

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION
Rocky Mountain Region, Western Area Power Administration

Medicine Bow Substation Control Building Installation Project (Amended)
Carbon County, Wyoming

A. Brief Description of Proposal: Western Area Power Administration (Western) proposes to install a new control building in the Medicine Bow Substation. The Medicine Bow Substation currently utilizes a fiberglass control building and sheet metal communications equipment building. These buildings and control systems no longer meet Western's needs and have reliability issues. Therefore, Western will replace the existing fiberglass control building and metal communications building with a single standard Rocky Mountain Region (RMR) Small Control building which consists of a wood frame, metal roof, and brick exterior.

The proposed project will consist of demolishing the current control and communication buildings and foundations and replacing them with a single building. New HVAC units, control boards, AC and DC distribution panels, protective relays, battery systems, RTU and communications equipment will be installed in the new building. All equipment in the substation will be converted for control by 125VDC. All new equipment will be compliant with Western's RMR Digital Control Standard.

The current size of the substation is 100 feet by 119 feet (fenced area). The fence will be relocated on the south side of the substation to increase the size to 125 feet by 119 feet. This will allow the construction of the new control building without impacting the operation of the substation. All work will occur on Western-owned lands located in Carbon County, Wyoming.

This Categorical Exclusion (CX) amends the original CX issued on August 6, 2014. The original CX did not indicate the geologic investigation testing that will occur outside of the fenced substation. Geologic information is required to design and construct the control building and for site work. Subsurface investigation shall include standard or cone penetration testing. The minimum depth for standard or cone penetration test holes is 20 feet. Two holes are anticipated. Drill holes will be backfilled with cuttings from the hole and if necessary, supplement the backfill with fill material. The top three feet shall be impervious material or as required by the State of Wyoming or the governing local jurisdiction. The filled holes shall be tamped and mounded to allow for settlement.

B. Number and Title of the Categorical Exclusion Being Applied: (See text in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D.)

B4.11 Electric Power Substations and Interconnection Facilities

Construction or modification of electric power substations or interconnection facilities (including, but not limited to, switching stations and support facilities).

C. Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410 (b): (See full text in regulation and attached checklist.)

1) The proposed action fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix A or B to Subpart D.

For classes of actions listed in Appendix B, the following conditions are integral elements. To fit within a class, the proposal must not:

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- Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders;
 - 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;
 - 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;
 - Have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources. An environmentally sensitive resource is typically a resource that has been identified as needing protection through Executive Order, statute, or regulation by Federal, State, or local government, or a federally recognized Indian tribe. An action may be categorically excluded if, although sensitive resources are present, the action would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on those resources (such as construction of a building with its foundation well above a sole-source aquifer or upland surface soil removal on a site that has wetlands). Environmentally sensitive resources include, but are not limited to, those listed in paragraph B. (4) (see Attachment A).
- 2) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.
- 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.

D. Special Stipulations Pertaining to the Proposal:

This Categorical Exclusion is valid for one year after the signature date. If routine maintenance work has not commenced within that time or the scope of work changes, Western's Environmental Division must be contacted for an updated environmental review.

The Western Office removing the buildings shall obtain the appropriate Federal, State, Tribal or local licenses or certifications prior to disturbing any regulated asbestos-containing material. If a building or portion of a building is demolished or renovated, an Asbestos Notice of and Permit for Demolition and Renovation shall be obtained from the Wyoming State Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Air Quality (or equivalent). The building(s) shall be inspected by a Wyoming State-Certified Asbestos Building Inspector. The inspector shall certify the presence and condition of asbestos, or non-presence of asbestos, onsite as directed on the State Demolition and Renovation Notice/Permit. The inspections shall be performed and notifications shall be submitted whether asbestos is present or not. All asbestos-related activities would be conducted in accordance with applicable U.S. Environmental Protection agency (USEPA), State of Wyoming, and Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations; by USEPA and State of Wyoming accredited personnel. The removal of the asbestos containing material will be conducted by State of Wyoming certified removal contractors and technicians. The removal contractor and their employees will wear appropriate protective equipment.

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If any cultural materials are discovered during construction, work in the area shall halt immediately and Western's Regional Preservation Officer shall be contacted, and the material evaluated by an archaeologist or historian meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards (48 FR 22716, Sept. 1983).

Western has a clean vehicle policy and all equipment used must be cleaned prior to use in order to prevent transporting of invasive plant or noxious weed seeds. Operators will be required to wash all machinery (trailers, trucks, UTVs, etc.) before entering the action area and working on the project to prevent transport of non-native invasive species.

To comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, maintenance work should be scheduled outside the March 1 through July 31 general nesting periods. If the maintenance work is to be done during this period, contact Western's Environmental Division so that they may arrange for a pedestrian survey to be conducted in advance of the maintenance crews to identify active nests that are to be avoided.

Western shall exercise care to preserve the natural landscape and shall conduct this construction operation to prevent any unnecessary destruction, scarring, or defacing of the natural surroundings in the project vicinity. Except where clearing is required for permanent works, approved construction roads, or excavation operations, vegetation shall be preserved and shall be protected from damage by Western's construction operations and equipment.

To minimize impacts to the environment and prevent damage to access roads, operation of off-road equipment will not be permitted during periods of heavy rains, when soils are wet, or when excessive soil damage may occur due to unsuitable operating conditions. No construction activities shall be performed during periods when the soil is too wet to adequately support construction equipment. If equipment creates ruts in excess of six inches deep, the soil shall be deemed too wet to adequately support construction equipment.

Determination: Based on my review of information provided to me and in my possession concerning the proposed action, I determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class of actions, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is categorically excluded from requirements for an EA or an EIS.

Signature



Date:

11/5/15

Gene Iley, Jr.
NEPA Compliance Officer
Rocky Mountain Customer Service Region
Western Area Power Administration

Prepared by: Brian Little

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ATTACHMENT A

**Conditions That Are Integral Elements of the Classes
of Actions in Appendix B That Apply to This Proposal**

Checklist for Categorical Exclusion Determination, revised Nov. 2011

Application of Categorical Exclusions (1021.410)	Disagree	Agree	Unknown
(b)(1) The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in appendix B to subpart D.		X	
(b)(2) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal. Extraordinary circumstances are unique situations presented by specific proposals, including, but not limited to, scientific controversy about the environmental effects of the proposal; uncertain effects or effects involving unique or unknown risks; and unresolved conflicts concerning alternate uses of available resources.		X	
(b)(3) The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. Segmentation can occur when a proposal is broken down into small parts in order to avoid the appearance of significance of the total action. The scope of a proposal must include the consideration of connected and cumulative actions, that is, the 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 § 1021.211 of this part concerning limitations on actions during EIS preparation.		X	
B. Conditions that are Integral Elements of the Classes of Actions in Appendix B.	NO	YES	Unknown
(1) Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.	X		
(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.	X		
(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.	X		
(4) Have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources. An environmentally sensitive resource is typically a resource that has been	X		

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identified as needing protection through Executive Order, statute, or regulation by Federal, state, or local government, or a federally recognized Indian tribe. An action may be categorically excluded if, although sensitive resources are present, the action would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on those resources (such as construction of a building with its foundation well above a sole-source aquifer or upland surface soil removal on a site that has wetlands). Environmentally sensitive resources include, but are not limited to:			
(i) Property (such as sites, buildings, structures, and objects) of historic, archaeological, or architectural significance designated by a Federal, state, or local government, or property determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places;	X		
(ii) Federally-listed threatened or endangered species or their habitat (including critical habitat) or Federally-proposed or candidate species or their habitat (Endangered Species Act); state-listed or state-proposed endangered or threatened species or their habitat; Federally-protected marine mammals and Essential Fish Habitat (Marine Mammal Protection Act; Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act); and otherwise Federally-protected species (such as under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act or the Migratory Bird Treaty Act);	X		
(iii) Floodplains and wetlands (as defined in 10 CFR 1022.4, -Compliance with Floodplain and Wetland Environmental Review Requirements: "Definitions," or its successor);	X		
(iv) Areas having a special designation such as Federally- and state-designated wilderness areas, national parks, national monuments, national natural landmarks, wild and scenic rivers, state and Federal wildlife refuges, scenic areas (such as National Scenic and Historic Trails or National Scenic Areas), and marine sanctuaries;	X		
(v) Prime or unique farmland, or other farmland of statewide or local importance, as defined at 7 CFR 658.2(a), -Farmland Protection Policy Act: Definitions, or its successor;	X		
(vi) Special sources of water (such as sole-source aquifers, wellhead protection areas, and other water sources that are vital in a region); and	X		
(vii) Tundra, coral reefs, or rain forests; or	X		

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(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.	X		
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