



Department of Energy
Western Area Power Administration
P.O. Box 281213
Lakewood, CO 80228-8213

DEC 21 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR CAROL M. BORGSTROM, EH-42
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF NEPA POLICY AND COMPLIANCE

FROM: MICHAEL S. HACSKAYLO *Michael S. Hacskaylo*
ADMINISTRATOR

SUBJECT: Environmental Impact Statement Determination for Proposal to
Contract for Electrical Transmission System Network Capacity
Rights and Participate in Tri-State Generation and Transmission
Association, Inc.'s Proposed Eastern Plains Transmission Line
Project

In accordance with my responsibilities under Section 5.a. (8) of the Department of Energy (DOE) Order, O 451.1B, National Environmental Policy Act Compliance Program, I have determined that the subject proposal will require an environmental impact statement (EIS). The Western Area Power Administration (Western) is proposing to partner with Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. of Westminster, Colorado, on its proposed Eastern Plains Transmission Line Project (Project) that includes construction of approximately 700 miles of high-voltage transmission lines. Western proposes to acquire capacity on the transmission lines to facilitate the economical transfer of Federal hydroelectric power to Western's customers in Southern Colorado, and improve the reliability of the Federal transmission system. In consideration for network capacity rights, Western has offered limited funds plus services such as assistance with the acquisition of transmission line easements, transmission line design, and construction management. The EIS will address the environmental impacts associated with siting, constructing, and maintaining the transmission line and appurtenant facilities.

My determination is based on Western's proposal to participate in the Project not being encompassed within the classes of actions listed in the appendices to Subpart D-Typical Classes of Actions of the DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Procedures (10 CFR part 1021). In accordance with Section 1021.400 (d) (2), if a DOE proposal is not encompassed within the classes of actions listed in the appendices to subpart D, or if there are extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal, DOE shall either prepare an environmental assessment or an EIS. I am directing the preparation of an EIS based on extraordinary circumstances related to the scope of the proposal that may affect the significance of environmental effects. Western will be the lead Federal agency for the EIS.



Per Section 5.a. (2) of DOE O 451.1B, I have designated Mr. Jim Hartman to be the DOE NEPA Document Manager for the EIS. Please contact Mr. Hartman at 970-461-7450 if you have any questions.