

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**Missouri to Iowa Transmission Line  
Clark and Lewis counties, Missouri and Lee County, Iowa**

**Rural Utilities Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture**

**Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative**

**Prepared by:  
Engineering and Environmental Staff  
Rural Utilities Service**

**March 2025**

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative plans to submit a financing request to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service (RUS) to construct the proposed Missouri to Iowa Transmission Line (Project) in Clark and Lewis counties, Missouri and Lee County, Iowa. RUS is considering this financing request. Prior to taking a federal action (i.e., providing financial assistance), RUS is required to complete an environmental analysis in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. §§ 4321–4347), the Council on Environmental Quality’s (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and RD’s NEPA implementing regulations, Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970). After completing an independent analysis of an environmental report prepared by Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative and its consultant, RUS concurred with its scope and content. In accordance with 7 CFR § 1970.102, RUS will adopt the report and issue it as the Agency’s Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed Project. RUS finds that the EA is consistent with federal regulations and meets the standards for an adequate assessment. Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative published newspaper notices, announcing the availability of the EA for public review, in accordance with 7 CFR § 1970.102. In addition, RUS considers the proposed Project an undertaking subject to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), 16 USC 470(f), and its implementing regulation, “Protection of Historic Properties” (36 CFR Part 800).

## **B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE/NEED**

The overall purpose of the Project is to construct the Missouri to Iowa Transmission Line Project. Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative proposes to construct approximately 58 miles of electric transmission line from Lewis County to Lee County. The Project will rebuild 52 miles with 5.5 new miles of transmission line. It will include improvements and expansion at the existing Winchester Substation. The proposed Project will provide increased energy in the community. RUS has reviewed the purpose and need for the Project and determined that the proposal will meet the RUS purpose and need.

## **C. ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED**

### **1. No Action**

Under the No Action Alternative, RUS will not provide financial assistance to Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative, and/or the proposed Project will not be constructed. This alternative will not assist Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative in providing electricity to rural residents.

## **2. Action Alternative (Preferred Alternative)**

Under the Action Alternative, RUS will consider financing the proposed Project, and Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative will construct approximately 58 miles of electric transmission line from Lewis County, Missouri to Lee County, Iowa. The Project will rebuild 52 miles with 5.5 new miles of transmission line. It will include improvements and expansion at the existing Winchester Substation. The proposed Project will provide increased energy in the community.

## **3. Alternatives Eliminated from Further Consideration**

In addition to the No Action Alternative and Action Alternative, Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative considered other technology and siting alternatives, which are documented in the Alternatives section of the EA: alternate routes.

## **D. SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

The analysis in the EA documented that the proposed Project will have no adverse effects to land use, farmland, floodplains, wetlands, water and coastal resources, biological resources, cultural resources and historic properties, aesthetics, air quality, socioeconomics, noise, transportation, human health and safety, and corridors. In accordance with the requirements of § 1970.104(b), a summary of anticipated impacts on the human environment is provided below, including any mitigation measures deemed necessary to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts. Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative is responsible for implementing these measures.

There are no federal lands or formally classified lands within the Project. The Project is exempt from the provisions of the Farmland Protection Policy Act. The Project will have no impact to formally classified lands or important farmland.

The Project substation and route are outside of the floodplain. There are no wetlands at the substation, while the line poles will be placed in positions that avoid wetland impact. The Project area will not impact water resources (including sole source aquifers) or coastal resources. The Project will have no significant impact to floodplains, wetlands, water resources, or coastal resources.

The Project may affect, not likely to adversely affect federally listed or proposed bat species. It will have no effect to other federally listed, proposed, or candidate species. There are no critical habitats or suitable eagle habitat within the Project area. Most of the Project route is rebuilding existing lines in established rights-of-way. The Project will conduct tree removal outside the bat maternity roost season of October 1 to March 31. The Project will have no significant impact to biological resources.

A cultural resources survey was completed in the Project Area of Potential Effect (APE). Consultation was conducted with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and Indian Tribes. The Project will use avoidance and minimization conditions to avoid impacting archeological sites during construction. The Project will not adversely affect historic properties and cultural resources.

The Project area is in attainment for criteria air pollutants. The Project will not negatively affect socio-economic issues. The Project may have temporary impacts during construction to aesthetics, noise, and transportation. The Project line pole placement will avoid the known former superfund site near the route. The Project will have no significant impact to aesthetics, air quality, socioeconomics, noise, transportation, and human health and safety.

#### **E. PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT**

A local newspaper advertisement, announcing the availability of the EA and participation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, was published on March 7, 8 & 11, 2025, in The Daily Democrat, Lee County, Iowa. A copy of the EA was available for public review at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/resources/environmental-studies/assessment/missouri-iowa-transmission-line>. The 14-day comment period ended on March 20, 2025. RUS received no comments on the EA during the public comment period.

#### **F. FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

Based on its EA, RUS has concluded that the proposed Project will have no significant effects to land use, farmland, floodplains, wetlands, water and coastal resources, biological resources, cultural resources and historic properties, aesthetics, air quality, socioeconomics, noise, transportation, human health and safety, and corridors. The proposed Project will have no effects on historic properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and no effects to federally listed species or designated critical habitat.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, as amended, the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations, and RD's Environmental Policies and Procedures, RUS has determined that the environmental impacts of the proposed Project have been adequately addressed and that no significant impacts to the quality of the human environment will result from construction and operation of the proposed Project. Any final action by RUS related to the proposed Project will be subject to, and contingent upon, compliance with all relevant federal and state environmental laws and regulations. Because RUS action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, RUS will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for its potential federal action associated with the proposed Project.

#### **G. LOAN REVIEW AND RIGHT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW**

This FONSI is not a decision on a loan application and therefore not an approval of the expenditure of federal funds. Issuance of the FONSI and its notices concludes RUS's environmental review process. The ultimate decision on loan approval depends upon conclusion of this environmental review process in addition to financial and engineering reviews. Issuance of the FONSI and publication of notices will allow for these reviews to proceed. The decision to provide financial assistance also is subject to the availability of loan funds for the designated purpose in RUS's budget. There are no provisions to appeal this FONSI or the agency's other environmental determinations. Legal challenges to the FONSI may be filed in Federal District Court under the Administrative Procedures Act.

#### **H. APPROVAL**

This Finding of No Significant Impact is effective upon signature.

Dated:

**CHRISTOPHER  
MCLEAN**

 Digitally signed by CHRISTOPHER  
MCLEAN  
Date: 2025.03.21 15:05:32 -04'00'

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#### **Contact Person**

For additional information on this FONSI and EA, please contact Terry Czerwien, Environmental Protection Specialist, at [terry.czerwien@usda.gov](mailto:terry.czerwien@usda.gov).