

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

Deering Lake and Yuma Substation Upgrades, Yuma County, Colorado

A. Brief Description of Proposal: Western Area Power Administration (Western) proposes to support the upgrade of Deering Lake Substation owned by Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. (Tri-State). This will result in removal of equipment from Western's existing Yuma Substation. Yuma Substation includes 69-kV subtransmission and 12.47-kV distribution facilities owned by Y-W Electric Association, Inc. (Y-W Electric), and the City of Yuma in addition to 115-kV facilities owned by Western. Yuma Substation is over 50 years old and requires major rework of the substation and upgrading of the electrical equipment. In lieu of Y-W Electric entering into a major construction project at the Yuma Substation and replacing certain Y-W Electric facilities at this substation, Y-W Electric and Tri-State have agreed to enter into a joint project to rebuild and upgrade the existing Tri-State's Deering Lake Switching Station into a new Deering Lake 115/69-kV and 115/12.47-kV Substation (Deering Lake). The existing four-breaker ring configured switching station will be converted into a six-breaker ring bus configured substation. Y-W Electric will construct separate 69-kV and 12.47-kV switching stations that will be adjacent to Tri-State's 115-kV substation. The project (Project) will also improve existing design/reliability deficiencies at both the Yuma and Deering Lake Substations, and is scheduled to be completed by December 2014. At Deering Lake, Western owns and maintains a remote terminal unit (RTU) and telecommunications' facilities that include one single channel 900 MHz radio, Yagi antenna, and associated equipment.

The Project will consist of four components: (1) the disconnection of Deering Lake Substation for the duration of the Project's construction from Western's Eckley, Beaver Creek, and Yuma 115-kV Transmission Lines, as well as Tri-State's North Yuma 115-kV Transmission Line, installation and removal of the shoo-fly, including installation and removal of two mobile circuit breakers to bypass Deering Lake; (2) replacement of the existing Western-owned Beaver Creek Transmission Line disconnect and ground switches at Deering Lake; (3) replacement of the existing Western-owned RTU at Deering Lake; and (4) the removal of Western's 12.47-kV metering at Western's Yuma Substation. One mobile circuit breaker will be placed on Tri-State's North Yuma-Deering Lake easement just to the west of the existing Deering Lake. The second mobile circuit breaker will be placed on Western's Deering-Eckley easement on the southern edge of Deering Lake. All other work will be contained within the fenced perimeter of either substation.

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

B4.6. Additions or modifications to electric power transmission facilities within a previously disturbed or developed facility area. Covered activities include, but are not limited to, switchyard rock grounding upgrades, secondary containment projects, paving projects, seismic upgrading, tower modifications, load-shaping projects (such as the installation and use of flywheels and battery arrays), changing insulators, and replacement of poles, circuit breakers, conductors, transformers, and crossarms.

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

Deering Lake and Yuma Substation Upgrades, Yuma County, Colorado

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 listed in Appendix A or B to Subpart D.

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

- Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders;
 - 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;
 - 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;
 - 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 resources include, but are not limited to, those listed in paragraph B. (4) (see Attachment A).
- 2) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.
- 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 of this project changes, Western’s Environmental Division must be contacted for additional environmental review.

This Categorical Exclusion is valid for the 2014 calendar year after the signature date. If construction has not commenced within that time, Western’s Environmental Division must be contacted for an updated environmental review prior to construction.

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

Deering Lake and Yuma Substation Upgrades, Yuma County, Colorado

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

All equipment used must be cleaned prior to use in to prevent transporting of invasive plant or noxious weed seeds.

To comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, maintenance work should be scheduled outside the March 1 through July 31 general nesting periods. If the maintenance work is to be done during this period, contact Environment so that they may arrange for a pedestrian survey to be conducted in advance of the maintenance crews to identify active nests that are to be avoided.

Western shall exercise care to preserve the natural landscape and shall conduct this construction operation to prevent any unnecessary destruction, scarring, or defacing of the natural surroundings in the project vicinity. Except where clearing is required for permanent works, approved construction roads, or excavation operations, vegetation shall be preserved and shall be protected from damage by Western's construction operations and equipment.

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.

Signature Gene Iley, Jr.

Date: 3/6/14

Gene Iley, Jr.
NEPA Compliance Officer
Rocky Mountain Customer Service Region
Western Area Power Administration

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

Deering Lake and Yuma Substation Upgrades, Yuma County, Colorado

ATTACHMENT A

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

Checklist for Categorical Exclusion Determination, revised Nov. 2011

Application of Categorical Exclusions (1021.410)	Disagree	Agree	Unknown
(b)(1) The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in appendix 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. Conditions that are Integral Elements of the Classes of Actions in Appendix B.	NO	YES	Unknown
(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	X		

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

Deering Lake and Yuma Substation Upgrades, Yuma County, Colorado

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 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		

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

Deering Lake and Yuma Substation Upgrades, Yuma County, Colorado

(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		
---	---	--	--