

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

Routine Maintenance Activities at Existing Substations and Switchyards Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming

Project Number: 2018-090

- A. Brief Description of Proposal:** The Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), Rocky Mountain Region (RMR), conducts routine maintenance activities at existing substations and switchyards in seven states (Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming). These substations and switchyards are surrounded by an existing chain link fence and the entire area within this fenced perimeter has been previously disturbed by the installation of an electric ground mat installed several feet below the ground surface and covered with compacted fill material and gravel.

The following activities occurring **within the existing fenced perimeter of a substation or switchyard** are covered by this Categorical Exclusion (CX):

- (1) Maintenance of transformers and breakers;
- (2) Maintenance or replacement of battery banks;
- (3) Maintenance, servicing, and testing of equipment;
- (4) Installation or replacement of bushings;
- (5) Cleaning or replacement of capacitor banks;
- (6) Maintenance or installation of above ground propane tanks;
- (7) Replacement of wiring;
- (8) Replacement of equipment, excluding transformers and breakers;
- (9) Installation of fuses;
- (10) Adjust and clean disconnect switches;
- (11) Cleanup of spills that don't reach reportable quantities, as defined by the RMR Spill Response Plan (SRP);
- (12) Repair or replacement of ground mats, not to exceed current depth of disturbance;
- (13) Replacement or repair of footings for electrical or communications equipment, not to exceed current depth of disturbance;
- (14) Repair or remove existing fences and gates by hand;
- (15) Any ground disturbing activity, not to exceed current depth of disturbance;
- (16) Maintenance and repair of buildings and structures less than 45 years old;
- (17) Substation control building upgrades;
- (18) Installation or replacement of bird guards, discouragers, and diverters;
- (19) Pest management within buildings;
- (20) Installation and maintenance of portable sanitary facilities;
- (21) Maintenance, installation, or removal of a solar power array panel and controller from structures; and
- (22) Installation, relocation, or removal of new poles, cable trays, and associated equipment.

The following activities occurring **within the existing fenced perimeter of a substation or switchyard and up to six (6) feet outside the fenced perimeter** are covered by this CX:

- (23) Vegetation management, including controlled burns and herbicide application;
- (24) Grounds maintenance including snowplowing, mowing, and servicing septic tanks;
- (25) Erosion control projects, not to exceed current depth of disturbance;
- (26) Maintenance of existing spill containment, control, and countermeasure (SPCC) structures; and
- (27) Replace fill or rocks around existing culverts, provided the material is brought in from a commercial source and ground disturbance is not necessary.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

**Routine Maintenance Activities at Existing Substations and Switchyards
Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming
Project Number: 2018-090**

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| B1.3 Routine maintenance | B2.1 Workplace Enhancements |
| B1.7 Electronic Equipment | B2.2 Building and Equipment Instrumentation |
| B1.11 Fencing | B2.3 Personnel Safety and Health Equipment |
| B1.15 Support Buildings | B2.5 Facility Safety and Environmental Improvements |
| B1.22 Relocation of Buildings | B4.6 Additions and Modifications to Transmission Facilities |
| B1.27 Disconnection of Utilities | B5.6 Oil Spill Cleanup |
| B1.28 Placing a Facility in an Environmentally Safe Condition | |
| B1.31 Installation or Relocation of Machinery and Equipment | |
| B1.33 Stormwater Runoff Control | |

C. Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR Part 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;
 - 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.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

Routine Maintenance Activities at Existing Substations and Switchyards Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming

Project Number: 2018-090

- 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 Part 1506.1 or 10 CFR Part 1021.211.

D. Special Stipulations Pertaining to the Proposal:

- 1) **Activities not listed in Section A, Items 1 through 27, or activities that cannot be implemented while following all Special Stipulations in Section D, are not authorized to be completed under this CX. In these instances, the project proponent must contact RMR’s Environment Department to initiate the appropriate environmental review.**
- 2) This CX is valid for 5 years after the signature date or until an updated version is executed by RMR’s Environment Department, whichever comes first.
- 3) If any cultural resources are inadvertently discovered during implementation of the proposed action, work within 100-feet of the discovery area shall halt immediately, RMR’s Archaeologist shall be contacted immediately. Work in the area of discovery shall not resume until notification to proceed is provided by RMR’s Archaeologist.
- 4) If any possible human remains are inadvertently discovered during implementation of the proposed action, work within 100-feet of the discovery area shall halt immediately and RMR’s Archaeologist shall be notified immediately by telephone (no later than 24 hours from the time of discovery). A reasonable effort shall be made to protect the remains from looting and/or further damage. Work in the area of discovery shall not resume until notification to proceed is provided by RMR’s Archaeologist.
- 5) Pesticide and herbicide applicators must meet all state licensing requirements and must follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines. Applicators must use only EPA-registered pesticides and herbicides that are approved for the intended use and location, and must follow all applicable label directions.
- 6) 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 non-PCB. Certification must be provided to WAPA at or before the time of installation. Oil-filled equipment may require an oil spill containment system to comply with Federal or state regulations.
- 7) For facilities covered by a current Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plan, RMR’s Environment Department must be notified prior to the installation, replacement, or removal of any oil-containing equipment, or placement of fill material, to ensure activities are in compliance with the requirements of the SPCC plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

**Routine Maintenance Activities at Existing Substations and Switchyards
Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming**

Project Number: 2018-090

- 8) Lead-based paint, asbestos, PCB, and other environmentally regulated materials requirements must be met.
 - 9) Transmission 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.
 - 10) Activities involving the use of fuel, oil, hydraulic fluid, or other petroleum products must comply with RMR's Spill Response Plan (SRP).
 - 11) All work must be conducted using existing access roads. RMR's Environment Department must be contacted prior to beginning work if access road maintenance is necessary in conjunction with any of the activities described in Section A, Items 1 through 27.
- 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 and Date

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

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

**Routine Maintenance Activities at Existing Substations and Switchyards
Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming
Project Number: 2018-090**

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 Part 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR Part 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR Part 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	X		

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

**Routine Maintenance Activities at Existing Substations and Switchyards
Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming**

Project Number: 2018-090

<p>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:</p>			
<p>(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;</p>	X		
<p>(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);</p>	X		
<p>(iii) Floodplains and wetlands (as defined in 10 CFR Part 1022.4, —Compliance with Floodplain and Wetland Environmental Review Requirements: “Definitions,” or its successor);</p>	X		
<p>(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;</p>	X		
<p>(v) Prime or unique farmland, or other farmland of statewide or local importance, as defined at 7 CFR Part 658.2(a), —Farmland Protection Policy Act: Definitions, or its successor;</p>	X		
<p>(vi) Special sources of water (such as sole-source aquifers, wellhead protection areas, and other water sources that are vital in a region); and</p>	X		
<p>(vii) Tundra, coral reefs, or rain forests; or</p>	X		

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

**Routine Maintenance Activities at Existing Substations and Switchyards
Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming**

Project Number: 2018-090

(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		
---	---	--	--