

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Development

Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA

ACTION: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to a request for possible financing assistance to Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative for the construction of the Missouri to Iowa Transmission Line project from Lewis County, Missouri to Lee County, Iowa.

FURTHER INFORMATION: To obtain copies of the Environmental Assessment (EA) and FONSI, or for further information, contact: Environmental and Historic Preservation Division, USDA Rural Development, Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20250-1570. The EA and FONSI are also available for public review at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/resources/environmental-studies/assessment/missouri-iowa-transmission-line>. Questions and comments should be emailed to RUS at RUSPublicComments@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The proposed project consists of construction of 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. Alternatives considered by RUS and Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative include: No action; alternate routes. The alternatives are discussed in the Missouri to Iowa Transmission Line EA. The RUS has reviewed and approved the EA for the proposed project.

The availability of the EA for public review was announced via notice in the following newspapers: The Daily Democrat on March 7, 8 & 11, 2025. A 14-day comment period was announced in the newspaper notice. The EA was also available for public review at the USDA Rural Development website, as well the Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative office. No comments were received during the public comment period.

Based on its EA and mitigation commitments made by Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative, and public comments received, RUS has concluded that the project will have no significant impact to water quality, wetlands, floodplains, land use, aesthetics, transportation, or human health and safety.

The proposed project will have no adverse effect on resources listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Agency has also concluded that the proposed project is not likely to affect federally listed threatened and endangered species or designated critical habitat thereof.

No other potential significant impacts resulting from the proposed project have been identified. Therefore, RUS has determined that this FONSI fulfills its obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 4321–4347), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR §§ 1500-1508), and USDA Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970) for its action related to the project.

RUS is satisfied that the environmental impacts of the proposed project have been adequately addressed. RUS's potential federal action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, and as such it will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for its action related to the proposed project.

Dated: March 27, 2025