



# U.S. Department of Energy Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

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Proposed Action Title: Oracle substation - Breaker support work

Program or Field Office: Western Area Power Administration, Desert Southwest Regional Office

Location(s) (City/County/State): Oracle substation, SaddleBrooke, Pinal County, AZ

Proposed Action Description:

Western proposes to conduct activities in support of breaker replacements and continued operations occurring at the existing Oracle substation; environmental work for the breaker replacements was completed at an earlier date (CX signed 2 July 2013). Support activities will consist of temporarily moving the Oracle-Saguaro (ORA-SGR) transmission line tie-in from Bay 4 to Bay 3, removing vegetation encroaching on the substation perimeter fencing, building a temporary fence outside of the substation yard, and laying down rock for erosion control. The purpose of the proposed work is to support breaker replacements occurring at Oracle substation. The support work is needed to provide safe access for equipment, secure location for equipment storage, and to prevent erosion of the substation yard. The current scope of work includes moving the ORA-SGR transmission line tie-ins from Bay 4 to Bay 3 during the breaker replacement. The tie-ins will be moved back to Bay 4 and the line restrung from the existing structure when the breaker replacements are completed. A bucket truck, line trucks, a bulldozer and pickup trucks will be used on the west side of the substation fence. Vegetation growing along the entire west side and under the transmission line will be removed, if necessary, using a bulldozer. Vegetation removal may extend up to 30 feet west from the fence. A temporary fenced lay down yard will be installed outside of the substation, 60 yards east of the entrance of the substation, in a previously disturbed area. The approximate 50-foot by 50-foot square fenced area will be used for storing supplies and staging equipment. The fence posts will be driven into the ground; excavation will not be required. Large rock material will be placed along the southeast corner on the outside of the substation yard using a bobcat.  
SEE CONTINUATION SHEET.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

B1.3 - Routine maintenance

For the complete DOE National Environmental Policy Act regulations regarding categorical exclusions, including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see Subpart D of [10 CFR Part 1021](#).

Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410(b): (See full text in regulation)

The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D.

To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; (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; (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; (4) 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; (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 listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. This proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

Based on my review of the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under DOE Order 451.1B), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class(es) of action, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

NEPA Compliance Officer: *Jane Maurer*

Date Determined: 10-30-13

Western Area Power Administration, Desert Southwest Region  
ORACLE SUBSTATION  
BREAKER REPLACEMENT SUPPORT WORK  
Continuation Sheet

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**Project Description (Continued)**

The rock placement for erosion control is anticipated to begin between November and December 2013 and will take two days to complete. The rock material will be purchased from Pioneer Sand and Gravel. The transmission line move, vegetation removal and temporary fence installation are anticipated to begin no sooner than November 1, 2013 and are expected to be completed by April 30, 2014.

**Special Conditions:**

1. No more than 48 hours prior to any vegetation-or ground-disturbing activities, a qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction survey for desert tortoise per the AGFD *Guidelines for Handling Desert Tortoises (2007)*.
2. No project activities will take place in the vicinity of a desert tortoise. All workers shall regularly check the project area, including beneath vehicles and equipment, for desert tortoise. At any time a desert tortoise is seen within or near any work area (including access roads, turnouts, staging areas, etc.), the project supervisor will be immediately notified and the tortoise allowed to leave the work area on its own. If a tortoise is located in imminent harm's way, Western Environmental Group (602-605-2640) will be contacted immediately. Desert tortoises may only be handled or moved by personnel as approved by Western Environmental Affairs.
3. Project activities will be scheduled between August 1 and February 15, as feasible. Project activities involving vegetation disturbance or removal occurring during the breeding bird season (February 16 – July 31) will be subject to pre-construction surveys by a qualified biologist. Project activities may not disturb an active bird nest. If an active bird nest is located on or adjacent to the project area, the biologist will designate and flag an appropriate buffer area around the nest where activities will not be permitted.
4. The old circuit breakers, current transformers, potential transformers, oil and potential asbestos wrapped wire will be sampled, tested, transported and disposed of in accordance with all local, state and federal laws and regulations by an Environmental Contractor.



Checklist for Categorical Exclusion Determination, revised Nov. 2011

<b>Application of Categorical Exclusions (1021.410)</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
(b)(1) The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in appendix A or 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 1508.25(a)(1), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or § 1021.211 of this part concerning limitations on actions during EIS preparation.		X	
<b>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, 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 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	X		

resources include, but are not limited to:			
(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;	X	
(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);	X	
(iii)	Floodplains and wetlands (as defined in 10 CFR 1022.4, —Compliance with Floodplain and Wetland Environmental Review Requirements: “Definitions,” or its successor);	X	
(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;	X	
(v)	Prime or unique farmland, or other farmland of statewide or local importance, as defined at 7 CFR 658.2(a), —Farmland Protection Policy Act: Definitions,   or its successor;	X	
(vi)	Special sources of water (such as sole-source aquifers, wellhead protection areas, and other water sources that are vital in a region); and	X	
(vii)	Tundra, coral reefs, or rain forests.; or	X	
(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	



