

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION



Proposed Action Title: Poncha Switchyard Emergency Buried Cable Repair

Location: Chaffee County, Colorado

Project Number: 2024-030

Expiration Date: September 30, 2024

A. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION:

Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), Rocky Mountain Region (RMR), conducted emergency repairs to an existing 25-kilovolt (kV) buried cable outside its Poncha (PON) Switchyard perimeter fence in Chaffee County, Colorado. The 25-kV buried cable that provides station service power to the PON Switchyard faulted, resulting in a power outage. The emergency repairs were completed between March 1 and March 4, 2024. The location of the fault was approximately 165 feet east of the PON Switchyard perimeter fence. Emergency repairs involved digging a trench to access the fault location, splicing and replacing the damaged cable, backfilling the trench using the excavated topsoil, and restoring power. Equipment used for this project included an excavator. Work was confined to WAPA's property boundary associated with the PON Switchyard. No access road maintenance or new road construction occurred.

B. STIPULATIONS PERTAINING TO PROPOSAL:

This Categorical Exclusion (CX) covers work that has already been completed. No further work is authorized under this CX. If additional work is required, RMR's Environment Department must be contacted to determine whether additional environmental review is required.

C. NUMBER AND TITLE OF THE CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION BEING APPLIED:

(See text in 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D.)

B1.3 Routine maintenance

D. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS 10 CFR 1021.410 (b): (See full text in regulation)

The proposed action fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B of 10 CFR 1021.

To fit within the classes of actions listed in 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 the Department of Energy (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 Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (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 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 of the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health.

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 improperly segmented, and the proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts, is not related to other proposed actions with cumulatively significant impacts, and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211.

E. DETERMINATION:

Based on my review of information conveyed to me and in my possession (or attached) concerning 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.

Signature and Date

James Wood
NEPA Compliance Officer
Rocky Mountain Region
Western Area Power Administration

Prepared by:
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