

MEMORANDUM

Western Area Power Administration

DATE:

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: G0400SUBJECT: Environmental Assessment Determination for the Parker-Blythe No. 2 Transmission Line
Rebuild Project, San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, California

TO: File

Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), Desert Southwest Region proposes to reconstruct the 161-kV Parker-Blythe No. 2 (PAD-BLY#2) transmission line within the current footprint. Structures along the line are degraded and some are no longer compliant with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission standards. PAD-BLY#2 is 63.88 miles in length and is owned and operated by WAPA. It connects the Parker Dam Upper 161-kV Switchyard to the Blythe Substation. The PAD-BLY#2 Transmission Line Rebuild Project (project) consists of:

- Replacing all wood structures along the transmission line with new, in-kind structures
- Replacing existing static neutral cable with optical ground wire (OPGW) in the same location on the poles

WAPA proposes to prepare an environmental assessment (EA) to evaluate the environmental effects of the project based on the provisions in 10 CFR 1021 of the Department of Energy National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures, since this action fits within category C4 (Upgrading, Rebuilding or Construction of Powerlines) of Appendix C to Subpart D of part 1021. Category C4 applies to this action since the project entails upgrading or rebuilding more than approximately 20 miles in length of existing powerlines.

Determination: In accordance with my responsibilities under Section 3.b of the Department of Energy Policy 451.1, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Compliance Program, I have determined that it is appropriate to prepare an EA to analyze the effects of the proposed project. Based on the analyses and findings in the EA, WAPA will either prepare a finding of no significant impact and proceed with the action or prepare an environmental impact statement if the EA reveals the potential for significant environmental impacts. Matt Pollock will be the NEPA Document Manager for the EA and may be contacted at mpollock@wapa.gov.

Jack D. Murray
Acting Senior Vice President and
Desert Southwest Regional Manager

Date