

# **WESTERN AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION**

## **CRSP MC**

### **Categorical Exclusion Determination**

**Proposed Action Title:** Letter Agreement; WAPA and Jemez Mountain Electric Cooperative to Fund the Upgrade and Construction of Transmission Lines and Related Electrical Facilities

**Program or Field Office:** CRSP MC

**Location(s):** San Juan County, New Mexico

**Description of Proposed Action:** As part of the Bureau of Reclamation's (Reclamation) Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, WAPA is entering into an agreement with Jemez Mountain Electric Cooperative (JMEC) to provide funding for JMEC to construct a small portion of this water project. The overall project has been addressed in a Reclamation EIS Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project Final Environmental Impact Statement, July, 2009. JEMC proposes to accomplish the following work with WAPA funding:

- Upgrade an existing transmission line to supply electrical power to Pumping Plant #2. The line upgrade will convert a 5-mile long, single phase line to a three-phase line. This line is located on land owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on an existing right of way (ROW).
- Construct a new transmission line of approximately one mile in length, located on BLM land to provide electrical power to an existing transformer/mini-substation that provides electrical service to a water treatment plant. This line begins at an existing service pole and will terminate at a yet-to-be constructed, Reclamation-owned electrical mini-substation that will provide electrical service for a Reclamation water treatment plant. The description of these Reclamation facilities and their expected impacts were included in Reclamation's EIS.

- **Provide for construction design, planning, studies necessary to environmental compliance for both the construction of the new line and the upgrade of the existing line and related electrical structures.**
- **Prepare an application for and receive any necessary permits from BLM for both lines and related structures.**

**WAPA's role in this action is limited to providing funding. Reclamation will own, operate, and maintain the new and upgraded facilities. Reclamation and the BLM will coordinate the development of the proposed project under the existing EIS. BLM will require NEPA-related studies (cultural resource and biological studies and/or surveys) for areas that would be disturbed by the proposed project, and will also likely require a Plan of Development. BLM will be the Federal land management agency affected by these actions and will determine permitting requirements and environmental protection measures in coordination with Reclamation. All necessary compliance and permitting work will be completed before construction of the project commences.**

**Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:** Subpart D of 10 CFR Part 1021 B4.13

*B4.13 Upgrading and rebuilding existing powerlines*

*Upgrading or rebuilding approximately 20 miles in length or less of existing electric powerlines, which may involve minor relocations of small segments of the powerlines.*

**X** The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D.

To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, 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 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 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 Part 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 listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

X There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

X The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. This 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 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

Based on my review of the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under DOE Order 451.1B), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the above specified class of action, and that the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

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**X** *S. Clayton Palmer*

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S. Clayton Palmer  
CRSP NEPA Compliance Officer

**Date Determined:**

May 5, 2017