

# CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION



---

**Proposed Action Title: Archer-Sidney 115-kV Transmission Line Sectionalizing and Kimball Substation Stage 04 Construction**

**Location: Kimball County, Nebraska**

**Project Number: 2017-074**

**Expiration Date: December 31, 2024**

---

## **A. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION:**

Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), Rocky Mountain Region (RMR), proposes to construct a new four-breaker 115-kV ring bus bay at the Kimball (KB) Substation, located in Kimball County, Nebraska. The purpose of the proposed undertaking is to provide additional line protection for the Kimball Windfarm interconnection into WAPA's Kimball Substation by way of an existing 6-mile long 115-kV transmission line owned by the City of Kimball.

The project involves removing three 34.5-kV oil-filled breakers, including foundations, and nine 34.5-kV disconnect switches within WAPA's Kimball Substation. Four 115-kV sulfur hexafluoride power circuit breakers, 11 disconnect switches, and three take off structures will be installed within the expanded Kimball Substation. As part of the proposed undertaking, structure numbers 62-5, 62-6, and 62-7 on WAPA's Archer-Sidney 115-kV Transmission Line will be replaced and realigned with the new 115-kV breaker bays.

The existing communication and control buildings within WAPA's Kimball Substation will be removed and replaced with a single building containing both communication and control equipment.

During construction, a temporary 115-kV transmission line, or shoe-fly, will be installed to bypass the construction area while keeping the Archer-Sidney 115-kV Transmission Line operational. Additionally, a temporary mobile transformer will be required to supply 34.5-kV loads while relocating nearby distribution lines owned by High West Energy and realigning the City of Kimball's 115-kV transmission line. The replacement structure for existing structure number 62-5 and the temporary shoe-fly structures may also require the installation of anchors, screwed into the ground, for stabilization purposes.

A pressurized stock water pipeline will also be relocated outside of WAPA's fee owned property associated with the KB Substation. This will be accomplished by cutting and removing the existing pipeline that runs under the KB Substation, and then trenching and rerouting a new pipeline outside the WAPA fee owned property to convey water to an existing stock tank south of the substation. Once the pipeline is installed, the trench will be backfilled and compacted.

Existing access roads and overland routes will be used for construction and permanent access; no road maintenance or new road construction is authorized. Equipment to be used may include bucket trucks, cranes, service trucks, dump trucks, excavators, tracked dozers, and utility trailers.

This Categorical Exclusion (CX) replaces the original CX issued November 8, 2019, with an original expiration date of December 31, 2022. The Proposed Action (Section A) has been updated for this CX; the Stipulations (Section B) remain the same.

---

## B. STIPULATIONS PERTAINING TO PROPOSAL:

- 1) If the scope of work of this project changes, RMR's Environment Department must be contacted to determine whether additional environmental review is required.
- 2) **This Categorical Exclusion expires on December 31, 2024.** If all project work has not been completed by the expiration date, or if the need for an environmental compliance extension is anticipated, RMR's Environment Department must be contacted for an updated environmental review.
- 3) Installation of equipment in substations must conform to WAPA's requirements and must be approved by WAPA. Oil-filled equipment, including bushings, must not contain polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB). In addition, oil-filled equipment must be permanently labeled by the manufacturer as No-PCB. Certification must be provided to RMR's Environment Department at or before the time of installation. Oil-filled equipment may require an oil spill containment system to comply with federal or state regulations.
- 4) Transmission line, distribution line, and substation components must be designed and constructed in conformance with the most current editions of Suggested Practices for Avian Protection on Power Lines and Reducing Avian Collisions with Power Lines, both published by the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC), to minimize avian collision and electrocution risk while maintaining safe and reliable electrical service.
- 5) Any injured or orphaned birds and all observed active nests must be immediately reported to the RMR Avian Protection Lead at (970) 593-8803. Any dead birds must be reported to the RMR Avian Protection Lead within twenty-four (24) hours of discovery. Additional documentation, such as photographs and GPS coordinates, may be requested to support RMR's reporting requirements to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- 6) If any cultural resources are inadvertently discovered during implementation of the proposed action, work within 100 feet of the discovery area must halt immediately, and an RMR Archaeologist must be contacted immediately at (970) 302-4753 or (970) 286-3523. Work in the area of discovery must not resume until notification to proceed is provided by an RMR Archaeologist.
- 7) If any possible human remains are inadvertently discovered during implementation of the proposed action, work within 100 feet of the discovery area must halt immediately, and an RMR Archaeologist must be notified immediately at (970) 302-4753 or (970) 286-3523 (no later than 24 hours from the time of discovery). A reasonable effort must be made to protect the remains from looting and/or further damage. Work in the area of discovery must not resume until notification to proceed is provided by an RMR Archaeologist.



- 8) To prevent the transport of non-native and invasive plants and animals, including noxious weeds and aquatic nuisance species, work crews must thoroughly wash all vehicles and equipment (trailers, trucks, UTVs, etc.) before entering the action area and working on the project.
- 9) Activities involving the use of fuel, oil, hydraulic fluid, or other petroleum products must comply with RMR's Spill Response Plan (SRP).
- 10) WAPA Maintenance Staff or the Contractor, as applicable, must record quantities of SF6, including:
  - a) Nameplate capacity in pounds of SF6 gas containing equipment;
  - b) Pounds of SF6 gas stored in containers, before transferring into energized equipment;
  - c) Pounds of SF6 gas left in containers, after transferring into energized equipment;
  - d) Pounds of SF6 gas purchased from equipment manufactures or distributors; and
  - e) Pounds of SF6 gas returned to suppliers.

Scales used to weigh cylinders must be accurate to within +/- 2 pounds and must have current calibration sticker.

**C. NUMBER AND TITLE OF THE CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION BEING APPLIED:**

(See text in 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D.)

B4.11 Electric power substations and interconnection facilities

**D. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS 10 CFR 1021.410 (b):** (See full text in regulation)

The proposed action fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B of 10 CFR 1021.

To fit within the classes of actions listed in 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 the Department of Energy (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 Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (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 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 of the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health.

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 improperly segmented, and 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.

---

#### **E. DETERMINATION:**

Based on my review of information conveyed to me and in my possession (or attached) concerning 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.

---

Signature and Date

James Wood  
NEPA Compliance Officer  
Rocky Mountain Region  
Western Area Power Administration

Prepared by:  
Mark Suchy, Natural Resource Specialist  
Brian Joseph, Archaeologist

