



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

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Proposed Action Title: Elden Microwave Site Operations and Maintenance, 2017-2018

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

Location(s) (City/County/State): North of Flagstaff, Coconino County, Arizona

Proposed Action Description:

Over the next year, Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), Desert Southwest Region (DSW), plans to conduct routine and repetitive operations and maintenance actions as well as occasional minor equipment, structure and building additions or modifications at the Elden Microwave Site north of Flagstaff, Coconino County, Arizona. WAPA holds an 0.05-acre easement (FS-101-PW) from the Forest Service, Coconino National Forest for this facility. It is located within portions of Section 36, Township 22 North, Range 7 East on the Gila and Salt River Baseline and Meridian. WAPA plans to use existing access roads, such as Lookout Road, to reach this facility. This work is needed to maintain the reliability and safety of the bulk electrical system.

See Attached 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:

Date Determined:

6-27-17

# Elden Microwave Site Operations and Maintenance Continuation Sheet

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## Project Description (continued)

WAPA includes in this determination maintenance, replacement, removal and/or repair and minor additions or modifications to communication equipment at existing facilities that may include but not be limited to:

1. Maintenance and inspection of microwave towers, dishes, parabolic dishes, and pertinent equipment;
2. Maintenance and inspection of communication towers, antennae, and pertinent equipment;
3. Installation, adjustment or replacement of antennae or dishes on an existing structure;
4. Maintenance and inspection of light beacons in-kind;
5. Adding, modifying, replacing, or removing, radio equipment, panels, wiring, or controls;
6. Maintenance of foundations or footings;
7. Maintenance and inspection of metering, fiber optics, and relaying equipment;
8. Maintenance and inspection of generators, batteries, gauges and propane tanks, including refilling propane tanks;
9. Replacement, recycling and disposal of batteries;
10. Replacement of propane tanks if existing concrete pad is reused;
11. Maintenance and inspection of security equipment;
12. Installation of security equipment on existing buildings or structures;
13. Maintenance, repair or replacement of air-conditioning units provided the Freon is recycled;
14. Maintenance of buildings, including interior and exterior painting;
15. Surveys of buildings and equipment to identify asbestos and lead-based paint.
16. Applications of pesticides and use of traps to control pests such as centipedes, mice, rats, scorpions, and termites in, on, or around communication buildings or equipment.
17. Conducting integrated vegetation management actions to control unwanted plants, such as applying herbicides and using hand tools to cut or pull weeds.

Minor additions are generally those that do not entail constructing or expanding concrete footers, pads, or foundations.

## Special Conditions:

Managers implementing actions under this Categorical Exclusion will contact DSW's Environmental Manager. If an action's scope is not listed or dissimilar to ones listed above, or if conditions that are integral elements are not met, then an action-specific NEPA document is needed.

1. This Categorical Exclusion is valid for one year after the signature date or until an updated version is executed, whichever comes first.

2. Ground-disturbing activities are not covered by this Categorical Exclusion and DSW's Environmental Manager must be contacted to review the proposed action prior to work.
3. Requirements for lead-based paint, polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB), asbestos, batteries, and other environmentally regulated materials requirements will be met and DSW's Environmental Manager shall be contacted.
  - a. If insulated wires will be pulled, scraped, or removed, DSW's Environmental Manager will be contacted to determine if asbestos testing is needed. If the insulation contains asbestos, DSW's Environmental Manager will be contact to dispose of it properly.
  - b. If equipment with components containing PCBs or mercury will be removed, DSW's Environmental Manager will be contacted to arrange for disposal.
4. If evidence of a nesting bird is discovered in the work area, work shall cease and DSW's Environmental Manager will be contacted with the location and nature of the findings.
5. If any cultural materials are discovered, work in the area shall halt immediately, DSW Regional Preservation Officer 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).
6. Regarding pesticide and herbicide use:
  - a. WAPA will only use General Use Pesticides; Restricted Use Pesticides will be avoided (see Arizona Department of Agriculture list).
  - b. Applicators shall obtain the appropriate federal, state, and local certifications and permits.
  - c. To protect non-targeted wildlife, WAPA will avoid products with the following 12 ingredients: aminopyridine (e.g., Avitrol), brodifacoum, chlorophacinone, chloro-p-toludine hydrochloride (e.g., CPTH, DRC-1339, Starlicide), diphacinone, famphur (e.g., Warbex 7), fenthion (e.g., Rid-a-bird), polybutene adhesive (e.g., tanglefoot bird repellent), sodium cyanide, sodium fluoroacetate, strychnine, and zinc phosphide.
  - d. To protect desert tortoise and burrowing owls, WAPA will not use fumigants, such as acrolein, aluminum phosphide, magnesium phosphide, potassium nitrate, sodium nitrate, in burrows.
  - e. WAPA will obtain and follow the conditions associated with Forest Service issued Pesticide Use Permits.
7. From March 1 to August 31, WAPA will avoid landing helicopters within 0.25-mile of a Mexican Spotted Owl Protected Activity Center located 1.5-mile northwest of the comm site.
8. If possible, WAPA will work outside the bird nesting season from April 15 to August 31. If work occurs during nesting season, WAPA will avoid active nests of birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.
9. If a condor is observed in or adjacent to a work area, personnel will cease work in the immediate vicinity until the condor leaves on its own.
  - a. To avoid attracting condors, personnel will properly disposed of trash each day.