U.S. Department of Energy
Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

Submit by E-mail

Proposed Action Title: Liberty-Peacock 223/5 - 237/1: Insulator Replacements, Access Road Repairs, and Pad Work

Program or Field Office: Western Area Power Administration - Desert Southwest Region

Location(s) (City/County/State): near Buckeye, Maricopa County, Arizona

Proposed Action Description:
The Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) is proposing to repair access roads, replace insulators, and perform pad work from Structure 223/5 to Structure 237/1 along the Liberty (LIB) - Peacock (PCK) transmission line corridor. The proposed work is needed to maintain the reliability and safety of the bulk electrical system.

WAPA maintenance staff would be transported to the work area using crew trucks; bucket trucks would be positioned adjacent to each structure and staff would be lifted to the insulators to perform replacement activities. A dozer would be used to grade the existing access road along portions of the route, and also in the area surrounding each structure pad.

The proposed work is planned to commence in late January 2017 and be completed in February 2017.

See Continuation Sheet.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:
B1.3 - Routine maintenance

For the complete DOE National Environmental Policy Act regulations regarding categorical exclusions, including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see Subpart D of 10 CFR Part 1021.

Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410(b): (See full text in regulation)

☑ The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D.

To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; (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; (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; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph B(4) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B; (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 listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

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

☑ The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. This 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 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

Based on my review of the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under DOE Order 451.1B), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class(es) of action, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

NEPA Compliance Officer: Ronald Marunt

Date Determined: 1.26.17

CONTINUATION SHEET

LIB-PCK 223/5 to 237/1: Insulator Replacements, Access Road Repairs, and Pad Work

On December 20-21, 2016, WAPA environmental staff performed vehicular and pedestrian surveys along the project route for biological and cultural resources.

Special Conditions:

1) WAPA maintenance staff performing the above referenced work shall be mindful of their annual biological awareness training to avoid impacts to the Sonoran desert tortoise, burrowing owls, and their respective burrows, and shall follow the mitigation measures below:
    a. Avoid burrows that may be inhabited by a tortoise or burrowing owl;
    b. Minimize the amount of vegetation altered during the pad work;
    c. All workers shall regularly check the project area, including beneath vehicles and equipment, for desert tortoise.

    When a desert tortoise is seen in or near a work area (including access roads, turnouts, staging areas, etc.), work shall cease, the project supervisor will be notified immediately, and the tortoise shall be allowed to leave the work area on its own accord without harassment or intervention. If a tortoise is located in imminent danger, WAPA's environmental staff shall be contacted immediately.

2) WAPA maintenance staff shall minimize impacts to vegetation as much as practicable, and impacts only occur to the extent necessary to complete the maintenance task. Cacti species should be avoided where feasible.

3) Active bird nests on transmission line structures shall not be "taken" (removed, disturbed, harassed). Inactive bird nests may be removed from the structures.