



# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF RECLAMATION  
Phoenix Area Office  
6150 West Thunderbird Road  
Glendale, AZ 85306-4001  
DEC 29 2022

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
PXAO-1500  
2.1.4.17

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL AND U.S. MAIL

Subject: Notice of Availability (NOA) – Final Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on the Proposed Babbitt Ranch Energy Center Interconnection Project – Coconino County, Arizona

Dear Interested Party:

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has prepared a Final EA and FONSI, to analyze the potential environmental effects of NextEra Energy Resources, LLC's proposed interconnection of the Babbitt Ranch Energy Center (BREC) to the Navajo Southern Transmission System (NSTS) at the Moenkopi to Cedar Mountain 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission line, referred to as the BREC Interconnection Project. Reclamation is a part owner of the NSTS and must approve large generator interconnection requests to the NSTS (i.e., the Proposed Action).

The Final EA considers the impacts of Reclamation's approval of the interconnection at the Moenkopi to Cedar Mountain transmission line. Reclamation has determined that the proposed project does not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, and therefore an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This determination is recorded in a FONSI. The Final EA and FONSI can be viewed at: <https://www.usbr.gov/lc/phoenix/index.html>. A paper copy or CD can be obtained by calling Reclamation at (623) 773-6422 or by emailing Ms. Kelly Bergin at [kbergin@usbr.gov](mailto:kbergin@usbr.gov).

Reclamation initially solicited input from the public on the proposed project to assist in identifying key issues and defining the scope of the project and environmental analysis. On June 8, 2022, Reclamation sent scoping letters to 159 potentially interested individuals, stakeholders, Tribes, and organizations and announced public scoping via a newspaper notice and internet publications. Within the 30-day scoping period, Reclamation received eight comments letters.

Following scoping, Reclamation issued a Draft EA that presented the proposed project, existing conditions in the project area, and the environmental effects that would be reasonably expected from implementing the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative. The Draft EA was released on September 1, 2022, initiating a 30-day public comment period. Reclamation sent a NOA of the Draft EA to all entities on the mailing list and any commenters from scoping. The NOA and Draft EA were also advertised in the Arizona Daily Sun, on Reclamation's website, and on the Forest Service's website (a cooperating agency). Three comment letters or emails were received during the comment period, and the final EA was amended appropriately.

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INTERIOR REGION 8 • LOWER COLORADO BASIN

ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA\*, NEVADA\*

\* PARTIAL

For any additional information regarding this matter, please contact Ms. Kelly Bergin, Environmental Protection Specialist, Bureau of Reclamation Phoenix Area Office, at (623) 773-6422 or via email at [kbergin@usbr.gov](mailto:kbergin@usbr.gov). Thank you for your help and cooperation with this project.

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Sincerely,

ALEXANDE  
R SMITH  Digitally signed by  
ALEXANDER SMITH  
Date: 2022.12.23  
08:43:03 -07'00'

Alexander B. Smith  
Area Manager