actions listed in Appendix B, the following conditions are integral elements. To fit within a class, the proposal must not:

- Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders;

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

Henry Lake - Sipres 230-kV Transmission Line

Structure 11/4R Relocation

Weld County, Colorado

Project No. 2016-101

- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities;
- 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;
- Have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources. An environmentally sensitive resource is typically a resource that has been identified as needing protection through Executive Order, statute, or regulation by Federal, State, or local government, or a federally recognized Indian tribe. An action may be categorically excluded if, although sensitive resources are present, the action would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on those resources (such as construction of a building with its foundation well above a sole-source aquifer or upland surface soil removal on a site that has wetlands). Environmentally sensitive resources include, but are not limited to, those listed in paragraph B. (4) (see Attachment A).

(2) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

(3) The proposal is not "connected" to other actions with potentially significant impacts, is not related to other proposed actions with cumulatively significant impacts, and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211.

D. Special Stipulations Pertaining to the Proposal:

If the scope of work of this project changes, WAPA's Environmental Division must be contacted to determine whether additional environmental review is required.

This Categorical Exclusion expires December 31, 2017. If all project work has not been completed by the expiration date, or if the need for an environmental compliance extension is anticipated, WAPA's Environmental Division must be contacted for an updated environmental review.

To comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, work should be scheduled outside the March 1 to July 31 general nesting period. If work is to be done during this period, contact WAPA's Environmental Division at least **90 days** before the work is scheduled so that they may arrange with Tri-State for a pedestrian survey to be conducted no more than 5 calendar days in advance of the maintenance crews to identify active nests that are to be avoided.

If project construction were to occur between March 15 and October 31 within black-tailed prairie dog colonies, burrowing owl surveys shall be conducted to determine if an active nest occurs within 150-feet of proposed construction activities. If owls are present, Tri-State shall avoid human encroachment within 150-feet of an active burrowing owl nest site from March 15 through October 31, or an Environmental Monitor would be present at all times.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

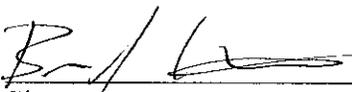
**Henry Lake - Sipres 230-kV Transmission Line
Structure 11/4R Relocation
Weld County, Colorado
Project No. 2016-101**

If any cultural resources are inadvertently discovered during implementation of the proposed action, work within 100-feet of the discovery area shall halt immediately, WAPA's archaeologist shall be contacted, and the resource shall be evaluated by an archaeologist or historian who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards (36 CFR Part 61). Work in the area of discovery shall not resume until notification to proceed is provided by WAPA's archaeologist.

All heavy equipment utilized during construction will be washed prior to departure from the equipment storage facility. Washing of equipment prior to transport from one work site to another is not recommended, as on-site washing of equipment increases the chance of weed seed dispersal by drainage of water off of the site, across an area greater than the size of the work site. Equipment will have accumulations of mud 'knocked off' instead. This method promotes containment of weed seeds on the work site; all seed mixes and mulch used for reclamation activities will be certified weed-free.

No maintenance activities shall be performed during periods when the soil is too wet to adequately support equipment. If equipment creates ruts in excess of 6 inches deep, the soil shall be deemed too wet to adequately support the equipment.

- E. **Determination:** Based on my review of information provided to me and in my possession concerning the proposed action, I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class of actions, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is categorically excluded from requirements for an EA or an EIS.



Signature

Date: 1 Apr 2016

Brian Little
NEPA Compliance Officer
Rocky Mountain Customer Service Region
Western Area Power Administration

Prepared by: Tim Snowden

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

Henry Lake - Sipres 230-kV Transmission Line

Structure 11/4R Relocation

Weld County, Colorado

Project No. 2016-101

ATTACHMENT A

**Conditions That Are Integral Elements of the Classes
of Actions in Appendix B That Apply to This Proposal**

Checklist for Categorical Exclusion Determination, revised Nov. 2011

Application of Categorical Exclusions (1021.410)	Disagree	Agree	Unknown
(b)(1) The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in appendix B to subpart D.		X	
(b)(2) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal, including, but not limited to, scientific controversy about the environmental effects of the proposal; uncertain effects or effects involving unique or unknown risks; and unresolved conflicts concerning alternate uses of available resources.		X	
(b)(3) The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. Segmentation can occur when a proposal is broken down into small parts in order to avoid the appearance of significance of the total action. The scope of a proposal must include the consideration of connected and cumulative actions, that is, the proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or § 1021.211 of this part concerning limitations on actions during EIS preparation.		X	
B. Conditions that are Integral Elements of the Classes of Actions in Appendix B.	NO	YES	Unknown
(1) Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.	X		
(2) Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities.	X		
(3) 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.	X		
(4) Have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources. An environmentally sensitive resource is typically a resource that has been identified as needing protection through Executive Order, statute, or	X		

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

Henry Lake - Sipres 230-kV Transmission Line

Structure 11/4R Relocation

Weld County, Colorado

Project No. 2016-101

regulation by Federal, state, or local government, or a federally recognized Indian tribe. An action may be categorically excluded if, although sensitive resources are present, the action would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on those resources (such as construction of a building with its foundation well above a sole-source aquifer or upland surface soil removal on a site that has wetlands). Environmentally sensitive resources include, but are not limited to:			
(i) Property (such as sites, buildings, structures, and objects) of historic, archaeological, or architectural significance designated by a Federal, state, or local government, or property determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places;	X		
(ii) Federally-listed threatened or endangered species or their habitat (including critical habitat) or Federally- proposed or candidate species or their habitat (Endangered Species Act); state-listed or state-proposed endangered or threatened species or their habitat; Federally-protected marine mammals and Essential Fish Habitat (Marine Mammal Protection Act; Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act); and otherwise Federally-protected species (such as under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act or the Migratory Bird Treaty Act);	X		
(iii) Floodplains and wetlands (as defined in 10 CFR 1022.4, —Compliance with Floodplain and Wetland Environmental Review Requirements: “Definitions,” or its successor);	X		
(iv) Areas having a special designation such as Federally- and state-designated wilderness areas, national parks, national monuments, national natural landmarks, wild and scenic rivers, state and Federal wildlife refuges, scenic areas (such as National Scenic and Historic Trails or National Scenic Areas), and marine sanctuaries;	X		
(v) Prime or unique farmland, or other farmland of statewide or local importance, as defined at 7 CFR 658.2(a), —Farmland Protection Policy Act: Definitions, or its successor;	X		
(vi) Special sources of water (such as sole-source aquifers, wellhead protection areas, and other water sources that are vital in a region); and	X		
(vii) Tundra, coral reefs, or rain forests; or	X		

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

Henry Lake - Sipres 230-kV Transmission Line

Structure 11/4R Relocation

Weld County, Colorado

Project No. 2016-101

(5) 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.	X		
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	--	--