

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Western Area Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: 2022 Rate Adjustment Washoe Project Stampede Division Non-firm Power Schedule WSH-1, Rate Order No. WAPA-201

Project No.: 100153308

Project Manager: Arun Sethi, Power Marketing Manager; Autumn Wolfe, SN Rates Manager

Location: Sierra County, California

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):

B4.3 Electric Power Marketing Rate Changes
B4.4 Power Marketing Services and Contracts

Description of the Proposed Action:

Western Area Power Administration, Sierra Nevada Region (WAPA) proposes to adjust the non-firm power rate for the Washoe Project Stampede Division, which is unchanged from the existing formula rate in Rate Schedule SNF-7 that expires on September 30, 2022. The WAPA proposed non-firm power formula rate under rate schedule WSH-1, Rate Case WAPA-201, will be effective on October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2027, pending confirmation and approval by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) on a final basis or until superseded. Minor rate cases are defined by 10 CFR 903.2(e).


The Washoe Project, Stampede Division, was authorized by Public Law 858 in 1956, and includes operating the Stampede Dam and Reservoir, on the Truckee River, for the purpose of flood control, fisheries enhancement, recreation, and power generation. Stampede Powerplant is registered with the California Energy Commission as a qualified renewable energy resource and provides energy for two Federal fish hatcheries, Lahontan and Marble Bluff. Congress declared Washoe Project costs non-reimbursable except the Stampede Powerplant. WAPA accepts power generated from Stampede's non-firm power (dependent on run of the Truckee River) and provides it to Truckee Donner Public Utility District and City of Fallon through a contract with Stampede Energy Exchange Account (SEEA) to serve these project loads and market energy. WAPA applies the ratio of project use costs to the generation revenue recorded in the SEEA to determine a non-reimbursable percentage. The reimbursable percentage portion is used to determine reimbursable costs for repayment and financial purposes; with excess energy integrated with the Central Valley Project (CVP) and marketed under the 2004 and 2025 power marketing plans. WAPA published the Federal Register notice of the proposed minor rate adjustment for the non-firm power formula rate for the Washoe Project, Stampede Division, on April 5, 2022. In accordance with 10 CFR 903.15(a) and 10 CFR 903.16(a), WAPA held public information and comment forums on April 22, 2022 with comment period ending June 6, 2022. Actions taken by WAPA related to the rate adjustment are primarily administrative. All generation projects would operate within normal operating limits and consistently with environmental laws and regulations.

Findings:

In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) of the Department of Energy's (DOE) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Regulations (57 FR 15144, Apr. 24, 1992, as amended at 61 FR 36221-36243, Jul. 9, 1996; 61 FR 64608, Dec. 6, 1996, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011), WAPA has determined that the proposed action:

- (1) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D (see attached Environmental Checklist);
- (2) does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- (3) has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

Based on these determinations, WAPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

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Attachment: Environmental Checklist

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Checklist

This checklist documents environmental considerations for the proposed project and explains why the project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources and would meet other integral elements of the applied categorical exclusion.

Proposed Action: 2022 Rate Adjustment Washoe Project Stampede Division Non-firm Power Schedule WSH-1, Rate Order No. WAPA-201

Project Site Description

The proposed project area is in Sierra County, California. Stampede Powerplant is registered with the California Energy Commission as a qualified renewable energy resource and provides energy for two Federal fish hatcheries, Lahontan and Marble Bluff. WAPA accepts power generated from Stampede's non-firm power (dependent on run of the Truckee River) and provides it to Truckee Donner Public Utility District and City of Fallon. WAPA contracts with Stampede Energy Exchange Account (SEEA) to serve these project loads and market energy.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. Historic and Cultural Resources <u>Explanation:</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The proposed action involves administrative, strategic and financial activities to recover WAPA costs for power and transmission products and services and would not result in ground disturbing activities or changes to existing structures and landscapes. Generation would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, there is no impact to historic and cultural resources.

2. **Geology and Soils**



Explanation:

The proposed action involves administrative, strategic and financial activities to recover WAPA costs for power and transmission products and services and would not result in ground disturbing activities or potential for erosion, landslides, or other related impacts. Generation would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, there is no impact to geology and soils.

3. **Plants** (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)



Explanation:

The proposed action involves administrative, strategic and financial activities to recover WAPA costs for power and transmission products and services and would not result in ground disturbing activities or vegetation removal or alteration. Generation would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, there is no impact to plants.

4. **Wildlife** (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)



Explanation:

The proposed action involves administrative, strategic and financial activities to recover WAPA costs for power and transmission products and services and would not result in ground disturbing activities or potential to cause impacts to special-status species and habitats. Generation would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. For these reasons, there is no impact to wildlife.

5. **Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish** (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)



Explanation:

The proposed action involves administrative, strategic and financial activities to recover WAPA costs for power and transmission products and services and would not result in potential to cause impacts to water bodies, floodplains, and fish. The Stampede Powerplant serves two fish hatcheries and would not be impacted by the rate adjustment. Generation would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period.

6. **Wetlands**
Explanation:



The proposed action involves administrative, strategic and financial activities to recover WAPA costs for power and transmission products and services and would not result in ground disturbing activities or impacts to wetlands. Generation would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. No impacts would occur.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**
Explanation:



The proposed action involves administrative, strategic and financial activities to recover WAPA costs for power and transmission products and services and would not result in ground disturbing activities or impacts to groundwater or aquifers. Generation would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. No impacts would occur.

8. **Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas**
Explanation:



The proposed action involves administrative, strategic and financial activities to recover WAPA costs for power and transmission products and services and would not result in potential to cause impacts to land use. The Stampede Powerplant serves two fish hatcheries and would not be impacted by the rate adjustment. Generation would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. No impacts would occur.

9. **Visual Quality**
Explanation:



The proposed action involves administrative, strategic and financial activities to recover WAPA costs for power and transmission products and services and would not result in ground disturbing activities or impacts to visual resources. Generation would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. No impacts would occur.

10. **Air Quality**
Explanation:



The proposed action involves administrative, strategic and financial activities to recover WAPA costs for power and transmission products and services and would not result in ground disturbing activities or impacts to air quality. Generation would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. No impacts would occur.

11. **Noise**



Explanation:

The proposed action involves administrative, strategic and financial activities to recover WAPA costs for power and transmission products and services and would not result in ground disturbing activities or noise. Generation would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. No impacts would occur.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation:

The proposed action involves administrative, strategic and financial activities to recover WAPA costs for power and transmission products and services and would not result in ground disturbing activities or impacts to human health or safety. Generation would continue to operate within normal operating limits during the rate period. No impacts would occur.

Evaluation of Other Integral Elements

The proposed project would also meet conditions that are integral elements of the categorical exclusion. The project would not:



Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.

Explanation, if necessary:



Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation, if necessary:



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.

Explanation, if necessary:



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.

Explanation, if necessary:



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.

Explanation, if necessary:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description:

WAPA conducted public information forums and no comments from the public were received. Proposed action is under existing contracts with directly affected property owners and agencies.

Based on the foregoing, this proposed project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts to any environmentally sensitive resource.

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