



Department of Energy
Western Area Power Administration
Desert Southwest Customer Service Region
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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Bouse Upgrade Project San Bernardino County, California and La Paz County, Arizona DOE/EA-2106

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Energy, Western Area Power Administration

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact

BACKGROUND: Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) is proposing to re-build, upgrade, and decommission components of the existing Parker-Davis transmission system to improve overall system reliability, safety, and to better meet future transmission needs (Project). The existing Parker-Headgate Rock and Parker-Bouse 161-kilovolt (kV) transmission lines, located along the Colorado River in La Paz County, Arizona and San Bernardino County, California, are part of the Parker-Davis transmission system. The transmission lines were originally constructed in the 1940s and 1950s and built with wood-pole, H-frame structures using copper conductor. Due to the age of the transmission lines, many of the structures are in poor condition and are difficult to access. The proposed Project consists of four phases which are described below:

- 1) Constructing an approximately 18-mile-long, new, double-circuited, 230-kV transmission line from WAPA's existing Parker-Liberty #2 Transmission Line to WAPA's existing Bouse Substation. The new transmission line would run north from WAPA's existing Bouse Substation, located approximately 12 miles west of Bouse, Arizona, and then east, paralleling Shea Road to connect to WAPA's existing Parker-Liberty #2 230-kV Transmission Line.
- 2) Expanding WAPA's existing Bouse Substation by adding a 230-kV bus.
- 3) Connecting WAPA's existing Parker-Bouse 161-kV and Parker-Headgate Rock 161-kV transmission lines with a short, new transmission line segment called a jumper, which would complete a 161-kV circuit from Bouse Substation to the Headgate Rock Substation. Seven (7) potential jumper alignments were assessed, ranging in length from 0.1 to 3.3 miles. The locations of the jumper options are all in the vicinity of Parker, Arizona.
- 4) Decommissioning and removing segments of the existing Parker-Bouse and Parker-Headgate Rock 161-kV transmission lines. The transmission line segments that would be decommissioned and removed start at Parker Substation in California, span the Colorado River, and cross a residential and commercial area known as the Parker Strip.

As part of the Project, WAPA also proposes to construct and improve access roads, lease up to three laydown yards for construction, and acquire rights-of-way for transmission line construction, operation, and maintenance.

Project work will be performed on Arizona State Trust land, Bureau of Land Management land, Bureau of Indian Affairs land, private land, and WAPA-owned land and rights-of-way.

WAPA prepared a Final Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzing the Proposed Action and a No Action Alternative, titled “*Bouse Upgrade Project, Final Environmental Assessment, DOE/EA-2106*” and dated June 2022. WAPA is the lead Federal agency, with the Bureau of Land Management (Lake Havasu Field Office) and The Colorado River Indian Tribes participating as Cooperating Agencies. WAPA incorporates this EA by reference.

FLOODPLAIN STATEMENT OF FINDINGS: The Project, including its purpose and need, and the no action alternative are described in detail in the EA. A map depicting Project elements in relation to 100-year floodplains is presented as EA Figure 3-1. Most of the floodplains within the Project area are crossings associated with streams or rivers such as the Colorado River. The new 230-kV transmission line and access road would traverse approximately 2.2 miles of Zone A floodplain associated with Osborne Wash (EA 3-25 and Figure 3-1). Certain proposed jumper alignments also cross portions of floodplains, up to an approximate maximum distance of 1.4 miles (EA 3-27). The transmission lines to be decommissioned and removed along the Parker strip include structures lying within floodplains (EA 3-27 – 3-28). For all components of the Project, WAPA will implement resource protection measures, detailed in Sections 2.6 and 3.6 of the EA, to minimize impacts to floodplains and conform with applicable floodplain protection standards. WAPA also will consult with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other agencies with floodplain responsibility as needed (EA Section 3.6.2.1).

DETERMINATION: Based on the analysis described in DOE/EA-2106, WAPA finds that the Proposed Action to construct the Bouse Upgrade Project does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Therefore, preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required, and WAPA issues this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

In consideration of comments received from the public and the Colorado River Indian Tribes, WAPA has identified jumper alignment #6 as the preferred alignment contingent upon successfully obtaining any required permits, rights-of-way, and easements from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Federal Aviation Administration, and Bureau of Land Management. Jumper alignment #6 is outside of floodplains and developed areas, while facilitating a greater mileage of decommissioned and removed transmission line facilities from the Parker Strip area relative to jumper alignment options #1-5. WAPA reserves the ability to select an alternate jumper alignment if obtaining the required permits, rights-of-way, and easements for jumper alignment #6 is deemed infeasible.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Additional information and copies of the Final EA and FONSI are available to all interested parties and the public from the following contact:

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The Final EA and FONSI can be downloaded from WAPA’s website at:
<https://www.wapa.gov/regions/DSW/Environment/Pages/Bouse-Upgrade-Project.aspx>

For further information on DOE's NEPA process, contact:

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Issued at Phoenix, Arizona on _____

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