

APPENDIX A

MITIGATION ACTION PLAN

MITIGATION ACTION PLAN

for the

**MODIFICATION AND CONSTRUCTION OF TRANSMISSION
LINES FOR THE U.S. HOOVER DAM BYPASS PROJECT –
PHASE II, HOOVER DAM AND BOULDER CITY, NEVADA**

(DOE/EA-1478)

WESTERN AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION

October 2003

Western Area Power Administration

Mitigation Action Plan

1.0 HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The Western Area Power Administration (Western) prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) (DOE/EA-1478) for the Modification and Construction of Transmission Lines for the U.S. Hoover Dam Bypass Project, referred to as Phase II (Project). Based on the EA, Western has determined that the proposed Project would not result in any significant environmental impacts, and the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) will not be required. The basis for this determination is described in the Finding of No Significant Impact issued in October 2003.

Western proposes to double-circuit a portion of the Hoover-Mead #5 and #7 230-kV Transmission Lines with the Henderson-Hoover 230-kV Transmission Line newly renamed Henderson-Mead #1. The double circuiting will be in the area of Hoover Dam and Mead Substation. In addition, a fiber optic cable will be placed extending from the Hoover Power Plant to Mead Substation mainly carried along on the new double-circuited structures. The modifications and construction to the transmission lines and placement of the fiber optic cable would be completed in 2004. A number of environmental protection measures are included with the proposed action to minimize potential adverse environmental effects.

The requirements for preparing a Mitigation Action Plan (MAP) are specified in 10 CFR part 1021 (Section 331(b), Department of Energy National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures). These guidelines state that DOE shall prepare a MAP for commitments to mitigations that are essential to render the impacts of a proposed action not significant. The guidelines further state that the MAP shall also explain how mitigation will be planned and implemented. The EA analyzed the impacts of the proposed Project. Western has determined that five mitigation measures are essential to render the impacts of the proposed action not significant: 1) mitigating impacts to historic facilities, 2) avoiding and mitigating impacts to archaeological sites during construction, 3) avoiding and monitoring for the Mojave Desert tortoise, 4) avoiding and monitoring for the Gila monster, and 5) avoiding and monitoring for the peregrine falcon.

2.0 FUNCTION AND ORGANIZATION OF THE MITIGATION ACTION PLAN

The following sections describe the plans and actions by which Western will implement and verify mitigation action commitments described above.

Section 3.0 describes the monitoring and verification of mitigation actions and the reporting requirements. Section 4.0 describes the mitigation commitments and action plans for the Project. The commitment to the mitigation is presented along with an action plan composed of the tasks, responsible party, and schedule anticipated for the mitigation.

3.0 MITIGATION ACTION PLAN MONITORING AND REPORTING SYSTEM

Section 5.d. (11) (f) of DOE Order 451.1B, National Environmental Policy Act Compliance Program, requires Western to report MAP activities in its Annual Site Environmental Report (Annual Report), published by January 31 of each year. The Annual Report will reflect new information or changed circumstances. If major changes to mitigation included in this MAP are necessary, these changes will be described in the Annual Report. The Annual Report will be made available to the public.

A member of Western’s environmental staff will verify mitigation results and determine if the mitigation actions achieved their intended purpose. Existing organizational and administrative controls will be used to gather information regarding implementation and status of mitigation actions. Such controls include applicable reporting systems, inspection, and verification. The results of inspection and verification will be reported on the anniversary of the MAP in the Annual Report. When mitigation actions are completed and verified, the information will be included in the Annual Report.

4.0 MITIGATION COMMITMENTS AND ACTION PLANS

Mitigation practices were defined for the Project in the EA and were considered during the assessment of impacts of the Project. Measures not addressed as part of this MAP will be implemented as part of Western’s standard business and environmental program practices.

Table 4.1 outlines the mitigation measures to reduce impacts to less than significant and action items necessary to assure the mitigation is implemented to protect important cultural resource sites (archaeological and historical), and sensitive wildlife species (Mojave Desert tortoise, Gila monster and peregrine falcon).

TABLE 4.1 MITIGATION MEASURES		WESTERN ACTIONS NEEDED TO AVOID SIGNIFICANT IMPACT.
Cultural Resources (archaeological)	Sites subject to impacts from construction activities would be monitored during structure replacement and fiber optic installation activities. Archaeological and Tribal monitors will be used to ensure that the two newly recorded prehistoric sites eligible to the National Register of Historic Places are avoided and project activities are modified to mitigate any impact.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Western will assure an Archaeological monitor and Tribal monitor will present pre-construction training to all project construction crews, explaining the importance of the sites and the reason for protecting and respecting these sites and similar sites within the area. 2. Site 26CK6725 is a multiple rock ring site. Western will require that project activities, personnel and equipment will not access the site other than to allow the construction contractor to place a rope on the ground during the conductor pulling process. The rope may be laid across the site, but not pulled. The rope will be placed by hand under the supervision of an archaeological monitor.

TABLE 4.1 MITIGATION MEASURES		WESTERN ACTIONS NEEDED TO AVOID SIGNIFICANT IMPACT.
		<p>3. Site 26CK6726 is a monolith rock shelter. Western will require that project activities, personnel and equipment will not access the site except under supervision of the archaeological monitor. The structure due for replacement <u>will not</u> be accessed by the current spur access road but rather, a new spur access road that will be constructed from the northeast toward the existing access road. Development, use and rehabilitation of the new spur access road will be supervised by the archaeological monitor and a tribal monitor. The new access spur road will be approximately 80 feet long and 12 feet wide. Fill from an approved area will be brought in to create the new spur access road and will not be pulled from the adjoining areas. Western's construction contractor will be using a large crane to remove sections of the current structure tower. These sections will be unbolted and lowered to ground level away from the rock shelter site in order to complete the remaining disassembly. The reverse will occur for the placement of the new monopole structure. The sections will be assembled at ground level away from the rock shelter and the crane will move the structure sections into place.</p>
Cultural Resource (historical)	Historic facilities subject to impacts from construction will be mitigated through documentation.	<p>1. Western will assure that the Hoover-Mead #5 and #7 230-kV Transmission Lines will be documented in the amended Historic American Engineering Record for Hoover Dam and a draft provided to the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office.</p>
Wildlife (Mohave Desert tortoise)	Protection of the Mojave Desert tortoise. Western and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have identified areas of tortoise habitat the southern 5.2 miles of the project area. This area will be surveyed and monitored for the present of the Mojave Desert tortoise during this project so as to reduce possible harm or injury to the Mojave Desert tortoise.	<p>1. Western will assure that a qualified tortoise biologist will train all project personnel prior to access to the project area on the identification, habitat, and protection measures employed for this project to ensure that desert tortoises are not inadvertently harmed.</p> <p>2. A qualified tortoise biologist will conduct preconstruction surveys prior to the start of project activities at each work location to include but not limited to pad sites, staging areas and access routes anytime during the year.</p>

TABLE 4.1 MITIGATION MEASURES		WESTERN ACTIONS NEEDED TO AVOID SIGNIFICANT IMPACT.
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. A qualified tortoise biologist will be present for survey and monitoring from March 15-October 15 (active season) during surface-disturbing activities to ensure that desert tortoises are not inadvertently harmed. 4. A qualified tortoise biologist will be on-call for survey and monitoring from October 16-March 14 (inactive season) during surface disturbing activities to ensure that desert tortoises are not inadvertently harmed. 5. Herbicides shall not be used in the project area. 6. Vehicular traffic shall be restricted to existing access roads and new constructed access spur roads or those approved by Western in consultation with the USFWS. 7. Vehicles shall not exceed 15 miles per hour speed limit on non-public access roads. 8. All project activities will be confined to designated areas and blading of vegetation shall only occur in limited areas designated for that purpose by the qualified tortoise biologist. 9. All litter shall be restricted to disposal in covered raven-proof trash receptacles and the trash removed daily. 10. Fully implement all measures, including the reasonable and prudent measures, terms and conditions, reporting requirements, and reinitiation requirements in the biological opinion issued October 22, 2003 by the USFWS.
Wildlife (Gila monster)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Western will ensure implementation of the "Gila Monster Protocol for Minimizing Impacts on Construction Sites," by the biological monitor on-site for the Mojave Desert tortoise.
Wildlife (peregrine falcon)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Western will coordinate with the Federal Highway Administration on a monitoring program and restrict construction during the breeding season if an active peregrine falcon nest is located within one-quarter mile of the project area.