

**Categorical Exclusion Documentation**  
**Application for an overhead 12kV power line right-of-way**  
**AZAR 019018/ AZA 036033**  
**Rainbow Valley-El Paso Line**  
**DOI-BLM-AZ-P020-2012-014-CX**

**A. Background** BLM Office: *Lower Sonoran Field Office (LSFO)*

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: AZAR 019018/ AZA 036033

Proposed Action Title/Type: Conversion of existing right-of-way grant to Title V grant.

Applicant: Arizona Public Service

Project Code: LVRAA912AI38

Location of Proposed Action: T. 3S. R. 2W., sec 2, lot 1, SE1/4NE1/4, E1/2SE1/4; sec 11, E1/2E1/2; sec 13, NW1/4NW1/4NW1/4; sec 14, E1/2NE1/4.

Description of Proposed Action: The right-of-way grant for this 12kV distribution line was originally issued on April 10, 1959. Located approximately 15 miles southeast of Buckeye, the right-of-way crosses BLM land for a distance of 11,562 feet or 2.19 miles in length, by 15 feet in width, and is located along the east boundary line of sections 2, 11, and 14. On February 17, 1984, the grant was amended to include a 160 foot extension from section 14 into section 13 with 32 feet of the extension being located in section 14 and 128 feet of the extension lying in section 13. The extension is 15 feet in width. The extension provides power to a communications microwave site with the main line providing power to El Paso Natural Gas facilities.

**B. Land Use Plan Conformance**

Land Use Plan (LUP) Name: The Lower Gila South Resource Management Plan (as amended).

This proposed action has been reviewed for conformance with this plan (43 CFR 1610.5-3, BLM Manual 1601.04.C.2).

Date Approved/Amended: 6/1/1988

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s):

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s) (objectives, terms, and conditions):

The Lower Gila South Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (June 1988) states on page 11: "Lower Gila Resource Area processes a variety of lands actions in the Lower Gila South RMP/EIS area – rights-of-way, communication sites, easements, permits, and unauthorized occupancy. All lands cases would continue to be evaluated on a case by case basis".

Explain specific or implied decision: BLM agrees to reauthorize the right-of-way grant under Title V of the Federal Land Policy Management Act.

**C: Compliance with NEPA**

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with BLM NEPA Handbook H-1790-1, Appendix 4 or 516 Departmental Manual (DM) 11.9:

**E (11) : Conversion of existing rights-of-way grants to Title V grants or existing leases to FLPMA Section 302(b) leases where no new facilities or other changes are needed.**

A categorical exclusion (CX) is appropriate as there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in H-1790-1, Appendix 5 or 516 DM 2, Appendix 2 apply.

[NOTE: Appropriate staff should determine exception, comment, and initial for concurrence. If exceptions apply to the action or project, and existing NEPA documentation does not address it (i.e., Part III) then further NEPA analysis is required. Attachment 1 (BLM Categorical Exclusions: Extraordinary Circumstances), enclosed, is a checklist of each extraordinary circumstance and corresponding staff concurrence].

**D. Signature**

Review: *We have determined that the proposal is in accordance with CX criteria and that it would not involve any significant environmental effects (see Attachment 1). Therefore, it is categorically excluded from further environmental review.*

**Prepared by:** \_\_\_\_\_/S/\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Rice  
**Project Manager**

**Reviewed by:** \_\_\_\_\_/S/\_\_\_\_\_  
Leah Baker  
**Planning & Environmental Coordinator**

**Approved by:** \_\_\_\_\_/S/\_\_\_\_\_  
Emily Garber  
**Field Manager Lower Sonoran Field Office**

**E. Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact: Michael Rice, Project Manager APS Team, by phone 623-580-5646, e-mail [mrice@blm.gov](mailto:mrice@blm.gov), or the BLM Phoenix District Office address at 21605 N. 7th Avenue Phoenix, Arizona 85027.

**Note:** A separate decision document must be prepared for the action covered by the CX.

**F. Recommendation**

**Project Description:** The applicant has applied for a right-of-way seeking authorization for the continued use of an existing powerline ROW. The powerline provides power to El Paso Natural Gas facilities and a communications microwave site. If approved, the right-of-way would expire in 2038.

**Determination:** Based on a review of the project described above and field office staff recommendation in Attachment 1 (BLM Categorical Exclusions: Extraordinary Circumstances), I have determined the project is in conformance with the land use plan and is categorically excluded from further environmental analysis. I concur with the proposed action provided the right-of-way includes all of the relevant stipulations now being included in new right-of-way grants.

**Approved by:** \_\_\_\_\_/S/\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** 08/29/2012  
**Emily Garber**  
**Field Manager Lower Sonoran Field Office**

BLM Categorical Exclusions: Extraordinary Circumstances<sup>1</sup>  
**Attachment 1**

CRITERIA	<u>Comment (Y/N)</u>	<u>Staff Initial</u>
1. Have significant impacts on public health and safety?	<u>NO</u>	<u>MR</u>
2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness or wilderness study areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds (Executive Order 13186); and other ecologically significant or critical areas?	<u>NO</u>	<u>MR</u>
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)]?	<u>NO</u>	<u>MR</u>
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?	<u>NO</u>	<u>MR</u>
5. Establish a precedent for future action, or represent a decision in principle about future actions, with potentially significant environmental effects?	<u>NO</u>	<u>MR</u>
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant, environmental effects?	<u>NO</u>	<u>MR</u>
7. Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the Bureau or office?	<u>NO</u>	<u>MR</u>
8. Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species?	<u>NO</u>	<u>MR</u>
9. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners, or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007)?	<u>NO</u>	<u>MR</u>
10. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?	<u>NO</u>	<u>MR</u>

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11. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898)?      NO      MR
12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area, or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112)?      NO      MR

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<sup>1</sup> If an action has any of these impacts, you must conduct NEPA analysis.