

United States Government

Department of Energy

memorandum

Western Area Power Administration

DATE: 04/14/2014

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: G0400

SUBJECT: Determination to Prepare an Environmental Assessment for Parker-Headgate Rock and Parker-Bouse Reroute Project

TO: Ron Moulton, G0000, Phoenix, AZ

Western proposes to rebuild and reroute the Parker-Headgate Rock and Parker-Bouse 161-kilovolt (kV) transmission lines around the town and surrounding community of Parker, Arizona. The proposed action is on lands owned or administered by the Bureau of Land Management, Arizona State Trust, tribal, and private lands in San Bernardino County, California, and La Paz County, Arizona.

As we begin environmental planning activities, we request you approve the attached Determination to Prepare an Environmental Assessment. Johnida Dockens will be the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Document Manager for the Environmental Assessment. If you have any questions, please contact me at (602) 605-2524.



Linda Marianito
Environmental Manager

Attachment

DETERMINATION TO PREPARE AN ENVIRONMENTALASSESSMENT

Name of Project: Parker-Headgate Rock and Parker-Bouse Reroute Project

Location: La Paz County, Arizona, and San Bernardino County, California

Description of the Proposed Action: The proposed action is to rebuild and reroute the Parker-Headgate Rock and Parker-Bouse 161-kilovolt (kV) transmission lines around the town and surrounding community of Parker, Arizona (Figure 1). The Parker-Headgate Rock and Parker-Bouse transmission lines are located in La Paz County, Arizona, and San Bernardino County, California. The proposed action is on lands owned or administered by the Bureau of Land Management, Arizona State Trust, tribal, and private lands. Table 1 lists the public land survey system information associated with the proposed action.

Township	Range	Section(s)	Meridian
2 North	27 East	4, 5, 8, 9, 17, 18, 19, 20	San Bernardino
2 North	26 East	24, 25, 26, 34, 35	San Bernardino
1 North	26 East	3, 4, 9, 16	San Bernardino
11 North	18 West	31	Gila and Salt River
10 North	18 West	6	Gila and Salt River
10 North	19 West	12, 14, 15, 22, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35	Gila and Salt River
9 North	19 West	2, 3	Gila and Salt River

The existing Parker-Headgate Rock 161-kV transmission line is 12.9 miles long between Parker Dam substation in eastern California and Headgate Rock substation in western Arizona. The Parker-Bouse 161-kV transmission line is 22.6 miles long and runs parallel with the Parker-Headgate Rock transmission line out of Parker Dam substation for approximately 9 miles, before turning east into Arizona to the Bouse Substation. Rebuilding and moving these lines would address several safety, and reliability issues. The lines were installed in the 1950s with wood pole H-frame structures. Many of the structures are in poor condition and present a potential safety issue to workers and the continued reliability of the transmission lines. In addition to the safety issues, public and private encroachment has occurred on the right-of-way making it difficult to access the line for maintenance.

Western proposes to construct approximately 18 miles of new double-circuit, steel pole 230-kV transmission line. The existing Parker-Headgate Rock line would be demolished, as well as 12.3 miles of the existing Parker-Bouse line from Parker substation to just north of Shea Road; the southern 10.3 miles of this line are not included in the proposed project. Structures on the existing lines range in height from approximately 40 to 65 feet.

The new lines would depart the Parker Substation along the existing rights-of-way as single-circuit, 50 to 60 foot steel structures for approximately 1 mile, and then co-locate on the same series of steel structures for approximately 10.5 miles. The first 2 miles of the co-located transmission line route would follow the existing Parker-Bouse right-of-way, before heading west and southwest along the California side of the Colorado River for just over 7 miles. At this point, the line would head southeast for approximately 1.5 miles where it would cross the Colorado River to meet the existing Parker-Headgate Rock right-of-way in Arizona. After crossing the river and just south of State Route 95, the co-located line would split. The Headgate Rock line would follow the existing Parker-Headgate Rock right-of-way and parallel the

Colorado River for 2 miles heading southwest to connect to the Headgate Rock Substation. From the split, the Bouse line would continue southeast for approximately 3 miles on a new right-of-way before reconnecting to the existing Parker-Bouse right-of-way just north of Shea Road.

The new transmission lines would be constructed on steel poles ranging 50 to 60 feet in height as single circuit structures and 90 to 100 feet in height for double circuit structures. Steel poles at the Colorado River crossing would be approximately 130 feet tall. All rights-of-way for new construction would be expanded from 100 feet to 150 feet. Following construction, each of the lines would continue to be operated at 161-kV; however, future demand is expected to create the need for 230-kV services.

River Crossing Alternative

An alternative crossing of the Colorado River will also be evaluated. This alternative follows the same route as the Proposed Action except that it stays on the California side of the river for an additional 0.5 miles (approximately) before it heads southeast and crosses the river. The River Crossing Alternative would then travel one mile and join the existing Parker-Headgate Rock right-of-way 0.5 mile west of the preferred crossing. From this point, the Parker-Headgate Rock circuit would continue approximately 1.5 miles southwest to the Headgate Rock Substation and the Parker-Bouse circuit would continue northeast 0.5 miles before continuing southeast to join the existing Parker-Bouse transmission line along the same route as the preferred alternative.

Western's action, per 10 CFR 1021.104, consists of 1) rebuilding the transmission line with steel monopoles, new conductors, and new overhead protection ground wire with fiber optic cables; 2) constructing new access roads and equipment work areas for construction and maintenance of the rebuild transmission line; 3) removing the existing wood pole structures; and 4) construction of a 6-acre temporary staging/laydown area.

Class of Action from Department of Energy (DOE) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Regulations: The items listed in Appendix C are classes of actions that normally require Environmental Assessments (EAs), but not necessarily Environmental Impact Statements (EISs). Appendix C4 states "Upgrading or rebuilding more than approximately 20 miles in length of existing powerlines; or construction of powerlines (1) more than approximately 10 miles in length outside previously disturbed or developed powerline or pipeline rights-of-way or (2) more than approximately 20 miles in length within previously disturbed or developed powerline or pipeline rights-of-way." Appendix C4 applies to the proposed action, because it entails constructing more than 10 miles of transmission line outside of previously disturbed or developed power line rights-of-way.

Determination: Based on Section 1021.300 of the DOE NEPA Implementing Procedures, I have determined that an EA will be prepared to assess the impacts of the proposed action. Based on the EA analysis, Western will either prepare a finding of no significant impact and proceed with the action, or Western will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement if the EA reveals the potential for significant environmental impacts.



Ron Moulton
Acting Regional Manager
Desert Southwest Region



Date

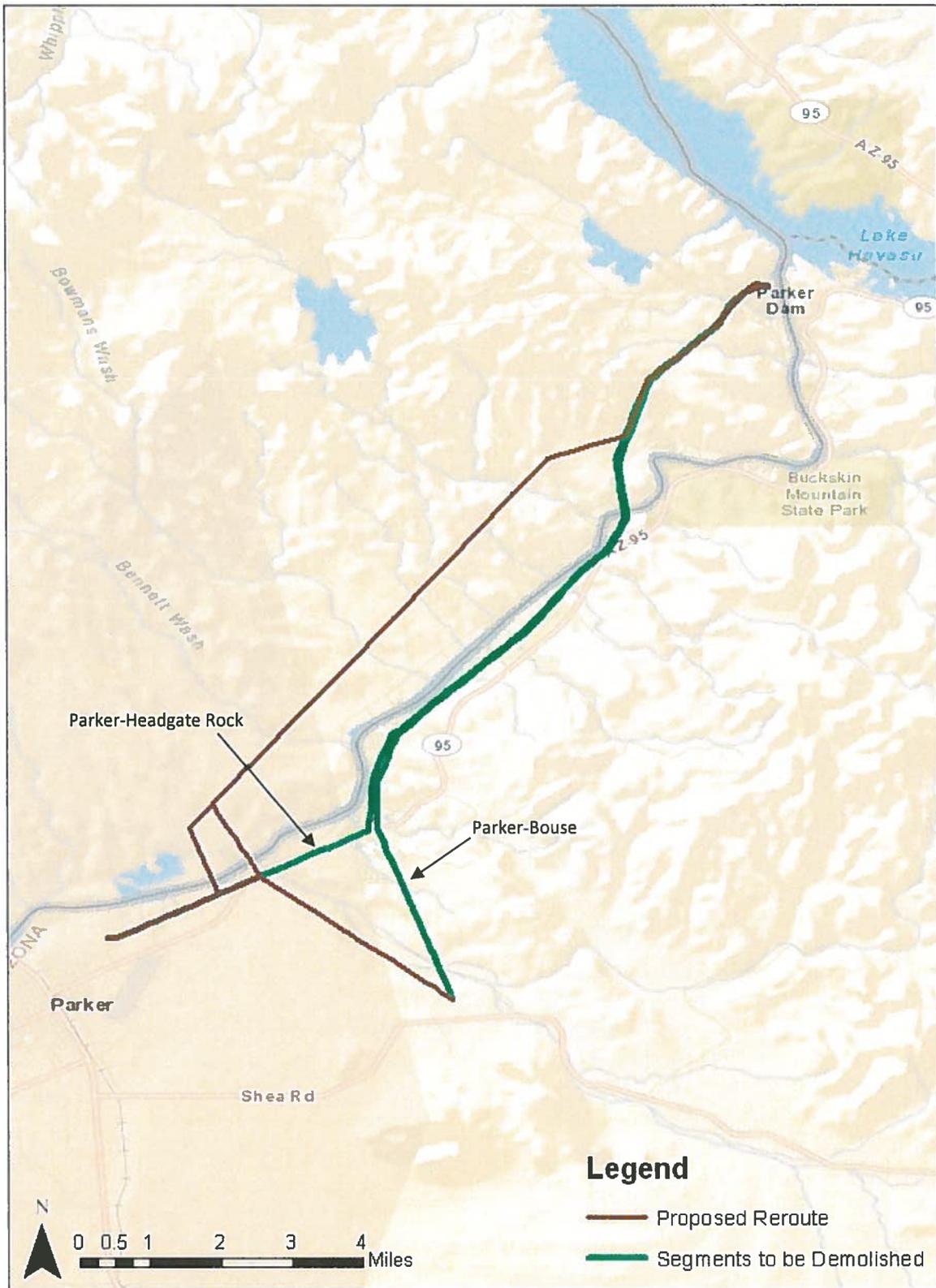


Figure 1. Parker-Headgate Rock and Parker-Bouse Reroute Project Overview