

Project title:	Spring Creek-Keswick Fiber Optic Cable Installation		
Requested By:	Wilson Head	Mail Code :	N5500 Phone: 916-353-4779
Date Submitted:	9-21-2018	Date Required:	9-24-2018

Description of the Project:

Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), Sierra Nevada Region (SNR), markets and delivers electric power through transmission facilities in northern California. This process of marketing and delivering electric power requires a great deal of real time information transfer between locations, and WAPA uses fiber optic cables for some of this information transfer. One of these cables was positioned on the Keswick-Spring Creek 13.8-kV wood pole distribution line, and this line was destroyed by the Carr Fire in late July 2018. As part of its emergency response to the Carr fire, WAPA re-established the fiber optic communication link by installation of a replacement line on the existing 2.1-mile long Spring Creek-Keswick 230-kV transmission line. The project involved removing the existing (standard, non-optical) ground wire from this line and replacing it with an optical ground wire. Placement along this alignment utilized existing right-of-ways (ROWs) and allows for greater stability and reliability of the line. Installation of the cable was completed with the use of helicopters and was accomplished over the course of approximately two weeks. Helicopter landing was conducted within the fenced Keswick substation.

At the north end, the Spring Creek-Keswick line terminates into the Spring Creek Pumphouse. New fiber optic cable was run to the transformer deck at the Spring Creek Pumphouse and new cable was run from the transformer deck into the pumping plant using the existing cable entrance point. At the south end, the Spring Creek-Keswick line terminates at a bay in the Keswick substation; upon reaching this point, a short trench was excavated to convey the ground wire to the nearest cable tray. This trench was approximately 6' in length, 18" in depth and 4" wide, entirely within the fenced substation area.

As this project is part of an emergency response to the Carr Fire, the project was completed as soon as possible to restore service to the area.

Location of the Project:

The Spring Creek-Keswick line runs 2.1 miles from the Spring Creek Switchyard to the Keswick Substation, both near the town of Keswick, Shasta County, California. Land beneath the lines is managed by the Bureau of Reclamation and private landowners.

Work Order Number: 100423427

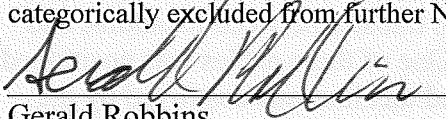
Action taken

Note: All Documentation is Attached

- ☒ Categorical Exclusion (CX)
- ☒ Integral Elements
- ☒ NEPA Attachment Sheet

- ☐ Minimization
- ☐ Other

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 meets the requirements for the categorical exclusion listed above. Therefore, I have determined that the proposed action may be categorically excluded from further NEPA review and documentation.



Gerald Robbins
Environment Supervisor

9/21/2018

Date

☒ Approved

CC: Requestor: Wilson Head	File Code:	Assigned to:	Project #: 100423427	Environmental Specialist: Michael Prowatzke Date: 9/21/18
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Western Area Power Administration Sierra Nevada Region	CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION (CX) DETERMINATION	Project Number: 100423427
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Integral Elements

Project Title: Spring Creek-Keswick Fiber Optic Cable Installation

Category of Action:

B4.7: Fiber optic cable

Adding fiber optic cables to transmission facilities or burying fiber optic cable in existing powerline or pipeline rights-of-way. Covered actions may include associated vaults and pulling and tensioning sites outside of rights-of-way in nearby previously disturbed or developed areas.

Regulatory Requirements for a Categorical Exclusion Determination: The Department of Energy (DOE), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Procedures, 10 CFR 1021.410(b) require the following determinations be made in order for a proposed action to be categorically excluded (see full text in regulation).

1. The proposed action fits within a class of action listed in Appendixes A and B to Subpart D. For classes of actions listed in Appendix B, the following conditions are integral elements; i.e., to fit within a class, the proposal must not:
 - a. Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, including requirements of DOE and/or Executive Orders.
 - b. Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities, but may include categorically excluded facilities.
 - c. Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products preexisting in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or un-permitted releases; or
 - d. Adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources (including but not limited to those listed in paragraph B (4)).
2. There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal which may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal;
3. 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 cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(2)), 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), The Western Area Power Administration (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 do not require preparation of either an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment (EA).

The proposed action meets the above regulatory criteria and there are no significant adverse environmental effects associated with this action.



**Western Area Power Administration,
SIERRA NEVADA REGION
NEPA Attachment Sheet**

**Project
Number:**

PROJECT TITLE:

Spring Creek-Keswick Fiber Optic Cable Installation

REVIEW ACTION AND RESULTS

WAPA proposes to install a fiber-optic cable on its existing 230-kV Spring Creek-Keswick transmission line.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The Spring Creek-Keswick transmission line lies within the burned area perimeter of the Carr fire at elevations ranging from approximately 580 to 800'. Habitat prior to the fire was primarily a mix of oak and chaparral pine, with a few intermittent creeks and small pockets of Great Valley forest interspersed. These habitats were largely destroyed by the fire.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

No sensitive biological resources were known in the project area prior to the Carr Fire. There were likely some active bird nests in the area, but none are expected to have survived.

MINIMIZATION MEASURES:

Crews have received annual environmental awareness training highlighting the sensitive resources of the area. There is limited potential for sensitive biological resources in the project area, but crews have been advised to contact environment department if they observe any sensitive resources.

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESULTS

This activity falls under the Programmatic Agreement Among The Western Area Power Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the California State Historic Preservation Officer Concerning Emergency and Routine Maintenance Activities at Western Facilities in California," revised 3/1/ 2010.

Stipulation II.5 of the PA states (Components of the Project):

This action is covered by Western's Programmatic Agreement, "Programmatic Agreement Among the Western Area Power Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the California State Historic Preservation Officer Concerning

Emergency and Routine Maintenance Activities at Western Facilities in California,” revised 3/1/ 2010.

This action will be included in WAPA’s annual report.

AIR QUALITY RESULTS

General Conformity Appendix B: Since the cited categorical exclusion is listed in Appendix B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D and since the project will generate emissions of criteria pollutants in a maintenance area, a general conformity review is required for this project, pursuant to Clean Air Act General Conformity Requirements and the National Environmental Policy Act Process guidance document published by Department of Energy in April, 2000. However, under 40 CFR 93.153(d)(2) and (e), a general conformity determination is not required for this project because it is a response to a an emergency, provided that the Federal agency taking the actions makes a written determination that, for a specified period not to exceed an additional 6 months, it is impractical to prepare the conformity analyses which would otherwise be required and the actions cannot be delayed due to overriding concerns for public health and welfare.

This categorical exclusion shall serve as the written determination that

- 1) It is impractical to prepare the conformity analyses which would be required, and
- 2) the project is anticipated to be complete within six months, and
- 3) the project to repair the transmission line is a response to an emergency which has been undertaken within hours of the emergency and which could not be delayed due to overriding concerns for public health and welfare.

Prevention of Air Pollution: In addition to complying with Federal and State air quality regulations, the project must also comply with Shasta County Air Quality Management District Rules, found here: <https://www.arb.ca.gov/drdb/sha/cur.htm>

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Recycled Materials Quantities: All materials generated from the project that can be recycled, shall be recycled. All quantities of recycled materials shall be submitted to Environment or COR by category within 30 days of recycling and prior to completion or project or submittal of final invoice as appropriate. Record quantities of material by category that is salvaged, recycled, reused, or reprocessed.

Disposal of Waste Material: Waste materials will be recycled or disposed in accordance with applicable Federal, State, and local regulations and ordinances. Coordinate with Environment and the COR regarding sampling and signatures on manifests for wastes if required. Submit quantities of total project waste material disposal as listed below to the COR or to Environment, as appropriate. The following information is collected and reported regularly.

- (1) Unregulated Wastes (i.e., trash): Volume in cubic yards or weight in pounds.

- (2) Hazardous or Universal Wastes: Weight in pounds.
- (3) PCB Wastes (If applicable): Weight in pounds.
- (4) Other regulated wastes (e.g., lead-based paint or asbestos): Weight in pounds (specify type of waste in report).