

Categorical Exclusion (CX) Determination

Proposed Action: Reroute of Jamestown-Grand Forks 230 kV transmission line near Hannaford, North Dakota.

Description of Proposed Action: Western is planning to reroute approximately two miles of its Jamestown-Grand Forks 230-kilovolt (kV) transmission line. The reroute will occur in SEC1 and 11 T144N R60W in Griggs County, North Dakota. The purpose of moving the transmission line is to relocate the line out of a wetland to a more upland site. Construction will occur late summer or fall of 2012.

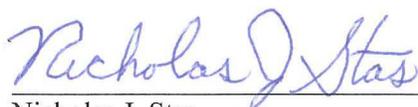
Number and Title of Categorical Exclusions Being Applied: 10 CFR 1021.410 Subpart D, Appendix B, B4.13: Reconstruction (upgrading or rebuilding) and/or minor relocation of existing electric powerlines approximately 20 miles in length or less to enhance environmental and land use values. Such actions include relocations to ... reduce existing impacts to environmentally sensitive areas.

Regulatory Requirements for CX Determination: The DOE Guidelines for Compliance with the Regulatory Requirements for the National Environmental Policy Act at 10 CFR 1021.410(b), require the following determinations be made in order for a proposed action to be categorically excluded from National Environmentally Policy Act (NEPA) review:

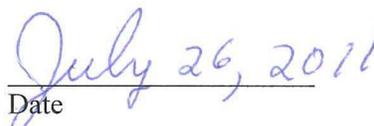
- 1) The proposed action fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B to Subpart D.
- 2) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- 3) The proposal is not "connected" to other actions with 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.

Results of Review: In accordance with DOE environmental regulations (10 CFR 1021) Western has reviewed the proposed action in terms of the level of NEPA review needed. Based on this review, Western has determined the proposal is encompassed within a class of action listed in Appendix B to Subpart D (10 CFR 1021.410) which lists actions not normally requiring the preparation of either an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or an Environmental Assessment (EA), provided the actions meet the integral elements defined in Appendix B. The proposed action fits into the categorical exclusion listed under B4.13 "Reconstruction (upgrading or rebuilding) and/or minor relocation of existing electric powerlines approximately 20 miles in length or less to enhance environmental and land use values. Such actions include relocations to ... reduce existing impacts to environmentally sensitive areas. The North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office concurred with Western's finding of "No historic properties affected" on 21 December 2010. A site biological survey was performed by Western biologists on 4 May 2011. Western's environmental staff concluded, with stated construction timing and nature of this project, there were no biological issues of concern found during the survey.

Determination: Based on my review of information provided to me concerning the proposed action as NEPA Compliance Officer, I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class of action, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is categorically excluded from further requirements of NEPA review.



Nicholas J. Stas
NEPA Compliance Officer, UGP



Date