



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

Submit by E-mail

Proposed Action Title: Glen Canyon Guyed Tower Replacement

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

Location(s) (City/County/State): Page, Coconino County, Arizona

Proposed Action Description:

Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), Desert Southwest Region (DSW), plans to build a new 300-foot-tall guyed communications tower and demolish the existing 400-foot-tall guyed tower. In order to maintain our microwave connections, the new one would be built first and put into service before the existing one would be demolished. WAPA expects that the two towers would stand side-by-side for up to four months. WAPA plans to install three 12-foot-diameter microwave dishes on the new tower; the existing one has two dishes. WAPA would install two Yagi-Uda and a VHF antennae for WAPA's use to replace similar ones on the existing tower. WAPA would design the new tower for future UHF antennae as well. WAPA plans to reuse the existing communications equipment building. WAPA would remove the ground-mounted microwave dish located next to the shelter. WAPA plans to use the existing one-mile-long access road to bring equipment, material, and personnel to the work site. WAPA does not plan to improve the road at this time. This work is needed to maintain the reliability and safety of the bulk electrical system.

WAPA's Glen Canyon Microwave facility is located on a 7.5-acre-parcel of WAPA-managed land situated southwest of Glen Canyon Dam and northeast of Page, in Coconino County, Arizona. It occurs within portions of Sections 24 and 25 in Township 41 North, Range 8 East on the Gila and Salt River Baseline and Meridian.

See Attached Continuation Sheet

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

B1.19 - Microwave, meteorological, and radio towers

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:

6.4.18

# Glen Canyon Guyed Tower Replacement Categorical Exclusion Continuation Sheet

---

## **Biological Concerns**

The proposed project is not located in designated critical habitat of Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed species (United States Fish & Wildlife Service, 2017).

Southwest Willow Flycatcher Critical Habitat is nearly 26 miles away; the project will not affect this Critical Habitat.

Razorback Sucker Critical Habitat is 8 miles away, straight-line distance, or about 16 miles away following the watercourse of the Colorado River; the project will not affect this Critical Habitat.

Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA): both Golden Eagles (year-round) and Bald Eagles (winter) occur in the project area and may be affected (i.e., “take” caused by collision with the tower and guy wires). However, eagles commonly perch on towers, have been rarely documented as colliding with guyed wires of communication towers, and possible effects will be less than the current baseline.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA): many species covered by MBTA, including waterfowl, raptors, and songbirds, may be affected (i.e., “take” caused by collision with the tower and guy wires, in addition to problems caused by nocturnal migrants being attracted to the tower’s lights). However, possible effects will be less than the current baseline.

In addition, upland game birds are generally more affected by guyed wires and they are not protected in the project area by either the ESA, MBTA, or BGEPA. The tower location is not situated between avian feeding and resting areas nor is it directly within an avian migratory corridor. The tower location is not immediately adjacent to water or wetland habitat and the land under and around it is maintained and managed in a way that does not attract birds or bats.

Various sensitive species of bats, including pale Townsend’s big-eared bat, spotted bat, Arizona myotis, Yuma myotis, and Brazilian free-tailed bat, may occur in the project area (Arizona Game & Fish Department (AZGFD), 2017) and could be affected by the proposed project via collisions with the tower and guyed wires. However, bats have been rarely documented as colliding with guyed wires of communication towers and possible effects will be less than the current baseline.

The proposed project is in the Marble Canyon and Vermillion Cliffs Important Bird Area (AZIBA). This IBA is noted for large numbers of over-wintering waterfowl, breeding Peregrine Falcons (de-listed from ESA in 1999), wintering Bald Eagles, and occasional California Condors (AZIBA, 2017).

In Arizona, the Arizona Audubon Society manages the IBA program. The IBA designation recognizes a history of successful habitat management that promotes and sustains bird populations, but is not a legally binding designation. The Paria Canyon-Vermillion Cliffs Wilderness Area is about 4.7 miles from the project area. Replacing a 400-foot tall tower with a

shorter 300-foot tall tower will reduce any baseline effects to the Wilderness Area. Species on AZGFD list of Species of Economic and Recreation Importance do not occur or are not likely to occur within the project area (AZGFD, 2017).

### Mitigation Measures

To avoid and minimize impacting native birds and other wildlife, WAPA will implement practices in WAPA's Avian Protection Plan (WAPA, 2016) and guidance from the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC, 2012).

To reduce energy costs, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA 2016) and Federal Communications Commission (FCC 2017) require using flashing lights, such as L-810 (F), L-864, or L-865, on communication towers between 150-foot and 350-foot tall (AGL). No steady burning lights (e.g., L-810) should be used. In addition, security lighting at ground facilities should be motion- or heat-activated, down-shielded, and of minimum intensity.

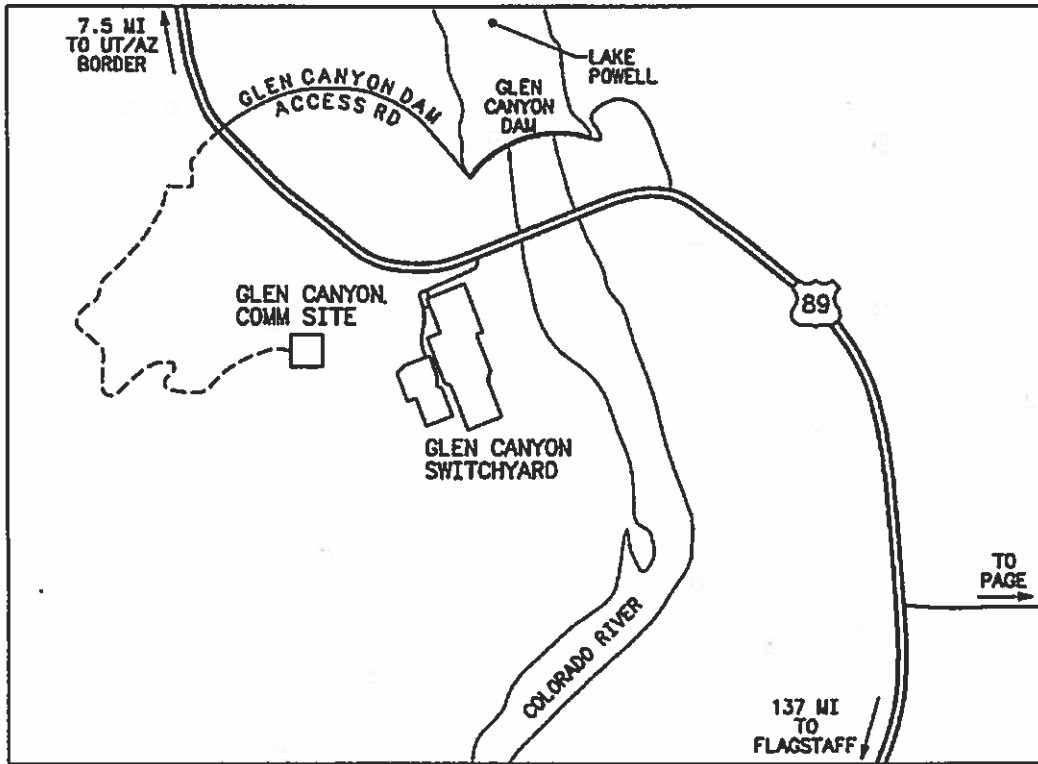
### Cultural Resources Concerns

Per Stipulation IV.B.1-2 of the Programmatic Agreement, a Class I review is the appropriate level of effort. The Class I literature review showed no survey of the APE, but the area is heavily disturbed, leveled, graded and graveled. In addition, WAPA previously consulted the AZ SHPO regarding its NRHP determination of "not eligible" for WAPA's Microwave Communications System (MCS) which included the associated towers and utility sheds/buildings, to which the SHPO concurred [SHPO-2016-0475 (130727)]. WAPA makes a finding of No Historic Properties Affected.

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



Location of the Glen Canyon Communication Site.