

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

Construction of the Goshen County Substation

Goshen County, Wyoming

Project No. 2013-019

- A. **Brief Description of Proposal:** Western Area Power Administration (Western) proposes to construct a new substation called the Goshen County Substation at the intersection of Western's Dave Johnston - Stegall (DJ-SG) 230-kV Transmission Line and its Torrington - Wildcat (TO-WLC) 34.5-kV Transmission Line near the town of Torrington in Goshen County, Wyoming. In addition to the new substation, Western plans to rebuild approximately 7-miles of the existing TO - WLC 34.5-kV Transmission Line between the new Goshen County Substation and the existing Torrington Substation. Also, to provide temporary power to the substation during the construction, Western will install transmission poles from the TO - WLC 34.5-kV to the substation. Western will also acquire an additional 100-foot strip of property at the existing Torrington Substation in order to accommodate new bus work and other related structures. The existing 7-mile section of transmission line will be up-rated from 34.5-kV to 115-kV in order to reliably serve electric loads in the Platte Valley area. The action includes re-insulating all the existing structures for 115-kV conductors; installing extensions on all the structures to provide adequate clearance between the static wire and the top conductor; and replacing approximately 13 existing single wood pole structures to provide the appropriate conductor clearance to ground requirements.

This Categorical Exclusion (CX) supersedes the previous CX for Project No. 2013-019 signed on 24 October 2014.

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

B4.11 Electric power substations and interconnection facilities

Construction or modification of electric power substations or interconnection facilities (including, but not limited to, switching stations and support facilities).

- 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;
- 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;

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

Construction of the Goshen County Substation

Goshen County, Wyoming

Project No. 2013-019

- 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, Western’s Environmental Division must be contacted to determine whether additional environmental review is required.

This Categorical Exclusion expires one year from the signature date. If all project work has not been completed by the expiration date, or if the need for an environmental compliance extension is anticipated, Western’s Environmental Division must be contacted for an updated environmental review.

If any cultural resources are inadvertently discovered during implementation of the proposed action, work within 50-feet of the discovery area shall halt immediately, Western’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 may not resume until notification to proceed is provided by Western’s archaeologist.

Western has a clean vehicle policy intended to prevent the transport of non-native and invasive plants and animals, including noxious weeds and aquatic nuisance species. Operators will be required to thoroughly wash all vehicles and equipment (trailers, trucks, UTVs, etc.) before entering the action area and working on the project.

The contractor shall comply with all Federal, State, and local environmental laws, orders, and regulations. All necessary permits such as National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits shall be obtained by Western’s construction contractor.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

Construction of the Goshen County Substation

Goshen County, Wyoming

Project No. 2013-019

While it is not often effective to prevent animals' access into substations, Western would reduce impacts by utilizing protection for buswork, circuit breakers, transformers, and capacitors. Hazard guards and insulation would be installed, as necessary.

Western shall exercise care to preserve the natural landscape and shall conduct this project to prevent any unnecessary destruction, scarring, or defacing of the natural surroundings in the project vicinity. Except where clearing is required for permanent works, approved construction roads, or excavation operations, vegetation shall be preserved and shall be protected from damage by Western's construction operations and equipment. If operations or equipment cause terrain damage, the maintenance crew shall repair the damage.

- 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: 17 MAY 2016

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

Prepared by: Brian Little

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

Construction of the Goshen County Substation

Goshen County, Wyoming

Project No. 2013-019

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 regulation by Federal, state, or local government, or a federally	X		

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

Construction of the Goshen County Substation

Goshen County, Wyoming

Project No. 2013-019

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

Construction of the Goshen County Substation

Goshen County, Wyoming

Project No. 2013-019

(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		
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	--	--