Categorical Exclusion Determination

Western Area Power Administration
Department of Energy

Proposed Action: Olinda Tracy 1 Landing Zone at Tower 84-1

Project No.: 100153025

Project Manager: James Hill

Location: Colusa County,

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.3 Routine maintenance

Description of the Proposed Action:

Western Area Power Administration, Sierra Nevada Region (WAPA) is responsible for the operation and maintenance of several federally owned and operated transmission lines throughout California, including Olinda Tracy line (ODA-TCY), located in northern California from Tracy to Olinda substations. Part of this responsibility includes ensuring WAPA maintains reliable access to transmission towers and other facilities to comply with the National Electric Safety Code, Western States Coordinating Council, and WAPA directives for protecting human safety and maintaining the reliable operation of the transmission system.

WAPA proposes to replace spacers on spans along the ODA-TCY transmission line. To accomplish this task, a landing zone (LZ) outside the right -of-way near Tower 84-1 will be used at one location within Colusa County. Equipment will be staged at the landing zones.

Findings:

In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) of the Department of Energy's (DOE) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Regulations (57 FR 15144, Apr. 24, 1992, as amended at 61 FR 36221-36243, Jul. 9, 1996; 61 FR 64608, Dec. 6, 1996, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011), WAPA has determined that the proposed action:
(1) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D (see attached Environmental Checklist);
(2) does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
(3) has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

Based on these determinations, WAPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

Signed: KRISTEN DALLDORF Digitally signed by KRISTEN DALLDORF Date: 2023.09.29 10:11:51 -07'00'

Date:

Attachment: Environmental Checklist

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Checklist

This checklist documents environmental considerations for the proposed project and explains why the project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources and would meet other integral elements of the applied categorical exclusion.

Proposed Action: Olinda Tracy 1 Landing Zone at Tower 84-1

Project Site Description

The proposed landing zone is in Colusa County on disturbed farming access roads just north and west of tower 84-1 and west of Danley Road. The land immediately north is planted in rice fleids. This location has been previously used as a landing zone.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. **Historic and Cultural Resources**	☑	☐

Explanation:

A cultural resources survey of the proposed landing zone indicated no cultural resource concerns were identified and there is no potential to cause effects due to the activity.

No ground disturbance is required. Natural Resources will be contacted immediately if archeological, paleontological, or historic evidence is found.

2. **Geology and Soils**

Explanation: ☑ ☐

Ground disturbance is not anticipated in this project; therefore, no impacts would occur.

3. **Plants** (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)

Explanation: ☑ ☐

No special-status plants are known or expected at the landing zone.

4. **Wildlife** (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)

Explanation: ☑ ☐

The landing zone is along disturbed farm roads which do not provide habitat for special status species. The project will take place outside of nesting season, so no impacts to migratory bird nests are anticipated.

5. **Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish** (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)

Explanation: ☑ ☐

The project area does not have any water bodies, floodplains, or fish; therefore, no impacts would occur.

6. **Wetlands** ☑ ☐

Explanation:

The project area does not have wetlands; therefore, no impacts would occur.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers** ☑ ☐

Explanation:

Spill prevention measures would be utilized during construction activities. The project would not provide a pathway for groundwater contamination.

8. **Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas** ☑ ☐

Explanation:

The land use would not change at the project site. Nor is the project within, or near, any specially designated areas, such as National Scenic Rivers.

9. **Visual Quality** ☑ ☐

Explanation:

The visual quality would be consistent with the existing use of the transmission right-of-way corridor. There would be no significant change to the visual quality.

10. **Air Quality** ☐ ☑

Explanation:

A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions would occur during the conductor repair. The helicopter would operate for a few hours with 2-3 take-off and landings. Emissions were modeled and do not exceed the daily thresholds in lbs/day for the Yolo-Solano AQMD. Results in lbs/day for each pollutant are shown below:

ROG	CO	NOX	SOX	PM 10	PM 2.5
13.54	16.88	20.44	3.04	10.52	1.59

The following relevant SOPs were adopted by WAPA to support the state implementation plan to restore air quality in the region.
AQ-SOP-1: The Contractor will adhere to all applicable requirements of those agencies having jurisdiction over air quality matters, and any necessary permits for O&M will be obtained.
AQ-SOP-2: Machinery and vehicles will be kept in good operating condition and older equipment will be replaced with equipment meeting applicable emission standards; appropriate emissions-control equipment will be maintained for vehicles and equipment, per EPA and/or WAPA air-emission requirements.
AQ-SOP-3: Idle equipment will be shut down when not in active use; visible emissions from stationary generators will be controlled.
AQ-SOP-5: There will be no open burning of construction trash.
AQ-SOP-7: Major operations will be avoided on days when the local Air Quality Index is expected to exceed 150.

11. **Noise** ☑ ☐

Explanation:

There are no residences within the project location. Helicopter noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours.

12. **Human Health and Safety** ☑ ☐

Explanation:

During project activities, all standard safety protocols would be followed. Project activities would not impact human health or safety. Contractor shall be required to follow the OSHA standards set forth in 29 CFR 1910.269 specifically paragraphs (a)(2), (b), (c), (g), (k), (p), and (r) as required under (a)(E)(2). Contractor shall also adhere to the requirements under Title 8 Cal OSHA Electrical Safety Order specifically Subchapter 5 Article 38 and Subchapter 7 Article 12. Contractor shall maintain a safe working distance from conductors as described in the above OSHA standards. If a safe working distance cannot be maintained, a clearance shall be requested 3 days in advance.

Evaluation of Other Integral Elements

The proposed project would also meet conditions that are integral elements of the categorical exclusion. The project would not:

☑ Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.

Explanation, if necessary:

☑ Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation, if necessary:

☑ 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.

Explanation, if necessary:

☑ 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.

Explanation, if necessary:

☑ 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.

Explanation, if necessary:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: WAPA has notified and received permission from the landowner to use the landing zone site.

Based on the foregoing, this proposed project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts to any environmentally sensitive resource.

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