



U.S. Department of Energy Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

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Proposed Action Title: WAPA Vegetation Maintenance for Hazard Trees Affecting the Flagstaff-Pinnacle Peak #2 Transmission Lines near Structure 184-1.

Program or Field Office: WAPA Desert Southwest Region Office, Phoenix, AZ

Location(s) (City/County/State): Yavapai, Arizona

Proposed Action Description:

Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) Desert Southwest Region Office (DSW) proposes to remove 2 tall trees within the Right-of-Way (ROW) that pose a hazard to the Flagstaff-Pinnacle Peak #2 Transmission Lines. These trees are located close to structure 184-1 along Fossil Creek, southeast of Camp Verde, Arizona. The top canopies of both trees lie within a few feet of the energized transmission lines and have potential to spark a wildfire within the ROW if they come in contact with these lines. Therefore, WAPA Vegetation Maintenance Crews will cut down the 2 hazard trees and fell them in place and away from the Fossil Creek shoreline.

All work we be conducted using gas powered chainsaws and pick-up trucks to access the trees utilizing existing access roads. No road work is necessary for tree removal.

Please see attachment 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:

5-30-18

WAPA Transmission Line Vegetation Maintenance for Hazard Trees Affecting the Flagstaff-Pinnacle Peak #2 Transmission Lines near Structure 184-1 Categorical Exclusion Continuation Sheet

Biological Concerns

WAPA crews will cut and fell the trees away from the Fossil Creek shoreline to prevent any debris or erosion from entering the creek to avoid critical fish habitat.

WAPA Vegetation Maintenance Crews will conduct bird surveys prior to cutting the trees to determine if there are active bird nests within the trees.

If an active nest or nesting behavior by either yellow-billed cuckoos or Mexican spotted owls is observed in the 1-2 trees that need to be felled, the trees will not be removed until further instruction is provided by WAPA Environmental staff.

Cultural Resources Concerns

No ground disturbing activities will during tree removal.

Based upon the results of a Class I literature review no historic properties lie within the area of potential effects. WAPA made a finding of No Potential to Cause Effects as the activities are exempt per Stipulation III.A and Appendix B.B.8.

GENERAL: Do not remove or alter cultural artifacts or paleontological resources (fossils). Cultural artifacts are of potential scientific or cultural importance and include bones, tools, historic buildings, and features. Paleontological resources can be of scientific importance and include mineralized animals and plants or trace fossils such as footprints. Both cultural and paleontological resources are protected by Federal Regulations during Federal construction projects.

UNKNOWN CULTURAL OR PALEONTOLOGICAL SITES: On rare occasions cultural or paleontological sites may be discovered during excavation or other earth-moving activities.

- (1) **Reporting:** If evidence of a cultural or paleontological site is discovered, immediately notify the Regional Preservation Officer (602-605-2842) and give the location and nature of the findings. Stop all activities within a 50-foot radius of the discovery and do not proceed with work within that radius until directed to do so by the Regional Preservation Officer.

- (1) **Care of Evidence:** Do not damage or remove artifacts or fossils uncovered during construction.

bcc.