

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW for CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION  
Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration**

**CRAIG-BEARS EARS-HAYDEN SUBSTATIONS FIBER OPTIC AND POLE  
INSTALLATION, MOFFAT AND ROUTT COUNTIES, COLORADO**

**A. Brief Description of Proposal:**

Western will contract for fiber optic cable installation on 24 miles of transmission line between three substations. The installation will be from the Craig Substation to the Bears Ears Substation, and then along the Hayden-Vernal line to Hayden Substation. The project includes replacing an electrical ground cable with a fiber optic cable along the entire length of the transmission line between substations. The fiber optic cable will be located at the top and along one side of the existing structures. In order to elevate the fiber optic cable from the substation to the transmission line, Western will install a 50-foot tall glue-lam pole within 10 feet of the fence inside of the Bears Ears substation perimeter. An additional 70-foot glue-lam pole installation is planned within a few feet of existing structure 108-12 (which will be removed) on the Hayden-Vernal line. This placement is within the existing ROW and is approximately 100 feet outside the Bears Ears substation fence perimeter. There will be up to four culverts installed or rebuilt in dry or intermittent washes along the access road. To control access there is replacement or installation of up to ten gates along the ROW access roads.

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

Appendix B, 4.6 “Additions or modifications to electric power transmission facilities that would not affect the environment beyond the previously developed facility area including, but not limited to, switchyard rock grounding upgrades, secondary containment projects, paving projects, seismic upgrading, tower modifications, changing insulators, and replacement of poles, circuit breakers, conductors, transformers, and crossarms;” and B 4.7 “Adding fiber optic cable to transmission structures or burying fiber optic cable in existing transmission line rights-of-way.”

**C. Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410 (b):** (See full text in regulation and attached checklist.)

- 1) The proposed action fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to Subpart D.

For classes of actions listed in Appendix B, the following conditions are integral elements; i.e., to fit within a class, the proposal must not:

- Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, including DOE and/or Executive Orders:

- Require siting, construction, or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recover, or treatment facilities, but may include such categorically excluded facilities;
  - Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that pre-exist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; or
  - Adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources (including but not limited to those listed in paragraph B. (4)).<sup>1</sup>
- 2) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
  - 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 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211.

**D. Special Stipulations Pertaining to the Proposal:**

If the scope of work or construction timing, August 15 to December 25, of this project changes you must contact Western’s Environmental Division for additional environmental review.

If any cultural materials are discovered during construction, work in the area shall halt immediately, Western and the Wyoming SHPO staff shall be contacted, and the material be evaluated by an archaeologist or historian meeting the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards (48 FR 22716, Sept. 1983).

This CX is valid for 3 years after the signature date. If construction has not commenced within that time, contact Western’s Environmental Division for an updated environmental review prior to construction.

Access roads along the ROW cross seasonally wet areas or intermittent streams. At these locations, the contractor shall keep all vehicles on existing roadways or two track trails. Heavy trucks and other equipment should not cross these sites when unimproved access roads are wet. No pulling sites or staging sites will be located in these areas.

Other than the culvert and gate replacements specified in the contract, the contractor shall not use any earth moving or blading equipment to make any improvements to the existing access roads. All vehicles used on the ROW access roads shall be rubber tired. If road improvements or staging areas are necessary, the contractor shall submit a detailed description of the improvements to Western for environmental review and approval 60 days prior to construction.

The contractor is responsible for determining all pulling and splicing locations with exception of those required in the specifications. If the contractor wishes to use pulling locations or staging areas that are outside of Westerns ROW, then the contractor shall allow Western a minimum of 60 days, after receipt of the proposed site, to review and environmentally clear the area.

For culvert installation or replacement, the contractor will minimize construction disturbance of the drainage banks and beds. The contractor must implement Western’s Best Management Practices for erosion and sediment control as applicable on disturbed areas.

The contractor shall minimize the introduction and/or spread of noxious weeds by washing all equipment at a commercial facility prior to the start of construction each year, by avoiding vehicle traffic in known weedy areas, and by rewashing equipment if weeds are encountered. The contractor shall reclaim all disturbed areas as soon as practical after construction each year.

The contractor shall report any suspected paleontological finds to Western. Prior to construction, the contractor shall receive instructions from Western regarding the potential presence of fossils in areas excavated.

In the event any threatened or endangered candidate or proposed species are found during construction project-specific surface disturbance shall be halted and Western shall immediately notify the USFWS. Construction will resume in the specific area only with USFWS and Western approval.

**E. Determination:** Based on my review of information provided to me and in my possession concerning the proposed action, I 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.

C. Shane Collins

Signature

Date: 5/17/11

C. Shane Collins  
NEPA Compliance Officer  
Western Area Power Administration

- 1 All reviews and discussions supporting the "not adversely affect" determination have been completed

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**Conditions That Are Integral Elements of the Classes of Action in Appendix B That Apply to This Proposal**

<b>Application of Categorical Exclusions (1021.410)</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
1) The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in appendix A or B to subpart D.		x	
2) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effect of the proposal, (e.g. scientific controversy about environmental effects; uncertain effects or effects involving unique or unknown risks; unresolved conflicts concerning alternate uses of available resources (see NEPA 102(2)(E))		x	
3) The proposal is not connected (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1) to other actions with potentially significant impacts, is not related to other proposed actions with cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(2)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or § 1021.211.		x	
<b>Conditions that are Integral Elements of the Classes of Actions in Appendix B</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>UNKNOWN</b>
1) Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety and health, including requirements of DOE and/or Executive Orders <sup>1</sup> .	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.	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 intermitted releases; or	x		
4) Adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources. Including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Property of historic, archaeological, or architectural significance designated by Federal, state, or local governments or property eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places</li> </ul>	x		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federally-listed threatened or endangered species or their habitat (including critical habitat), federally-proposed or candidate species or their habitat, or state-listed endangered or threatened species or their habitat;</li> </ul>	x		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wetlands regulated under the Clean Water Act and Floodplains;</li> </ul>	x		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Areas having a special designation such as Federally- and state-designated wilderness areas, national parks, national natural landmarks, wild and scenic rivers, state and Federal wildlife refuges and marine sanctuaries;</li> </ul>	x		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prime agricultural lands;</li> </ul>	x		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Special sources of water (such as sole-source aquifers, wellhead protection areas, and other water sources that are vital in a region); and</li> </ul>	x		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tundra, coral reefs, or rain forests.</li> </ul>			

<b><sup>1</sup>Applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety and health, including requirements of DOE and/or Executive Orders (in addition to those listed above)</b>
Clean Air Act Complies with U.S. DOE Clean Air Act Conformity Requirements
<u>Department of Energy Floodplain and Wetland Regulations (10 CFR 1022)</u>
Clean Water Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complies with Section 404 requirements</li> <li>Complies with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permitting requirements</li> </ul>
Complies with <u>Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations</u> (February 11, 1994, with Presidential Memorandum)
Complies with Executive Order 13186, Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds. (January 10, 2001)

