



U.S. Department of Energy

Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

Submit by E-mail

Proposed Action Title: Letcher Stage 3

Program or Field Office: SDMO

Location(s) (City/County/State): Letcher/Sanborn and Hanson/SD

Proposed Action Description:

EREC has requested a 115kV bay addition at the WAPA Letcher Substation. EREC is installing a new 6.5 mile long 115 kV line to provide a tie line between the WAPA Letcher and Plano substations. This project will be built with 795 ACSR and will be built to 115 kV specifications to handle proposed and future area loads. The line will be constructed above ground. The typical structure will be a single wood or ductile iron pole with stand-off insulators.

- WAPA determined no potential to affect cultural resources or Historic Properties affected for the Proposed Action. If, during the course of any ground disturbance related to the project, any bones, artifacts, foundations, or other indications of past human occupation of the area are uncovered, the project will be stopped, and the State Historic Preservation Officer notified immediately.
- WAPA determined that the proposed project would not cause significant changes to risks to bio/natural resources, and would therefore reach a "may affect, not likely to adversely effect" determination. Construction should avoid spring (Apr-May) and fall (Sep-Nov) migration periods for whooping cranes, if possible.
- WAPA conducted a desktop qualitative review of impacts to aesthetics, transportation, air quality/GHG emissions, hazardous materials, human health and safety, socioeconomic, & community resources. No concerns identified. FEMA flood hazard maps for the project area show that the project will cross through designated flood zones, but no adverse effects are anticipated. Permits for the crossings will be obtained if required.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

B4.6 - Additions and modifications to transmission facilities

B4.11 - Electric power substations and interconnection facilities

B4.12 - Construction of powerlines

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: **JOHN RUSSELL** Digitally signed by JOHN RUSSELL
Date: 2024.08.09 08:13:27 -06'00'

Date Determined: 08/09/2024