

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

**Categorical Exclusion
ROW for Existing SDCE Power Line**

PREPARING OFFICE

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management



Categorical Exclusion ROW for Existing SDCE Power Line

DOI-BLM-CO-F02-0066 CX

**Prepared by
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Royal Gorge Field Office
Cañon City, CO**

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A. Background

BLM Office:

Royal Gorge Field Office, LLCOF02

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: COC-77174

Proposed Action Title/Type: Application for a right-of-way for an existing 7.2 kV electrical power distribution line.

Location of Proposed Action:

Chaffee County, CO

6th PM, T.15 S., R. 78 W., Section 10; Lot 1, NW1/4NE1/4.

Applicant: Sangre de Cristo Electric Association, Inc.

Description of Proposed Action: The BLM action is to respond to an application received from Sangre de Cristo Electric Association, Inc. (SDCE). SDCE has requested a right-of-way grant to operate and maintain an existing overhead 7.2 kV electrical power distribution line. No additional improvements have been proposed. The ROW is proposed as is, 20 feet wide and crosses 945 feet of public land.

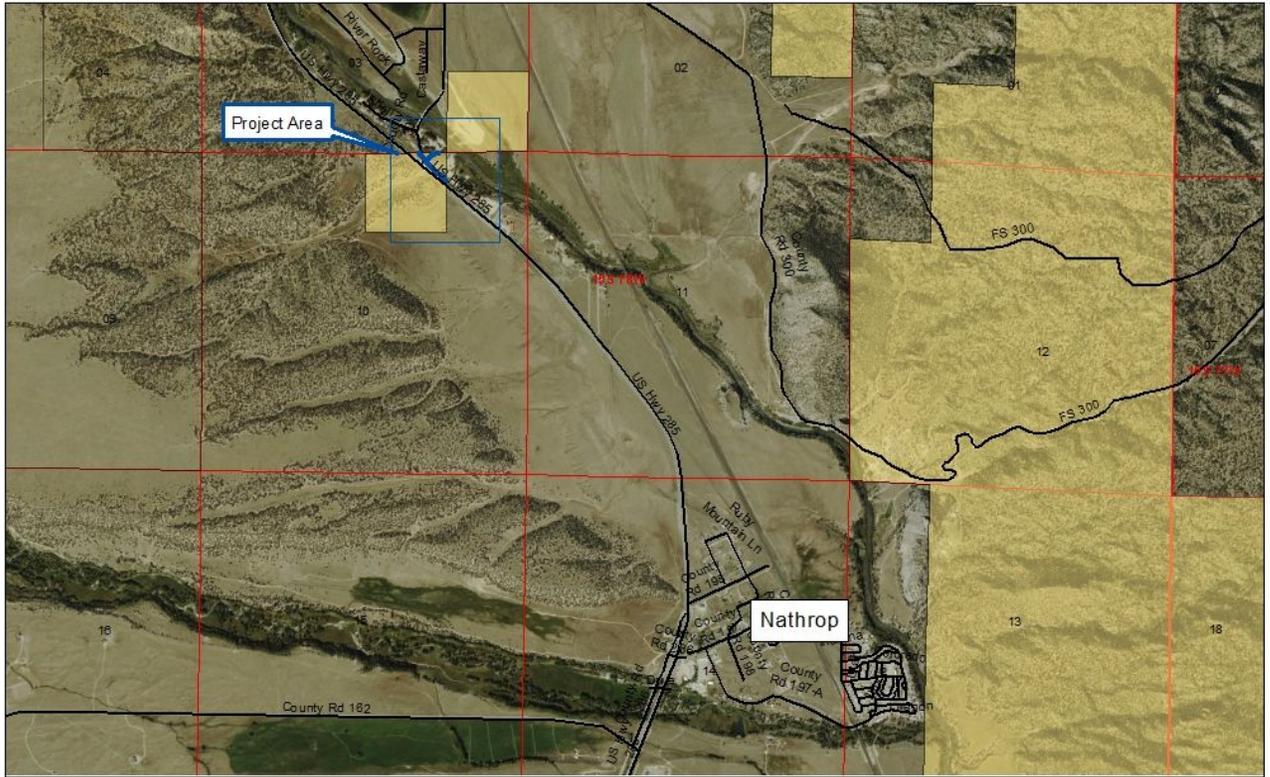


Exhibit B-1, COC-77174
Power Line Right-of-Way
6th PM, T. 15 S., R. 78 W., Sec 10: NW1/4NE1/4.

- Legend
- T15S_78W_SEC10_1PH_PI_Easement_Centerline
 - T15S_78W_SEC10_3PH_PI_Easement_Centerline
 - T15S_78W_SEC10_UNIMPROVED_ACCESS_Easement_Centerline
 - BLM
 - Private



Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid,



Exhibit B-2, COC-77174
 Power Line Right-of-Way
 6th PM, T. 15 S., R. 78 W., Sec 10: NW1/4NE1/4.

- Legend**
- T15S_78W_SEC10_1PH_Pi_Easement_Centerline
 - T15S_78W_SEC10_3PH_Pi_Easement_Centerline
 - T15S_78W_SEC10_UNIMPROVED_ACCESS_Easement_Centerline
 - BLM
 - Private



Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name:

Name of Plan: Royal Gorge Resource Management Plan

Date Approved: May 1996

Decision Number: C-116

Decision Language: Authorize minor ROWs on a case-by-case basis utilizing criteria for ROW objectives in each specific eco-region.

Date Approved/Amended: May 1996

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s): C-116

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) :

C. Compliance with NEPA:

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 2, Appendix 1, or 516 DM 11.9,

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because 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 516 DM 2 apply.

I considered:

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: This proposed action is listed as a Categorical Exclusion in DOI Departmental Manual Part 516 Chapter 11 9 (E16). None of the following exceptions in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, apply.

Table 1.1. Exclusion Criteria

Exclusion Criteria	YES	NO
1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; lands with wilderness characteristics; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands; floodplains; national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		X
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.		X
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
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.		X
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.		X
9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations.		X
11. 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.		X
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.		X

Table 1.2. Interdisciplinary Team Review

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM REVIEW			
NAME	TITLE	AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY	Initials/date
Lara Duran	Wildlife Biologist	Terrestrial Wildlife, T&E, Migratory Birds	LD, 8/13/15
Jeff Williams	Range Management Spec.	Range, Vegetation, Farmland	JW, 7/29/15
John Lamman	Range Management Spec.	Weeds	JL, 8/7/2015
Dave Gilbert	Fisheries Biologist	Aquatic Wildlife, Riparian/Wetlands	DG, 8/6/2015
Melissa Smeins	Geologist	Minerals, Paleontology, Waste Hazardous or Solid	MJS, 8/7/2015
John Smeins	Hydrologist	Hydrology, Water Quality/Rights, Soils	JS, 7/24/15
Ty Webb	Fire Management Officer	Air Quality	TW, 7/27/15
Dave Parker	Cadastral Surveyor	Cadastral Survey	
Linda Skinner	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation, Wilderness, LWCs, Visual, ACEC, W&S Rivers,	LS, 7/28/15
Ken Reed	Forester	Forestry	KR, 7/24/15
Monica Weimer	Archaeologist	Cultural, Native American	MMW, 1/4/16
Rich Rotte	Realty Specialist	Realty	RAR, 7/22/15
Steve Cunningham	Law Enforcement Ranger	Law Enforcement	NA
Ty Webb	Fire Management Officer	Fire	TW, 7/27/15

REMARKS:

Cultural Resources: Although cultural resources were found near the area of potential effect (see report CR-RG-15-66 P), no sites determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) were found. Therefore, the proposed project will have no effect on any historic properties (those eligible for the NRHP).

Native American Religious Concerns: No possible traditional cultural properties were located during the cultural resources inventory (see above). There is no other known evidence that suggests the project area holds special significance for Native Americans.

Threatened and Endangered Species: Of the federally listed threatened, endangered and proposed species that occur in Chaffee County, suitable habitat does not occur within 1/4 mile of the action area for Mexican spotted owl, piping plover, Uncompahgre fritillary butterfly, and Canada lynx. There would be direct or indirect effects to federally listed threatened, endangered or proposed species or their habitats. There would be no cumulative effects to these species or their habitats. Therefore, there would be NO EFFECT to federally listed threatened, endangered or proposed species. There is no need to consult with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. No mitigation measures would be necessary.

BLM Sensitive, Migratory Bird and Terrestrial Wildlife Species: Suitable habitat for Gunnison's prairie dog, Townsend's big-eared bat, fringed myotis and golden eagle occurs within 1/4 mile of the existing powerline. Gunnison's prairie dog colony and a golden eagle nest are present, but since the powerline is existing, those individual animals acclimated to that structure and use. The right of way renewal would not change use of that space by those species. Forage and prey would persist. Reproductive habitats would not change. Therefore, there would be NO EFFECT to Gunnison's prairie dog, Townsend's big-eared bat, fringed myotis and golden eagle from the proposed renewal. Similarly, the renewal of the existing powerline right of way

would not have an effect on migratory birds or terrestrial wildlife utilizing that space. There would be no cumulative effects to BLM sensitive, terrestrial wildlife or migratory bird species or their habitats from this project.

Wastes, Hazardous or Solid: If the project involves oil or fuel usage, transfer or storage, an adequate spill kit and shovels are required to be onsite during project implementation. The project proponent will be responsible for adhering to all applicable local, State and Federal regulations in the event of a spill, which includes following the proper notification procedures in BLM's Spill Contingency Plan.

D. Approval and Contact Information

COMPLIANCE PLAN (optional):

NAME OF PREPARER: Rich Rotte

SUPERVISORY REVIEW: Jay Raifoed

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: /s/ Martin Weimer

DATE: 1/5/16

DECISION AND RATIONALE: I have reviewed this Categorical Exclusion and have decided to implement the Proposed Action.

This action is listed in the Department Manual as an action that may be categorically excluded. I have evaluated the action relative to the 10 criteria listed above and have determined that it does not represent an exception and is, therefore, categorically excluded from further environmental analysis.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:

/s/ Keith E. Berger

Keith E. Berger, Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 1/6/16