

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Western Area Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Elverta-Hurley 7/6 Access Road License Agreement

Project No.: N/A

Project Manager: SNR Lands

Location: Sacramento County

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): Multiple use of powerline rights-of-way

Description of the Proposed Action:

Western Area Power Administration, Sierra Nevada Region (WAPA) is responsible for the operation and maintenance of several federally owned and operated transmission lines throughout California.

The Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) is planning a multi-year habitat restoration project intended to restore a sand and gravel mine site to riparian habitat along the American River. SAFCA has requested permission to use WAPA's existing access road and easement near Elverta-Hurley towers 7/5, 7/6, and 8/1 as a haul road for this project.

WAPA does not have any part in SAFCA's project design, planning, or execution of the project, nor does WAPA hold any permitting authority over the project. WAPA is solely considering whether temporary use of the access road (if allowed by the underlying landowner) is consistent in maintaining and ensuring reliability of its transmission line. WAPA requests that protective K-rails be placed along the road when near its towers to safeguard from potential damage of construction traffic.

Findings:

WAPA follows the regulations at 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500-1508, in addition to the Department of Energy's (DOE) regulations implementing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) at 10 C.F.R. Part 1021 to meet the agency's obligations under NEPA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 et seq. In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) DOE's NEPA Regulations (57 FR 15144, Apr. 24, 1992, as amended at 61 FR 36221-36243, Jul. 9, 1996; 61 FR 64608, Dec. 6, 1996, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011), WAPA has determined that the proposed action:

- (1) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D (see attached Environmental Checklist);
- (2) does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- (3) has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

Based on these determinations, WAPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

Signed:

Name: Kristen Dalldorf

Title: Environmental Manager

Attachment: Environmental Checklist

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Checklist

This checklist documents environmental considerations for the proposed project and explains why the project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources and would meet other integral elements of the applied categorical exclusion.

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Project Site Description

The project area lies on the north side of the American River in the City of Sacramento. Three parallel transmission line easements are in this area, and a shared access road services all three lines. As such, heavy utility trucks are not uncommon on this access road.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. Historic and Cultural Resources		
<u>Explanation:</u>		

From previous surveys, no known cultural resources or historic properties have been identified within the established access road right-of-way. This project would have no adverse effect to historic properties.

2. Geology and Soils

Explanation:

The access road is essentially flat and would not be subject to extensive erosion.

3. Plants

(including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)

Explanation:

SAFCA's use of the established access road would be consistent with existing use. Additionally, their project would be expected to have a positive effect on riparian vegetation.

4. Wildlife

(including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)

Explanation:

SAFCA's use of the established access road would be consistent with existing use. Additionally, their project is expected to have a positive effect on riparian habitat.

5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish

(including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)

Explanation:

The use of the access road would avoid water bodies and fish habitat. No additional development of the floodplain would occur as part of this project.

6. Wetlands

Explanation:

The access road does not go through wetlands, and use of the access road would not result in development or loss of wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Explanation:

Use of the access road has no connection to groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Explanation:

SAFCA's use of the established access road would be consistent with existing use.

9. Visual Quality

Explanation:

SAFCA's use of the established access road would be consistent with existing use.

10. Air Quality

Explanation:

SAFCA would be responsible for any permitting related to their project. SAFCA would be responsible for any permitting or mitigation related to their project.

11. Noise

Explanation:

SAFCA's use of the access road would be consistent with existing use. SAFCA would be responsible for any permitting or mitigation related to their project.

12. Human Health and Safety

Explanation:

WAPA has requested that SAFCA install protective K-rails to guard its transmission line towers for the duration of the agreement.

Evaluation of Other Integral Elements

The proposed project would also meet conditions that are integral elements of the categorical exclusion. The project would not:

Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.

Explanation, if necessary:

None provided

Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation, if necessary:

None provided

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.

Explanation, if necessary:

None provided

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.

Explanation, if necessary:

None provided

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description:

WAPA has no part of the action other than signing an agreement with SAFCA. SAFCA would be responsible for working with landowners, including those underlying WAPA's easement.

Based on the foregoing, this proposed project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts to any environmentally sensitive resource.

Signed:

Name: Kristen Dalldorf

Title: Environmental Manager