



U.S. Department of Energy Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

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Proposed Action Title: Hazard Vegetation Removal along Central Arizona Project and Colorado River Storage Project Power System Transmission Lines in February 2018

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

Location(s) (City/County/State): La Paz, Maricopa, Mohave, Pinal and Yavapai Counties, Arizona

Proposed Action Description:

Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), Desert Southwest Region (DSW), plans to inspect and cut down hazard vegetation along seven transmission lines (Table 1) associated with the Central Arizona Project (CAP) or the Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) Power Systems located in central and western Arizona. WAPA would drive motorized vehicles and all-terrain vehicles on existing unimproved access roads to patrol transmission line right-of-ways looking for tall vegetation. WAPA would measure the distance between the conductors and tall vegetation to determine if it encroaches on minimum clearance requirements. Vegetation that crosses the threshold is considered a hazard. WAPA would use hand tools (e.g., hand saws, chain saws) to cut down hazard vegetation. The resulting stumps would be no greater than four inches high. In rural settings, WAPA would either lop or chip the resulting woody debris and scatter it in the right-of-way; in urban settings, WAPA would take the debris to an existing approved landfill. This work is needed to maintain the reliability and safety of the bulk electrical system.

WAPA plans to start the work on 2/8/2018 and complete it on 2/28/2018.

WAPA's transmission lines associated with this work cross Arizona State Land Department, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation and private lands.

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:

2-9-18

**Hazard Vegetation Removal along Central Arizona Project and
Colorado River Storage Project Power Systems Transmission Lines
in February 2018
Categorical Exclusion Continuation Sheet**

Project Description (continued):

Table 1. List of Transmission Lines for Hazard Vegetation Removal

Power System	Transmission Line	Structures
CAP	Spook Hill Salt Gila	0/1-0/2
CAP	Raceway Westwing	all
CAP	Raceway New Waddell Dam	all
CAP	Harcuvar Little Harquahala	all
CAP	Harcuvar Big Harquahala	all
CAP	Parker Havasu	all
CRSP	Pinnacle Peak Rogers	19/1 to 21/1

WAPA plans to conduct this work in conjunction with hazard vegetation removal actions along portions of five transmission lines associated with the Parker Davis Power System: Rogers Coolidge (7/3 to Spook Hill Substation), Gavilan Peak to Prescott (195/4 to Gavilan Peak Substation), Casa Grande Test Track (Test Track substation to 2/1), and Liberty Parker #1 and #2 (Harcuvar Substation to 53/1). WAPA previously analyzed these activities in an environmental assessment (DOE/EA-1982) and issued a finding of no significant impact dated 9/30/2015; thus they were not reanalyzed here.

Special Conditions:

1. Coordination
 - a. WAPA personnel and its contractors will attend an Environmental Manager led worker environmental awareness program prior to the start of on-site work to ensure that workers are familiar with sensitive environmental resources and associated protocols.
2. Air Quality
 - a. Workers shall conduct the work in ways that minimize creating air born dust.
3. Biological Resources
 - a. Regarding Endangered Species Act protected species and critical habitat, WAPA made a no effect determination on 2/7/2018. Workers will report unplanned mortalities or injuries to wildlife that occur from maintenance activities to the Environmental Manager.
 - b. Regarding Migratory Bird Treaty Act protected species, active bird nests are unexpected prior to the end of February. If active nests are encountered, workers will avoid that vegetation and notify the Environmental Manager.
 - c. Regarding the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, workers will inspect hazard vegetation for the presence of huge nests (they weight a ton or more). If

present, workers will avoid that tree and adjacent trees and notify the Environmental Manager immediately. Bald and golden eagle nests are protected even if the birds are not present. They can only be removed after WAPA obtains a permit from Fish and Wildlife Service.

4. Cultural Resources

- a. 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).

bcc. w/attachments

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FILE: 5440.04 SGL SPH, RWY WWG, RWY NWD, HCR LHP, HCR BHP , PAD HAV & PPK RGS