

Dec 14th 2014

PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO PREPARE A PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (PEA)

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is providing notice of its intent to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) to evaluate utility projects in the State of Colorado. We provide this notice to advise other Federal and State agencies, Native American tribes, non-governmental organizations, and the public of our intention as well as to obtain suggestions and information on the scope of issues to consider during the PEA planning process. These actions are part of our effort to comply with the general provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); NEPA regulations; other Federal laws, regulations, and Executive Orders; and our policies for compliance with those laws and regulations including 44 C.F.R. Parts 9 and 10.

Our PEA will focus on numerous utilities located in Colorado that require repair, replacement, restoration, or relocation as a result of damages sustained during disaster events. A “utility” supplies a community with electricity, gas, water, or sewage services. In an effort to restore these utilities or mitigate from future events, FEMA (and other agencies) may provide funds for expansion, enlargement, and other upgrades along with replacement, relocation, or changes in materials. The purpose of the PEA is to provide an assessment of the expected environmental impacts associated with implementing these projects. More specifically, it will address the purpose and need of the proposed projects, project alternatives considered, affected environment, environmental consequences, and impact of mitigation measures. The PEA would not address site-specific impacts, which would be evaluated prior to project approval.

The projects would be performed within existing rights of way to the extent practicable. However, because disaster events may have disrupted original footprints there will be situations that warrant upgrading a site to meet existing codes and standards or to address conditions that have changed since the original construction. All Federally-funded projects will be completed in compliance with applicable Federal, tribal, state and local laws, regulations, Executive Orders, etc. Some specific items of work may include, but not be limited to:

- Placement of temporary crossings, utilities, staging areas, access, and safety features.
- Repair, replacement, and relocation of production, transmission, and treatment facilities in order to provide communities with utility services.
- Construction, excavation, trenching, and directional boring to allow repair, replacement, and relocation of utilities and ancillary facilities.
- Upsizing, encasing, armoring, and upgrading utilities to improve function and protect from future events.
- Repair and reconstruction of adjacent roadway and other connected infrastructure necessary to restore function.
- Operating equipment within waterways to allow repair, replacement, and relocation of utilities.

The comment period for the proposed PEA will remain open for two weeks following publication of this notice. After gathering public comments, FEMA will develop a draft PEA that will be available for public review and comment according to [44 CFR Part 10](#).

You can obtain more detailed information about the proposed PEA from Steven Hardegen, FEMA Region VIII, Regional Environmental Officer, Denver, CO steven.hardegen@fema.gov.

Comments should be made in writing to the FEMA point of contact listed above and post-marked within fourteen (14) days of publication of this notice.