



Categorical Exclusion Determination

Western Area Power Administration

U.S. Department of Energy



<u>Proposed Action Title:</u>	Sidney-Bridgeport 115-kV Transmission Line Structure Removal and Replacements
<u>WAPA Region:</u>	Rocky Mountain
<u>Location (County/State):</u>	Morrill County, Nebraska
<u>CX Determination Number:</u>	2026-RMR-032 (RMR Project Number: 2026-021)
<u>CX Determination Expiration</u>	December 31, 2030
<u>Date*:</u>	

**CX is valid until the date above (no longer than five years from when document was signed) or completion of work started prior to the expiration of the CX Determination, unless there are substantial changes to the scope of work, location, or applicable regulations. If such changes occur prior to the expiration of the CX, the Region Environmental Program will review the analysis to ensure the CX is still applicable.*

Proposed Action Description:

Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), Rocky Mountain Region (RMR), proposes to remove existing Structure 270A and replace existing Structures 270 and 271 on the Sidney-Bridgeport 115-kV Transmission Line in Morrill County, Nebraska. The purpose of the proposed action is to replace structures that have been identified as structurally deficient and remove a structure that is no longer required following the replacements. The new transmission structures will be 5 to 10 feet taller than the existing structures and have minor structural updates to meet current WAPA design standards, but they will be visually similar to the existing structures. The new structures will be placed in the existing structure holes whenever possible. The full scope of the structure removal and replacements will include, as necessary, removing the existing structures, re-auguring the existing structure holes or auguring new structure holes, installing the new structures; backfilling the structure holes, and installing new hardware. Equipment used for the proposed action may include bucket trucks, truck-mounted augers and cranes, skid-steer loaders, utility trucks, pole trailers, and equipment trailers. Work will be confined to WAPA's right-of-way (ROW) on private lands. The ROW will be accessed by existing access routes; no access road maintenance or new road construction is authorized. Work may occur at any time prior to the expiration date.

Environmental Requirements during Project Implementation:

- 1) If the scope of work of this project changes, RMR's Environment Department must be contacted to determine whether additional environmental review is required.
- 2) **This Categorical Exclusion expires on December 31, 2030.** If all project work has not been completed by the expiration date, or if the need for an environmental compliance extension is anticipated, RMR's Environment Department must be contacted for an updated environmental review.



- 3) Any injured or orphaned birds and all observed active nests must be immediately reported to RMR Environment at (970) 342-6462 or (970) 473-5586. Any dead birds must be reported to RMR Environment within twenty-four (24) hours of discovery. Additional documentation, such as photographs and GPS coordinates, may be requested to support RMR's reporting requirements to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- 4) If any cultural resources are inadvertently discovered during implementation of the proposed action, work within 100 feet of the discovery area must halt immediately, and an RMR Archaeologist must be contacted immediately at (970) 286-3523 or (970) 218-4946. Work in the area of discovery must not resume until notification to proceed is provided by an RMR Archaeologist.
- 5) If any possible human remains are inadvertently discovered during implementation of the proposed action, work within 100 feet of the discovery area must halt immediately, and an RMR Archaeologist must be notified immediately at (970) 286-3523 or (970) 218-4946 (no later than 24 hours from the time of discovery). A reasonable effort must be made to protect the remains from looting and/or further damage. Work in the area of discovery must not resume until notification to proceed is provided by an RMR Archaeologist.
- 6) Vehicles and equipment (trailers, trucks, UTVs, etc.) will not be moved between work areas without first taking reasonable measures to ensure they are free of soil, seeds, vegetation matter, or other debris that could contain noxious weed seeds.
- 7) Activities involving the use of fuel, oil, hydraulic fluid, or other petroleum products must comply with RMR's Spill Response Plan (SRP).
- 8) To prevent the transport of non-native and invasive plants and animals, including noxious weeds and aquatic nuisance species, work crews must thoroughly wash all vehicles and equipment (trailers, trucks, UTVs, etc.) before entering the action area and working on the project.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied (Number and Title):

B1.3 Routine maintenance

Findings:

For the DOE procedures regarding categorical exclusions, including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see 10 CFR 1021.102 and Appendix B to [10 CFR Part 1021](#), and also Section 5.4 (Applying one or more categorical exclusions to a proposal) and Appendices B and C of [DOE's National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures](#) (Jun. 30, 2025).

Requirements and guidance in 10 CFR 1021.102 and DOE's NEPA Implementing Procedures: (See full text in regulation and in Implementing Procedures)



The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix B to 10 CFR Part 1021 or Appendix B or C of DOE's NEPA Implementing Procedures (June 30, 2025).

To fit within the classes of actions listed in Appendix B to 10 CFR Part 1021, or Appendix B of DOE's NEPA Implementing Procedures, a proposal must satisfy the conditions that are integral elements of the classes of actions in Appendix B of both 10 CFR Part 1021 and DOE's NEPA Implementing Procedures. Additionally, for CXs adopted pursuant to NEPA Section 109 (see DNIP, Appendix C), the originating Federal agency's integral elements or extraordinary circumstances must be in accordance with the applicable requirements.



There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal. DOE or an applicant may modify the proposal to avoid reasonably foreseeable adverse significant effects such that the categorical exclusion would apply.



The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

[Note: For proposals that fit within the categorical exclusions listed in Appendix C of DOE's NEPA Implementing Procedures, see DOE's notice of adoption for the subject Appendix C categorical exclusion for additional considerations. DOE notices of adoption for other agency categorical exclusions may be found on [DOE's Section 109 webpage](#).]

Determination:

Based on my review of the proposed action, I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class(es) of action, the other requirements and guidance set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

WAPA Authorized Official Signature:

James Wood, Regional Environmental Manager
Rocky Mountain Region
Western Area Power Administration