



U.S. Department of Energy

Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

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Proposed Action Title: Gila to Knob 161-kV (GLA-KNB) Transmission Line Rebuild Project

Program or Field Office: Western Area Power Administration - Desert Southwest Region

Location(s) (City/County/State): Yuma County, Arizona and Imperial County, California

Proposed Action Description:

The Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), Desert Southwest Region (DSW) proposes to rebuild the GLA-KNB 161-kV transmission line within the current footprint. The GLA-KNB line is 20.2 miles in length, connecting the Gila Substation in Yuma County, Arizona to the Knob Substation in Imperial County, California. The line was built in 1943 and many structures along the line are degraded and no longer compliant with National Electrical Safety Code clearance requirements. WAPA proposes to rebuild the GLA-KNB line between Gila Substation and the APS North Gila Substation on steel monopoles with the Gila-North Gila 69-kV line co-located, and to replace all wood structures between North Gila Substation and Knob Substation with light duty steel structures. Replacing the aging wood support structures and conductors will increase reliability of service, improve safety, and reduce maintenance costs by reducing the risk of line outages due to structure and support failures. Installing optical ground wire will improve communication redundancy within the area and allow future communication bandwidth needs to be met.

As part of the project design stage, WAPA will complete aerial Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) surveys to obtain digital topographical and feature mapping and imagery of the GLA-KNB line. Overflights are expected to be conducted with a helicopter at an elevation of 400' above ground level. The LiDAR surveys will include placement of ground control markers within WAPA's GLA-KNB right-of-way. WAPA will also complete a geological survey ("geotech") for design of the concrete foundations for the steel monopole structures. The geotech boreholes will be drilled along the existing GLA-KNB line.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

B4.13 - Upgrading and rebuilding existing powerlines

B3.1 - Site characterization and environmental monitoring

B3.2 - Aviation activities

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: