Final Environmental Assessment

Neodesha Substation Project

City of Neodesha

Wilson County, Kansas

FEMA-1711-DR-KS

June 2009

FEMA

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
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NEODESHA SUBSTATION PROJECT

NEODESHA, WILSON COUNTY, KANSAS

FINAL

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

9221 WARD PARKWAY, SUITE 300

KANSAS CITY, MO 64114-3372

JUNE 2009

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CO	carbon monoxide
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ESA	Environmental Site Assessment
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FPPA	Farmland Protection Policy Act
KCC	Kansas Corporation Commission
KDHE	Kansas Department of Health and Environment
KDWP	Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NO_2	nitrogen dioxide
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
O_3	ozone
PCB	polychlorinated biphenyls
pCi/L	picoCuries per liter
PM_{10}	particulate matter with a diameter less than or equal to 10 micrometers
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SO_2	sulfur dioxide
SWP2	Stormwater Pollution Prevention
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USCB	U.S. Census Bureau
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey

1.0 INTRODUCTION

As a result of severe storms and flooding in Kansas between June 26 and July 25, 2007, a major disaster was declared under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. § 5121-5206 (the Stafford Act). The disaster was designated as FEMA-1711-DR. The City of Neodesha is located between the Fall River and the Verdigris River, during this storm event the Fall River overtopped its banks and flooded Neodesha's power plant which is located in the 100-year floodplain. The electrical distribution controls were severely damaged and 500 customers were without power for seven days (J.D. Cox, City Administrator, city of Neodesha, phone conversation, March 31, 2009).

As a result of damage sustained from the flooding, the City of Neodesha has applied for funding under the Public Assistance Program administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In accordance with the Stafford Act, FEMA is required to review the environmental effects of the proposed action prior to making a funding decision. In accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 10, FEMA has prepared this environmental assessment to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and the Council on Environmental Quality's implementing regulations at 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508. The purpose of this environmental assessment is to analyze and assess the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

2.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

The original power plant was substantially damaged by the storms and flooding between June 30th and July 2nd. A damage assessment indicated that the repair and replacement of the engines within the power plant would cost approximately $12-13 million. Due to the high cost associated with restoring and elevating the facility out of the 100-year floodplain, the city of Neodesha has decided to apply to FEMA to use the eligible funds for an alternate project. The damaged power plant will no longer be used. Currently, the city of Neodesha provides power to its residents via a single 69kV radical feed transmission line coming into the city from the east. This transmission line is the only line coming into the city of Neodesha, therefore an accident or damage upstream along the transmission line can cause power outages across the entire community. The city has experienced complete blackouts several times in the past few years due to problems upstream of the city ranging from simple faults on the line near Cherryvale, to a pole falling in the river, to an upgrade of the substation near Altoona.

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide a reliable power source to the residents of Neodesha on a higher quality electric distribution line. The city's ability to provide electrical services would be improved by the increased capacity from the additional electrical feed, thus allowing the city to divide residential and industrial electric load between the east and west feeds. In the event of an outage on either the west or east feed, the city would have the ability to provide electricity to the entire community by simply flipping a switch to connect to the other feed.

3.0 ALTERNATIVES

3.1 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND DISMISSED

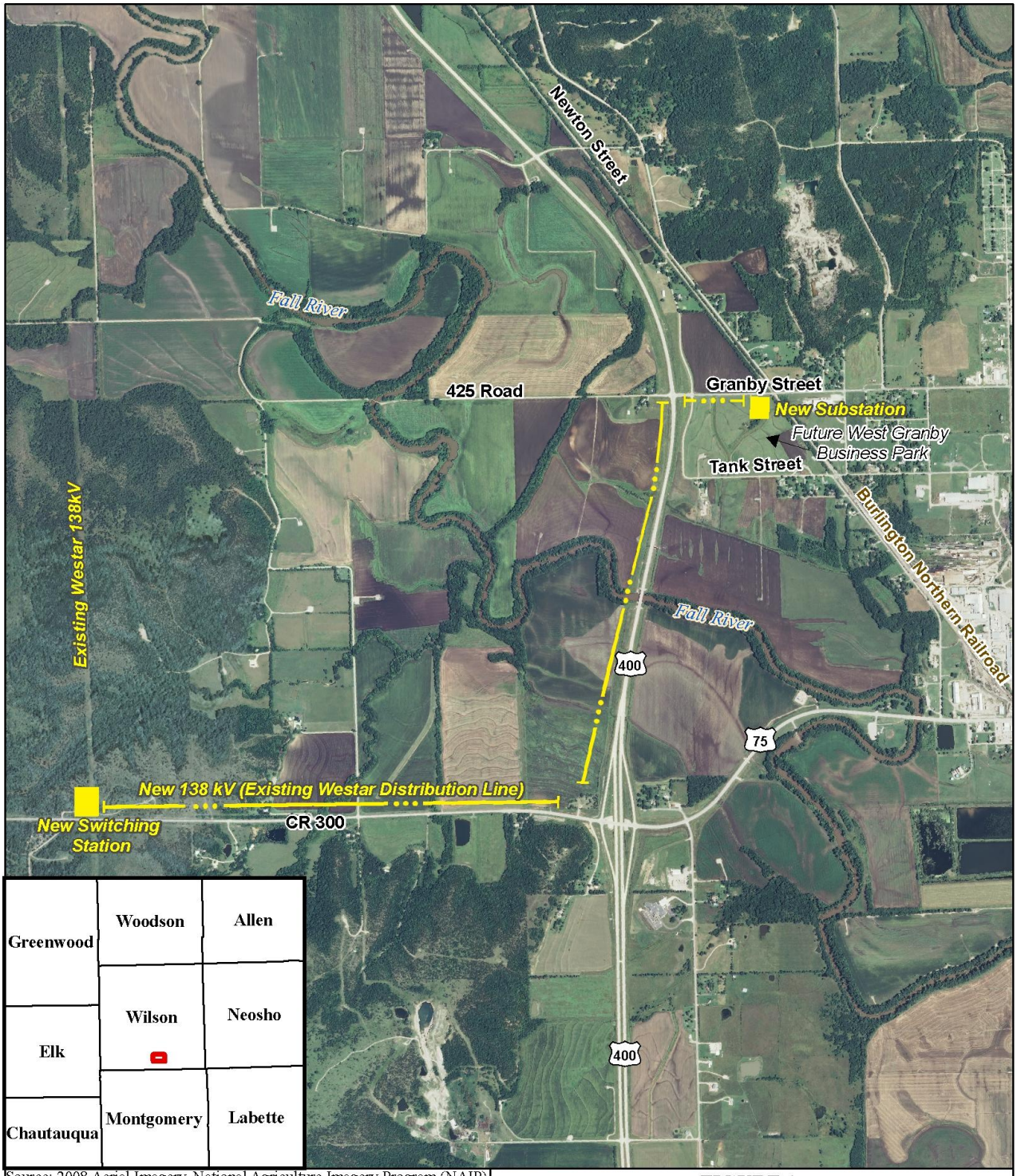
One option was to restore the damaged power plant located near Fall River. This option was considered but dismissed due to the estimated cost of $12-13 million to repair and replace the damaged engines within the power plant. Another reason for not repairing the existing power plant is that it is located within 100-year floodplain of Fall River. There were several routes for the transmission line and locations for the switching station and substation that were considered and dismissed based on poor accessibility to the site and high costs. The city of Neodesha, along with FEMA, determined that the most cost effective solution was the proposed action which is discussed in detail below.

3.2 NO ACTION

The No Action alternative would not construct the switching station, transmission line or substation. Under this scenario, the city of Neodesha would continue to provide power to its residents via a single transmission line. Any problems that may arise upstream of the city could cause city-wide power outages. The No Action alternative does not provide a reliable power source to the residents of Neodesha.

3.3 PROPOSED ACTION

A new 138kV switching station (300 feet x 200 feet) would be constructed in the existing Westar 138 kV transmission line right-of-way. A 3.2 mile 138 kV transmission line would be constructed from the switching station to West Granby Business Park. The transmission line would be located from the switching station beginning on the north side of County Road (CR) 300 for approximately 1.4 miles. At the intersection of CR 300/US 400 the transmission line would turn north-east and continue along the west side of US 400 for approximately 1.2 miles. At the intersection of U.S. 400/ Granby Street it would turn west and continue along the south side of Granby Street for approximately 0.6 mile to West Granby Business Park. The transmission line would replace the existing 60kV Westar distribution line. It would consist of 75/H1 poles spaced approximately 300 feet apart connecting fiber optic shield wire. A new 138 kV to 13.2 kV industrial substation (150 feet x 200 feet) would be constructed within the West Granby Business Park. *Figure 1* shows a layout of the proposed facilities on an aerial image. The construction of the new facilities would consist of site preparation (grading and/or excavation) and construction of the switching station and substation. The existing utility poles would be removed and replaced with new H1 poles. The development of the West Granby Business Park is not part of this project.



Source: 2008 Aerial Imagery, National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP)

SCALE

0 1,000 2,000 Feet

N

FIGURE 1
LOCATION MAP
NEODESHA SUBSTATION PROJECT
NEODESHA, WILSON COUNTY, KANSAS

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4.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND IMPACTS

The following table summarizes the potential impacts of the proposed action, and identifies mitigation measures to minimize those impacts, where appropriate. Following the summary table, each environmental resource area is evaluated in greater detail.

Table 1
Affected Environment and Impacts Summary

Affected Environment	Impacts	Mitigation
Geology and Soils	The proposed project would cause some disturbance of the shallow soils and surficial geology as part of the site preparation work. Since the site is relatively flat/gently rolling, the grading needed at the site would be minor. In general, effects to geology and soils would be minor and temporary in nature. The soils on the industrial substation site are classified as prime farmland. The proposed project would convert approximately 0.7 acre of prime farmland soils to a non-agricultural land use.	Exposed soils could be subject to erosion, therefore, silt fence and/or other storm water runoff best management practices would be utilized during construction.
Waters of the U.S. including Wetlands	The proposed project would not impact waters of the U.S., including wetlands, and therefore would not require a Section 404 permit. There are no navigable waters in the area; therefore, Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 does not apply.	N/A
Floodplains	The proposed action is not located in a floodplain. The transmission line would span the floodplain of the Fall River.	N/A
Water Quality	The proposed action would disturb more than one acre, therefore would require a construction stormwater general permit from the KDHE.	The primary requirement of the general permit is for the contractor or permitee to develop and implement a Stormwater Pollution prevention plan.
Flora and Fauna	The construction of the proposed action would result in clearing of approximately two acres of vegetation. The effects to wildlife are expected to be minimal and temporary in nature.	N/A

Affected Environment	Impacts	Mitigation
Threatened and Endangered Species	It was determined through coordination with the KDWP that critical habitat for the Eastern spotted skunk does occur on the project site. Therefore, if the habitat would not be disturbed by the proposed construction and vegetation clearing is limited to the area already cleared for the existing powerline right-of-way (near the proposed switching station), no further coordination is required. If the work extends beyond the existing easement, a separate action permit may be necessary for those disturbances and coordination with the KDWP should be performed. The proposed action would have no effect on threatened and endangered species other than the potential impact to the Eastern spotted shunk described above.	The conditions of such a permit would be the return of cleared areas to native vegetation.
Migratory Birds	No adverse impacts are expected to migratory birds.	As practicable, the design engineer and contractor would implement the best management practices describe in the *Suggested Practices for Raptor Protection on Power Lines: The State of the Art 2006* and *Mitigating Bird Collisions with Power Lines: The State of the Art in 1994*. If any portions of the of the transmission line cause mortalities, the city of Neodesha would work with the KDWP and USFWS to determine appropriate mitigation.
Cultural Resources	Coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer concluded that the proposed project "would not adversely affect any property listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places."	N/A
Socioeconomic Resources	Currently the city of Neodesha is providing power to its residents via a single transmission line, which has caused city wide power outages due to problems occurring upstream of the city. The construction of the proposed project would provide a reliable power source to the residents of Neodesha. In addition, the construction of the proposed project is expected to create jobs in the short term.	N/A
E.O. 12898 - Environmental Justice	Benefits of the proposed project would be equally received by residents of Neodesha. Construction of the proposed project would not have an adverse effect on minority or low-income populations.	N/A

Affected Environment	Impacts	Mitigation
Hazardous Materials	The proposed project would cause some disturbance of the shallow soils as part of the site preparation work. Based upon the data previously collected during the Phase I and Phase II ESAs, care should be taken during the development of the new industrial substation facility to insure that petroleum-impacted soils are addressed in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations. Additional sampling and laboratory analysis may be necessary to characterize the soils prior to disposal or onsite treatment. Contamination related to oil and gas production is regulated under the authority of the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC). Future assessment and/or cleanup of petroleum and chloride impacted soils would therefore need to be conducted under KCC oversight.	The contractor will take appropriate measures to prevent, minimize, and control the spill of hazardous materials in the construction staging area.
Noise	The proposed action would result in a slight increase in noise during the construction of the switching station and substation and the replacement of the utility poles. The increase in noise is expected to be minor and short term. No permanent changes to noise levels in the area are expected to be associated with the proposed project.	N/A
Air Quality	Pollutant emissions from construction equipment may result in minor, temporary effects to air quality in the area immediately surrounding the construction activity. Vehicular exhaust emissions would be produced by the operation of diesel engines and other construction equipment. These effects would be localized and of short duration. The contractor would be required to keep all equipment in good working order to minimize air pollution.	The contractor will be required to keep all equipment in good working order to minimize air pollution.
Public Health and Safety	The construction of the proposed project is expected to follow all applicable federal, state, and local safety laws and guidelines. No adverse effects to the health and safety of Neodesha residents, employees, and others associated with the project are expected.	N/A
Traffic, Circulation, Volume, and Parking Access	Construction personnel and equipment would require access to the site, which would temporarily increase traffic in the project area. There would be no adverse or long term impacts to the transportation system.	N/A

4.1 GEOLOGY

4.1.1 Geology and Soils

Wilson County is located in the physiographic region known as the Osage Cuestas of south-east Kansas. This region occupies all of eastern Kansas south of the Kansas River. It is characterized by a series of east-facing ridges (or escarpments), between which are flat to gently rolling plains. The Osage Cuestas is underlain by Pennsylvanian-age limestones and shales that dip gently to the west and northwest. Review of the *Map of Surficial Geology of Kansas,* indicates that the bedrock underlying the project area is mapped as the Kansas City Group and the Lansing Group, which consists of seven different shale and limestone formations.

The Soil Survey of Wilson County, Kansas, indicates the soils mapped in the project area are within the Woodson-Kenoma-Dennis Soil Association and the Catoosa-Shidler-Zaar Soil Association. In general these associations are deep, nearly level to moderately sloping, somewhat poorly drained and moderately well drained upland soils that have dominantly clayey subsoil (USDA 1989).

The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) (P.L. 97-98, Sec. 1539-1549; 7 U.S. Code 4201, et seq.) was enacted to minimize the unnecessary conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses as a result of federal actions. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is responsible for protecting significant agricultural lands from irreversible conversions that result in the loss of an essential food or environmental resource. Prime farmland is characterized as land with the best physical and chemical characteristics for the production of food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. This land is either used for food or fiber crops or is available for those crops, but is not urban, built-up land, or water areas. Unique farmland is land other than prime farmland that is used for production of specific high-value food and fiber crops, such as citrus, olives, cranberries, and other fruits and vegetables. It has the special combination of soil quality, location, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high quality or high yields of specific crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. There are two soil map units present on the new substation site, both map units are considered prime farmland by NRCS (USDA 2009). These two map units are Dennis silt loam, 1 to 3 percent slope and Woodson silt loam, 0 to 1 percent slope. The soil units mapped on the new switching site are not defined as prime farmland.

<u>Alternative A – No Action</u>: The No Action alternative would not have any impact on the soils or geology of the area.

<u>Alternative B – Construct Substation and Related Facilities</u>: The proposed project would cause some disturbance of the shallow soils and surficial geology as part of the site preparation work. Since the site is relatively flat/gently rolling, the grading needed at the site would be minor. Exposed soils could be subject to erosion, therefore, silt fence and/or other storm water runoff best management practices would be utilized during construction. In general, effects to geology and soils would be minor and temporary in nature. Since soils on the industrial substation site are classified as prime farmland, coordination with NRCS under the FPPA would be required. Approximately 0.7 acre of prime farmland soils would be converted to a non-agricultural land use. FPPA is intended to minimize the unnecessary conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses as a result of federal actions. This conversion would not reduce the support for farmland remaining in the area. In compliance with FPPA, the proposed conversion was scored using the Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form (AD-1006). The combined rating for this site was less than 160 and therefore does not need any further consideration. A coordination letter from NRCS is included in *Appendix A*.

4.2 WATER RESOURCES

4.2.1 Waters of the United States Including Wetlands

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S., including wetlands, pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Wetlands are identified as those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. In addition, Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands) directs federal agencies to take actions to minimize the destruction, loss, or degradation of wetlands and to preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands on federal property. A site visit was performed by a qualified wetland specialist to identify potential waters of the U.S., including wetlands, on or adjacent to the proposed project site.

Alternative A – No Action: The No Action alternative would have no effect on wetlands or other waters of the U.S. and would not require a Section 404 permit.

Alternative B – Construct Substation and Related Facilities: An onsite review of the proposed switching station and substation sites did not find any potential areas meeting the definition of waters of the U.S., including wetlands. According to the USGS Topographic Map the proposed 3.2 mile transmission line would cross the Fall River and five of its tributaries (*Figure 2*). The transmission line would replace the existing Westar distribution line and would span Fall River and its tributaries. The proposed project would not impact waters of the U.S., including wetlands and therefore would not require a Section 404 permit. There are no navigable waters in the area; therefore, Section 10 of the River and Harbors Act of 1899 does not apply.

4.2.2 Floodplains

Floodplains generally refer to 100-year floodplains as set by FEMA and are delineated on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) or Flood Hazard Boundary Maps for all communities that are members of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The city of Neodesha and Wilson County are participants in the NFIP.

Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management) requires federal agencies to avoid or minimize development in the floodplain except when there are no practicable alternatives. According to the NFIP Flood Insurance Rate Map for Wilson County Unincorporated Areas (Map Number 2006170006A), the proposed switching station and substation are not located within a 100 or 500 year floodplain. However, the 3.2 mile transmission line would cross the 100-year floodplain.

Alternative A – No Action: The No Action alternative would not result in impacts to the 100 or 500 year floodplain.

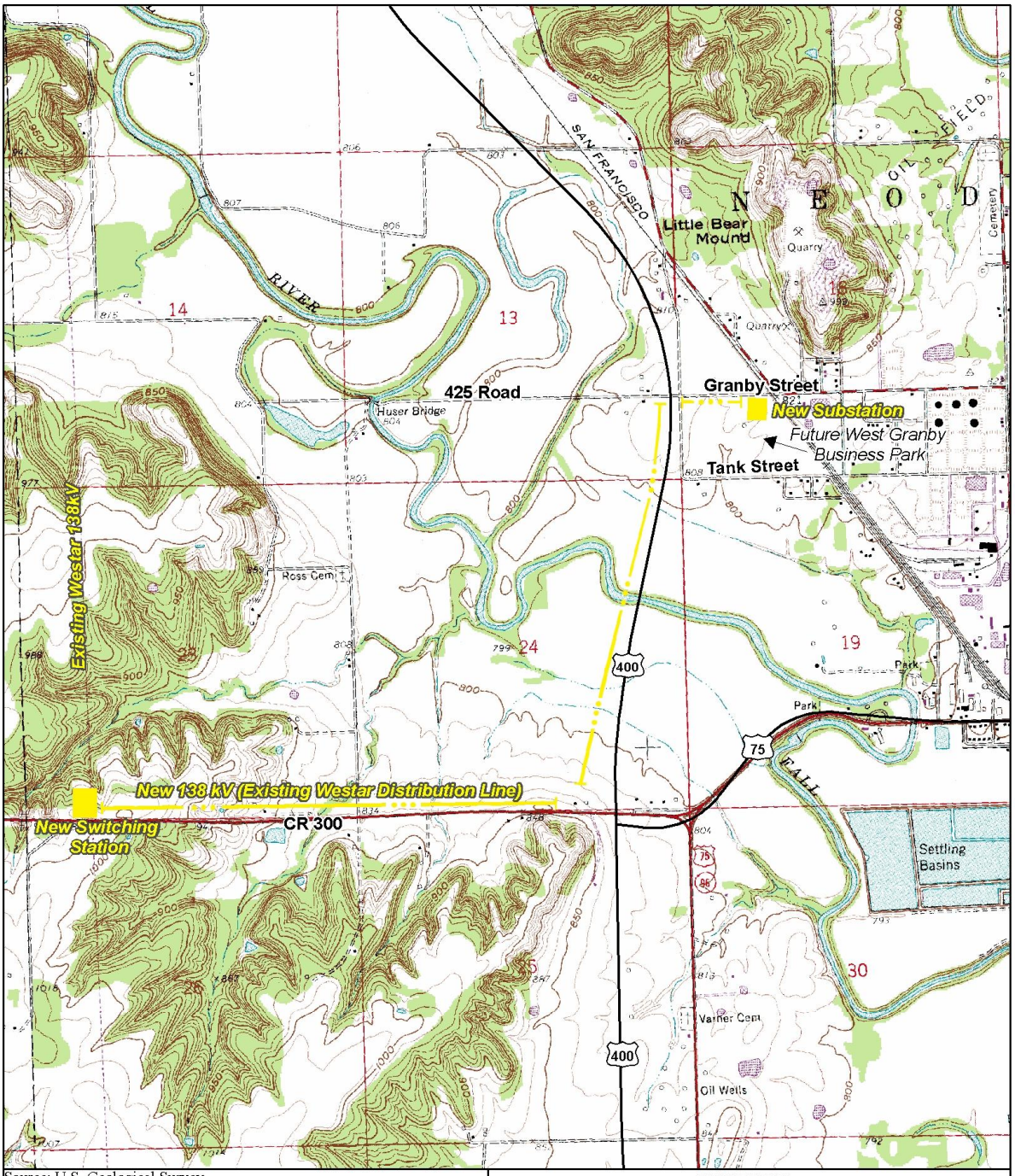
Alternative B – Construct Substation and Related Facilities: Under the proposed action, no impact is anticipated, because the switching station and substation sites are not located within a floodplain and the proposed transmission line would replace the existing Westar distribution line.

4.2.3 Water Quality

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) is responsible for administering the state's stormwater management program. The Kansas stormwater program is closely modeled after the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, which requires stormwater be treated to the maximum extent practicable. Owners or operators of any project or combination of projects who engage in construction activities which will disturb one or more acres must have authorization to discharge stormwater runoff under the construction stormwater general permit S-MCST-0701-1.

Alternative A – No Action: The No Action alternative would have no effect water quality.

Alternative B – Construct Substation and Related Facilities: The proposed action would have no adverse impacts to ground or surface water quality. The proposed action would disturb more than one acre, therefore would require a construction stormwater general permit from the KDHE. The primary requirement of the general permit is for the contractor or permitee to develop and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention (SWP2) plan. When the project is complete and final stabilization of the site has been achieved, the contractor must notify KDHE to terminate the authorization to discharge stormwater runoff.



Source: U.S. Geological Survey

SCALE

0 1,000 2,000 Feet

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FIGURE 2
USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
NEODESHA SUBSTATION PROJECT
NEODESHA, WILSON COUNTY, KANSAS

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4.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

4.3.1 Flora and Fauna

According to the Ecoregions of Nebraska and Kansas, the project area is located in the Osage Cuestas region Central Irregular Plains ecoregion (Chapman 2001). This region is a gently undulating cuesta plain. Natural vegetation ranges from a mosaic of mostly tall grass prairie in the west to a mixture of tall grass prairie and oak-hickory forest in the east, with floodplain forests along streams. The moist, silty clay loams are formed in material weathered from limestone and shale, and support a composite land use made up of woodlands and grassland/rangeland.

The project area is located on agricultural land currently used for crops and cattle grazing. It consists primarily of upland grasses with wooded areas along Fall River and its tributaries. The herbaceous community is dominated by little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) and other prairie grasses. The wooded areas are dominated by Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*). The proposed switching station site is currently a wooded bluff and the proposed substation site is currently an open field.

Wildlife occurring in the project area is expected to be typical of the location and geologic make-up of south-central Kansas. According to the KDWP, several wildlife species are abundant in Kansas including white-tailed deer, wild turkey, coyotes, bobwhite quail, ring-necked pheasant and prairie chickens. Migratory birds common to Kansas are doves, rails, snipe, ducks, crows, teal, sandhill crane, geese and woodcock.

The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act was enacted to protect fish and wildlife when federal actions result in control or modification of a natural stream or body of water. No streams or other water bodies would be controlled or modified as a result of the proposed action; therefore, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act is not applicable.

<u>Alternative A – No Action:</u> The No Action alternative would have no effect on the flora and fauna.

<u>Alternative B – Construct Substation and Related Facilities:</u> The construction of the proposed action would result in clearing of approximately two acres of vegetation. The effects to wildlife are expected to be minimal and temporary in nature.

4.3.2 Threatened and Endangered Species

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 provides for the protection of all listed threatened and endangered species from take defined as "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect or attempt to engage in any such conduct." Harm is further defined by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to include significant habitat modification or degradation that results in death or injury to listed species by significantly impairing behavioral patterns such as breeding, feeding, or sheltering. Harass is defined by the USFWS as actions that create the likelihood of injury to listed species to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavior patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.

Rare species protection was implemented within the State of Kansas by the Kansas Nongame and Endangered Species Act of 1975. This act provided the state authority to define and list endangered and threatened species. Endangered species are any species of wildlife whose continued existence as a viable component of the state's wild fauna is determined to be in jeopardy. Threatened species are any species of wildlife that appear likely, within the foreseeable future, to become an endangered species. These designations protect the animal from commercial or personal possession. The law also gives authority to the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks to review projects requiring a state or federal permit or those funded by tax revenues. This process is designed to safeguard listed wildlife.

The USFWS lists one species as endangered in Wilson County, the American Burying Beetle (*Nicrophorus americanus*) and one candidate species, the Neosho Mucket Mussel (*Lampsilis rafinesqueana*) (USFWS 2008). The KDWP lists the following seven species as endangered in Wilson County: American Burying Beetle, Eskimo Curlew (*Numenius borealis*), Eastern Spotted Skunk (*Spilogale putorius*), Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*), Neosho Mucket Mussel, Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), Rabbitfoot Mussel (*Quadrula cylindrica*), Western Fanshell Mussel (*Cyprogenia aberti*); and the following eight species as threatened in Wilson County: Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), Butterfly Mussel (*Ellipsaria lineolata*), Common Map Turtle (*Graptemys geographica*), Flutedshell Mussel (*Lasmigonia costata*), Ouachita Kidneyshell Mussel (*Ptychobranchus occidentalis*), Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*), and the Snowy Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus)* (KDWP 2009).

Table 2
Federal and State Listed Threatened/ Endangered Species in Wilson County, Kansas

Common Name	USFWS Status	KDWP Status	Comments
American Burying Beetle	Endangered	Endangered	State Designated Critical Habitat; no habitat exists on project site
Bald Eagle	–	Threatened	Migratory/ Transient Species
Butterfly Mussel	–	Threatened	State Designated Critical Habitat in Wilson County, however only on the main stem of the Verdigris River
Common Map Turtle	–	Threatened	Known historic range; habitat includes creeks, rivers, oxbows and lakes; the proposed action would not involve any work within any bodies of water
Eastern Spotted Skunk	–	Threatened	State Designated Critical Habitat; habitat for this species exists on project site
Eskimo Curlew	–	Endangered	Migratory/ Transient Species
Flutedshell Mussel	–	Threatened	Probable Historic Range; the proposed action does not involve any work within any bodies of water
Least Tern	–	Endangered	Migratory/ Transient Species
Neosho Mucket Mussel	Candidate	Endangered	State Designated Critical Habitat within the Fall River; the proposed action does not involve any work within Fall River or its tributaries

Common Name	USFWS Status	KDWP Status	Comments
Ouachita Kidneyshell Mussel	–	Threatened	State Designated Critical Habitat in Wilson County, however only on the main stem of the Verdigris River
Peregrine Falcon	–	Endangered	Migratory/ Transient Species
Piping Plover	–	Threatened	Migratory/ Transient Species
Rabbitfoot Mussel	–	Endangered	State Designated Critical Habitat in Wilson County, however only on the main stem of the Verdigris River
Snowy Plover	–	Threatened	Migratory/ Transient Species
Western Fanshell Mussel	–	Endangered	State Designated Critical Habitat within the Fall River; the proposed action does not involve any work within Fall River or its tributaries

Sources: USFWS 2008, KDWP 2009a, KDWP 2009b

Alternative A – No Action: The No Action alternative would have no effect on threatened or endangered species.

Alternative B – Construct Substation and Related Facilities: Both the KDWP and USFWS lists of endangered, threatened, proposed and candidate species for Wilson County were reviewed on March 2, 2009 and a field visit of the project area occurred on March 11, 2009. If any of the avian species defined above as migratory/ transient were to occur in the project area they would likely be transitory, due to the lack of the vegetation or landscapes typically used for resting or feeding present in the project area. There is no work proposed in any water bodies, therefore the proposed project would not impact the mussel species or the common map turtle. Due to potential habitat for the American burying beetle and the Eastern spotted skunk, the KDWP was contacted and an environmental review was requested. On May 13, 2009 a KDWP biologist visited the site to assess whether critical habitat for the eastern spotted skunk or American burying beetle occurs on-site. As a result of the assessment, it was determined that no habitat exists for the American burying beetle, but that designated critical habitat for the Eastern spotted skunk does occur on-site. The Eastern spotted skunk habitat falls into the 'odd area' classification (a mix of woods and grasslands) and has a good quality rating (R-value 7.0, scale 0-10). If the habitat would not be disturbed by the proposed construction and vegetation clearing is limited to the area already cleared for the existing powerline right-of-way (near the proposed switching station), no further coordination is required. If the work extends beyond the existing easement, a separate action permit may be necessary for those disturbances and coordination with the KDWP should be performed. The conditions of such a permit would be the return of cleared areas to native vegetation.

4.3.3 Migratory Birds

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act provides that it is unlawful for anyone to kill, capture, collect, possess, buy, sell, trade, ship, import or export, any migratory bird, or part, or nest or egg thereof, unless they first obtain an appropriate Federal Permit, issued pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act regulations, authorizing such activity.

Utility poles can benefit migratory birds by providing perching and/or nesting structures in areas where few natural perches or nest sites exist, such as grasslands, agricultural fields, and pastures. However, utility structures can also pose a threat to migratory birds through electrocutions and collisions. These deaths can cause power outages that inconvenience customers, spark grass fires, and result in lost revenue. Many of these threats can be avoided or minimized by using the best management practices described in *Suggested Practices for Raptor Protection on Power Lines: The State of the Art 2006* and *Mitigating Bird Collisions with Power Lines: The State of the Art in 1994 (*Avian Power Line Interaction Committee [APLIC] 2006 and APLIC 1994*)*.

Alternative A – No Action: The No Action alternative would have no effect on migratory birds as conditions would remain the same. There would be no change to the existing Westar distribution line in the project area.

Alternative B – Construct Substation and Related Facilities: The proposed project would replace the existing Westar distribution line with new utility poles which would be approximately 21.5 feet taller than the existing poles. The existing Westar transmission line in the project area provides some immediate protection as local, resident birds would already be conditioned to avoid the area. As practicable, the design engineer and contractor would implement the best management practices described above. If any portions of the transmission line cause mortalities, the city of Neodesha would work with the KDWP and USFWS to determine appropriate mitigation. As a result, no adverse impacts are expected to migratory birds.

4.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

In addition to review under NEPA, consideration of impacts to cultural resources is mandated under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended and as implemented by 36 CFR Part 800. Requirements include the need to identify significant historic properties that may be impacted by the proposed action or alternatives within the project's area of potential effect. Historic properties are defined as archeological sites, standing structures, or other historic resources listed in or determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. If adverse effects on historic, archeological, or cultural properties are identified, then agencies must consider effects of their activities and attempt to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the impacts to these resources.

Alternative A – No Action: The No Action alternative would have no effect on cultural resources in the area.

Alternative B – Construct Substation and Related Facilities: Coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer concluded that the proposed project "would not adversely affect any property listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places" (see letters in *Appendix A*). If artifacts or other potential historic materials are discovered during construction, work would be suspended and the applicant would contact the Kansas State Historic Preservation Officer and the FEMA Regional Environmental Officer.

4.5 SOCIOECONOMIC RESOURCES

The city of Neodesha, population 2,848 and per capita income of $13,406, is located in Wilson County (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). In comparison, Wilson County has a population of 10,332 and a per capita income of $14,910. The primary industries in Wilson County are related to agriculture.

Alternative A – No Action: The city of Neodesha would continue to provide power to its residents via a single transmission line. Any problems that may arise upstream of the city would continue to cause city-wide power outages. The No Action alternative could possibly have an adverse impact on the city of Neodesha because the lack of a reliable power source.

Alternative B – Construct Substation and Related Facilities: Currently the city of Neodesha is providing power to its residents via a single transmission line, which has caused city wide power outages due to problems occurring upstream of the city. The construction of the proposed project would provide a reliable power source to the residents of Neodesha. In addition, the construction of the proposed project is expected to create jobs in the short term.

4.5.1 Executive Order 12898, Environmental Justice

On February 11, 1994, President Clinton signed Executive Order 12898, entitled "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations". The Executive Order directs federal agencies to focus attention on human health and environmental conditions in minority and/or low-income communities. The Executive Order's goals are to achieve environmental justice, fostering non-discrimination in federal programs that substantially affect human health or the environment. It also requires that agencies identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations in the United States.

Census 2000 lists 96.5% of the city of Neodesha residents as white and therefore 3.5% as a minority consisting of Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian and other. Of the 2,848 residents in Neodesha 2.1% identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino. The median family income in 1999 was $34,537 and 9.7% of families were below the poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau 2000).

In comparison, Census 2000 lists 96.8% of Wilson County residents as white and therefore 3.2% as a minority consisting of Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian and other. Of the 10,332 residents in Wilson County 1.7% identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino. The median family income in 1999 was $36,990 and 7.5% of families were below the poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau 2000).

Alternative A – No Action: The No Action alternative would not have disproportionate impacts on minority or low-income populations in the city of Neodesha or Wilson County.

Alternative B – Construct Substation and Related Facilities: Benefits of the proposed project would be equally received by residents of Neodesha. Construction of the proposed project would not have an adverse effect on minority or low-income populations.

4.6 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Hazardous wastes, as defined by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), are defined as "a solid waste, or combination of solid wastes, which because of its quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics may; (1) cause, or significantly contribute to, an increase in mortality or an increase in serious irreversible or incapacitating reversible illness or; (2) pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported or disposed of or otherwise managed." Hazardous materials and wastes

are regulated in Kansas by a combination of federal laws and state laws. Federal regulations governing the assessment and disposal of hazardous wastes include RCRA, the RCRA Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments, Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, Solid Waste Act, and Toxic Substances Control Act.

A review of selected regulatory environmental databases published by federal and state agencies was conducted via the internet to determine the potential for environmental degradation in the project area. In addition, a windshield survey of the project limits was conducted to confirm the location of listed regulatory facilities, and to observe the general environmental conditions at any listed sites within the project area.

The environmental databases provide information on regulated facilities that are listed as having a past or present record of actual or potential environmental impact. The listings are limited and include only those sites that are known to the regulatory agencies at the time of publication to be contaminated or in the process of evaluation for potential contamination. The following is a list of the federal and state databases that were reviewed;

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Envirofacts Multisystem
- EPA National Priorities List (NPL)
- KDHE Solid Waste Facilities Database
- KDHE Petroleum Storage Tank (PST) List
- KDHE Leaking Petroleum Storage Tank (LPST) List; and
- KDHE Identified Sites List (ISL).

The EPA Envirofacts Multisystem database is composed of the Permit Compliance System; Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) System; Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Information; Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS); and the Aerometric Information Retrieval System (AIRS). The above databases and lists were searched by county, city, zip code, and/or street name. Based on the regulatory database review and windshield survey of the project area, one regulated facility was identified in the project area. Information regarding this facility is summarized below in ***Table 3***.

Table 3
Summary of Hazardous Material Sites

Facility Name	Facility Address	Status/Comments
KDHE – Identified Sites List (ISL)		
West Granby Industrial Park*	Southeast of intersection of US Hwy 400 and Granby Ave.	Site status listed as Active. No other information available on website.

*Note: The West Granby Industrial Park is referred to as the West Granby Business Park throughout this EA.

Additional information regarding the above listed facility was requested from the KDHE and the city of Neodesha to determine the potential for environmental degradation in the project area due to past practices and activities that have occurred on the proposed West Granby Business Park site (the development of this business park is not part of this project). Review of available information indicated that the KDHE conducted a Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessment to evaluate the property for redevelopment as a business park. The environmental documents reviewed

were prepared by Geotechnical Services, Inc. (GSI) of Wichita, Kansas and included the following: *Phase I Brownfields Targeted Assessment, West Granby Industrial Park, Neodesha, Kansas*, dated June 2008 and *Phase II Environmental Site Assessment, West Granby Industrial Park, Neodesha, Kansas,* also dated June 2008. The Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) concluded that recognized environmental conditions identified on the site included the past release of petroleum products and brine associated with the production of oil and natural gas on the property since about 1894. The Phase II ESA indicated that contaminants of concern associated with the facility were limited to shallow surface soils impacted by petroleum and chloride constituents in the soil and potentially, metals in groundwater at the site.

The above environmental document review was also supplemented with a site reconnaissance of the general project area. The site reconnaissance was performed to identify obvious visual indications of present or past activities which have or could have caused contaminated within the project area. Other than the oil and gas activity noted on the proposed business park property described above, no other evidence of potentially hazardous materials, substances, or recognized environmental conditions were observed within the project area, except for evidence of prior dumping activities noted in the vicinity of the new switching station. Most of the dumped materials observed in this area included mostly inert material such as discarded household materials, and construction materials and debris, including asphalt roofing shingles. The dumped materials are located on top of the ground surface and no evidence of land filling was noted in the area. No other evidence of dumping was reported or observed during our site reconnaissance, and no evidence of past dumping activities were discovered or reported during our review of available environmental and regulatory data obtained for the site. Minor amounts of scattered household trash, litter and debris were noted in isolated areas of the project area, but do not appear to present a source of environmental concern. No other indications that solid or liquid waste is received, generated, stored or disposed of within the project limits were noted during our site reconnaissance. On the basis of this information, the prior dumping activity observed near the new switching station does not appear to pose a material risk to public health or the environment and is not considered an environmental concern at this time. Upon site development, the debris should be removed and disposed in accordance with applicable regulations.

<u>Alternative A – No Action:</u> The No Action alternative would not disturb any hazardous materials or create any potential hazard to human health.

<u>Alternative B – Construct Substation and Related Facilities:</u> The proposed project would cause some disturbance of the shallow soils as part of the site preparation work. Based upon the data previously collected during the Phase I and Phase II ESAs, care should be taken during the development of the new industrial substation facility to insure that petroleum-impacted soils are addressed in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations. Additional sampling and laboratory analysis may be necessary to characterize the soils prior to disposal or onsite treatment. Contamination related to oil and gas production is regulated under the authority of the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC). Future assessment and/or cleanup of petroleum and chloride impacted soils would therefore need to be conducted under KCC oversight.

No other obvious evidence of potential environmental degradation was noted within the project area. If hazardous constituents other than those described above are unexpectedly encountered in the project area during the proposed construction operations, appropriate measures for the proper assessment, remediation and management of the contamination would be initiated in accordance with

applicable federal, state, and local regulations. The contractor would take appropriate measures to prevent, minimize, and control the spill of hazardous materials in the construction staging area.

4.7 NOISE

Noise is generally defined as an unwanted sound. Noise sources in the project area are typical of agricultural areas, primarily farm vehicles. Noise levels within and adjacent to the project would increase during the proposed construction activities as a result of construction and earth-moving equipment. The noise levels generated would be limited to workday daylight hours for the duration of the work.

Alternative A – No Action: The No Action alternative would not result in impacts to noise receivers in the area.

Alternative B – Construct Substation and Related Facilities: The proposed action would result in a slight increase in noise during the construction of the switching station and substation and the replacement of the utility poles. The increase in noise is expected to be minor and short term. No permanent changes to noise levels in the area are expected to be associated with the proposed project.

4.8 AIR QUALITY

The Clean Air Act, which was last amended in 1990, requires USEPA to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (40 CFR part 50) for pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment. The Clean Air Act established two types of national air quality standards. Primary standards set limits to protect public health, including the health of "sensitive" populations such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly. Secondary standards set limits to protect public welfare, including protection against decreased visibility, damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings.

The USEPA has established National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for six principal pollutants called criteria pollutants. These pollutants include sulfur dioxide (SO_2), particulate matter with a diameter less than or equal to 10 micrometers (PM_{10}), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), ozone (O_3), and lead.

The USEPA has designated specific areas as NAAQS attainment or non-attainment areas. Attainment areas are any areas that meet ambient air quality standards. Non-attainment areas are any areas that do not meet (or that contribute to ambient air quality in a nearby area that does not meet) the quality standard for a pollutant. According to the USEPA, the entire State of Kansas is currently designated as an “attainment” area for all NAAQS (USEPA 2009).

Alternative A – No Action: The No Action Alternative would have no effect on air quality.

Alternative B – Construct Substation and Related Facilities: Pollutant emissions from construction equipment may result in minor, temporary effects to air quality in the area immediately surrounding the construction activity. Vehicular exhaust emissions would be produced by the operation of diesel engines and other construction equipment. These effects would be localized and of short duration. The contractor would be required to keep all equipment in good working order to minimize air pollution.

4.9 PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

Safety and security issues that were considered in this environmental assessment include the health and safety of area residents, the public at-large, and the protection of personnel involved in activities related to the implementation of the proposed project.

Electric and magnetic fields (EMF) are found everywhere electricity is used, including hair dryers, computers, televisions and power lines. Some concerns have been raised in the past about potential health effects of EMF. Although there has been extensive scientific research, no direct link has been established between exposure to power lines and adverse health effects. Neither the state government nor the federal government has established any health standards relating to EMF (Lower Colorado River Authority [LCRA] 2008).

Alternative A – No Action: The No Action alternative would not likely have an adverse effect on health and safety.

Alternative B – Construct Substation and Related Facilities: The construction of the proposed project is expected to follow all applicable federal, state, and local safety laws and guidelines. No adverse effects to the health and safety of Neodesha residents, employees, and others associated with the project are expected.

4.10 TRAFFIC CIRCULATION, VOLUME, AND PARKING ACCESS

The proposed project is located west of the Neodesha city limits. The switching station is proposed at the intersection of the existing Westar 138kV transmission line and C.R. 300. An industrial substation is proposed within the West Granby Business Park located just west of the intersection of Granby Street and Tank Street. A transmission line will connect these two locations running east along the north side of C.R. 300, north along the west side of U.S. 400 and east along the south side of Granby Street.

Alternative A – No Action: The No Action alternative would have no effect on transportation in the area.

Alternative B – Construct Substation and Related Facilities: Construction personnel and equipment would require access to the site, which would temporarily increase traffic in the project area. There would be no adverse or long term impacts to the transportation system.

5.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts are those effects on the environment that result from the incremental effect of an action when added to past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency (federal or nonfederal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

There are several projects planned and currently under construction within the city of Neodesha:

- The raw water intake will be repaired next to the original power plant. The controls within the well were damaged during the flooding.

- The controls within the water treatment plant will be repaired, elevated and relocated farther away from Fall River. The current pumps within the water treatment plant are not submersible and were damaged in the flooding.

- A new city swimming pool is being constructed to replace the original swimming pool which was damaged in the flooding.

- West Granby Business Park (the proposed location of the substation) is being constructed just south of Granby Street between Tank Street and Newton Street. This business park will be approximately 52 acres in size. Neodesha Plastics will be expanding their operations in the city of Neodesha within this business park.

These repair, reconstruction and new construction activities would be expected to cause temporary inconveniences resulting from construction traffic, detours, noise and dust. In addition, these projects would be expected to create jobs in the short term. On a cumulative basis, these impacts would be short-term and localized until the reconstruction process has been completed.

The city of Neodesha has a comprehensive plan which was last updated in 1991 (Neodesha 1991). The proposed project is consistent with the plans and polices presented in this plan.

6.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The public was invited to comment on the proposed action and the Draft Environmental Assessment. A legal notice was posted in the Neodesha Derrick on April 16, 2009, and on FEMA's website (http://www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/envdocuments/index.shtm). Additionally, the Draft Environmental Assessment was made available for review for a period of 30 days at the Neodesha Rankin Library located at 502 Indiana Street, Neodesha, Kansas. A copy of the notice is attached in *Appendix B*.

7.0 COORDINATION AND PERMITS

The following agencies and organizations were contacted and asked to comment on the proposed project. Agency correspondence is located in *Appendix A*.

- Kansas State Historic Preservation Office

- Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks

- Natural Resources Conservation Service

In accordance with applicable local, state, and federal requirements, the applicant is responsible for obtaining any necessary permits or approvals prior to commencing construction at the proposed project site.

The proposed action would require a construction stormwater general permit S-MCST-0701-1 from the KDHE.

It was determined through coordination with the KDWP that critical habitat for the Eastern spotted skunk does occur on the project site. Therefore, if the habitat would not be disturbed by the proposed construction and vegetation clearing is limited to the area already cleared for the existing powerline right-of-way (near the proposed switching station), no further coordination is required. If the work extends beyond the existing easement, a separate action permit may be necessary for those disturbances and coordination with the KDWP should be performed. The conditions of such a permit would be the return of cleared areas to native vegetation.

8.0 CONCLUSION

The findings of this Environmental Assessment conclude that the proposed project would result in no significant environmental impacts to the human or natural environment; therefore, the proposed action meets the requirements of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) under NEPA and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement will not be required.

9.0 REFERENCES

Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC). 1994. Mitigating Bird Collisions with Power Lines: The State of the Art in 1994. Edison Electric Institute/Raptor Research Foundation.

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Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP). 2009b. Species Information. Available at http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us/news/Other-Services/Threatened-and-Endangered-Species/Threatened-and-Endangered-Species/Species-Information (viewed on December 2, 2009).

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2008. Endangered, Threatened, Proposed and Candidate Species – Kansas Counties. USFWS Ecological Services Kansas Field Office. December 2008.

10.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

Carlos Swonke, P.G., Project Manager, AECOM, Austin Texas

Tricia Bruck, Biologist/Environmental Scientist, AECOM, Austin Texas

Doug Zarker, P.G., Hazardous Materials Specialist, AECOM, Austin Texas

APPENDIX A
Agency Coordination

KANSAS

KSR&C No. 08-12-138

Kansas State Historical Society
Jennie Chinn, *Executive Director*

KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, GOVERNOR

December 23, 2008

Charlie McGonigle
State Hazard Mitigation
2800 SW Topeka Blvd
Topeka KS 66611

Re: Electrical Line Construction, City of Neodesha
Wilson County

Dear Mr. McGonigle:

Our staff has reviewed the materials received December 22, 2008, regarding the above referenced project in accordance with 36 CFR 800. The SHPO has determined the proposed project will not adversely affect any property listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Please refer to the Kansas State Review & Compliance number (KSR&C#) listed above on any future correspondence.

If you have any questions regarding this review, please contact Kim Norton (785) 272-8681 ext. 225.

Sincerely,

Jennie Chinn
State Historic Preservation Officer

Patrick Zollner

Patrick Zollner
Director, Cultural Resources Division
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

6425 SW Sixth Avenue • Topeka, KS 66615-1099
Phone 785-272-8681 Ext. 240 • Fax 785-272-8682 • TTY 785-272-8683
www.kshs.org

KANSAS

KSR&C No. 09-04-119

KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, GOVERNOR

Kansas State Historical Society
Jennie Chinn, *Executive Director*

April 14, 2009

Roger K. Wilson
Public Assistance Coordinator
Kansas Division of Emergency Management
2800 Topeka Boulevard
Topeka KS 66611-1287

Re: Neodesha Electrical Facility Repairs and Reconstruction
Wilson County

Dear Mr. Wilson:

Our staff has reviewed the materials received April 8, 2009, regarding the above referenced project in accordance with 36 CFR 800. The SHPO has determined the proposed project will not adversely affect any property listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Please refer to the Kansas State Review & Compliance number (KSR&C#) listed above on any future correspondence.

If you have any questions regarding this review, please contact Kim Norton (785) 272-8681 ext. 225.

Sincerely,

Jennie Chinn
State Historic Preservation Officer

Patrick Zollner Director,
Cultural Resources Division
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

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Phone 785-272-8681 Ext. 240 • Fax 785-272-8682 • TTY 785-272-8683
www.kshs.org

Bruck, Tricia

Subject: Switching Station/Substation - South-central Wilson County; CO: WL;
Attachments: Action Permit Application.pdf; siteevaluation.pdf

-----Original Message-----
From: kdwp.env.rev@gmail.com [mailto:kdwp.env.rev@gmail.com] On Behalf Of James Larson
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2009 2:41 PM
To: Bruck, Tricia
Cc: Jarmer, Trish
Subject: Re: Switching Station/Substation - South-central Wilson County; CO: WL;

KDWP Track No: 20090151 CO: WL Ref Code: D5.0303

Dear Tricia Bruck:

On May 13th I had an opportunity to visit the site of this proposed project to assess whether critical habitat for the eastern spotted skunk or American Burying Beetle occurs on-site. While no habitat exists for the American Burying Beetle, designated critical habitat for the Eastern Spotted Skunk does occur on-site. This habitat falls into our 'odd area' classification (a mix of woods and grasslands).and has a good quality rating (R-value 7.0, scale 0-10).

Based on our phone conversation on May 18th, 2009, this habitat will not be disturbed by the proposed construction, which is limited to the area already cleared for the power line right-of-way. There were potential impacts to this habitat by construction activities (i.e., staging areas). If these areas are substantial in size, a separate action permit may be necessary for those disturbances. The conditions of such a permit would be the return of cleared areas to native vegetation. I've attached the site evaluation I conducted to this email.

Please get back in touch with this office when you have an estimate of the area that will be disturbed outside of the construction footprint.
I've also attached a copy of the T&E Action Permit Application form.

Thank you

James

--
James Larson
Environmental Services Section
Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks
512 SE 25th Ave
Pratt, KS 67124-8174
W 620.672.0795
C 620.450.8311

Date: 5/13/09 Track No.: 20090151

Project Sponsor: City of Neodesha Site No:

Evaluator (s): James Larson

FIELD KEY FOR SUBJECTIVE EVALUATION OF TERRESTRIAL WILDLIFE HABITATS

Each habitat type or community present within the evaluation area will be rated. The rating will be a numerical value between 0.0 and 10.0, with a score of 10.0 representing optimal habitat conditions (i.e. reference site) for the geographical area in question. The criteria keys are only guides to obtain uniformity in evaluating different tracts. The criteria key will serve as a standardized checklist for identifying habitat communities and placing a value on their quality. When professional judgement determines that the habitat characteristics are different than those indicated, a narrative description can be developed in the field and a quality rating made. Qualitative thresholds for habitat ratings: ***Excellent. = 8.0 - 10.0; Good = 5.6 - 7.9; Fair = 3.1 - 5.5; Poor = 1.0 - 3.0***

WOODLAND KEY

Estimated Canopy Cover (minimum 25%)_____%

Species Groups	Points
All 5 species groups (Nut, Mast, Fruit, Seed, Evergreen)	6 to 10
4-5 species groups	3 to 6
Nut or mast + 2 other spp. groups	1 to 3
2-3 spp. groups	1 to 3
1 species group	1

Plant Form	Score each plant form as
Trees over 12" dbh	Abundant = 3 points
Trees over 25' tall	Common = 2 points
Trees 3'-25' talll	Sparse = 1 point
Trees up to 3' tall	Absent = 0 points
Shrubs	
Vines	
Grass	
Forbs	
Debris and/or Standing Dead, Snags	
Den Trees	

Total Points / 4 + IV = R

Circle adjacent habitat types:
Rangeland Pasture Impoundment
Cropland Wetland Odd Area Stream

Trees
Pin Oak, other small oaks elm, Hickory (sp?), Cedar,

Shrubs
Dogwood; plum

Vines
P. ivy, virginia creeper

Grass

Forbs
5+ flowering

RANGELAND KEY

	Component Points
A. Decreasers reproducing stand **B.** Plants in healthy condition **C.** Herbaceous increasers not conspicuous **D.** Woody increasers are not conspicuous	9.0 - 10.0
A. Decreasers conspicuous, can recover **B.** Woody invaders may be established, others **C.** reproducing markedly **D.** Woody increasers may be conspicuous	6.0 - 8.9
A. Decreasers not conspicuous **B.** Annuals/invaders conspicuous **C.** Increasers established **D.** Broadcast herbicide use evident	3.0 - 5.9
A. Decreasers absent **B.** Invaders established – Trees mature and extensive **C.** Desirable wildlife food/cover nearly absent	0 - 2.9

Tract is continuous for >1 square mile_____+ 1.5
Tract is continuous for > 2 square mile_____+ 2.5
Tract is fragmented by woody invasion, windbreaks, roads, crop fields, etc._____- 1.5 to - 2.5
Rare or unique plant life (list and provide appropriate points)_____

Total Points + IV = R

Circle adjacent habitat types:
Woodland Pasture Impoundment
Cropland Wetland Odd Area Stream

PASTURE KEY

	Component Points
Grass in good-excellent condition with desirable forbs present:	
A. Warm season pasture	9
B. Cool season pasture	8
Grass in poor-fair condition with desirable forbs present:	
A. Warm season	7
B. Cool season	6
Grass in good-excellent condition with undesirable forbs abundant:	
A. Warm season	5
B. Cool season	4
Grass in poor condition with undesirable forbs present All pastures	3
Grass in fair-good condition with no forbs present (herbicide use evident) All pastures	2
Grass in poor condition with no forbs present (herbicide use evident) All pastures	1
Any of the above with some established woody:	+ 1

Total Points + IV = R

Circle adjacent habitat types:
Rangeland Woodland Impoundment
Cropland Wetland Odd Area Stream

Revised 2004

ODD AREA KEY

	Component Points
Woody Vegetation	
Abundant trees, shrubs, vines; all age; excellent food/cover	5
Woody spp. abundant; even-all age; food/cover good/excellent	4
Woody spp. common; even-all age; food/cover good	3
Woody spp. sparse, even-all age; food/cover fair	2
Woody spp. sparse; cover poor	1
Herbaceous Vegetation	
Abundant perennial native grass & forbs; food/cover excellent	5
Abundant native vegetation; food/cover good	4
Native vegetation common; annuals/increasers established; food/cover fair	3
Native vegetation sparse; introduced grasses may be established; food/cover fair-poor	2
Introduced vegetation abundant; food/cover poor	1
Other cover	
Large brush piles, quarries, farm equipment/outbuildings, junk piles, silos, etc.	+1

7 0 7

Total Points + IV = R

Circle adjacent habitat types:

Rangeland Pasture Impoundment
Cropland Wetland Woodland Stream

CROPLAND KEY

Crop Type	Component Points
A. Milo, feed grain, corn	7
B. Alfalfa, small grain	4
C. Soy beans, sunflower	2
D. Cotton	1
E. Clean till	0
D. Other (describe)	evaluator assign points
Management	
A. Organic w/green manure & crop rotation	10
B. Mechanical tillage only (no pesticides)	7
C. Conservation tillage	5
D. Spring tillage	3
E. Fall tillage	2
F. Fall plowing	0
Other Factors	
A. Field size	+1 to -1
B. Crop rotation	+1 to -1
C. Unharvested crop left	0 to +1

(Total Points ÷ 2) + IV = R

Circle adjacent habitat types:

Rangeland Pasture Impoundment
Woodland Wetland Odd Area Stream

WETLAND KEY

_____ 1987 Delineation necessary?

	Component Points
A. Isolated & natural with no hydrology manipulation. Emergent vegetation present	8.0 - 10.0
B. Riverine and adjacent wetlands subject to US Army COE jurisdiction	7.9 – 8.0
C. Restored wetland w/native plants and enhanced hydrology possible	5.0 – 6.9
D. Naturally farmed w/ disturbance to native plant community	3.0 – 4.9
E. Hydrology manipulated for farming ("PC", "FW" or "FWP")	2.0 – 2.9
F. Wetland w/invasive & exotic plant life	0.0 – 1.9

Total Points + IV = R

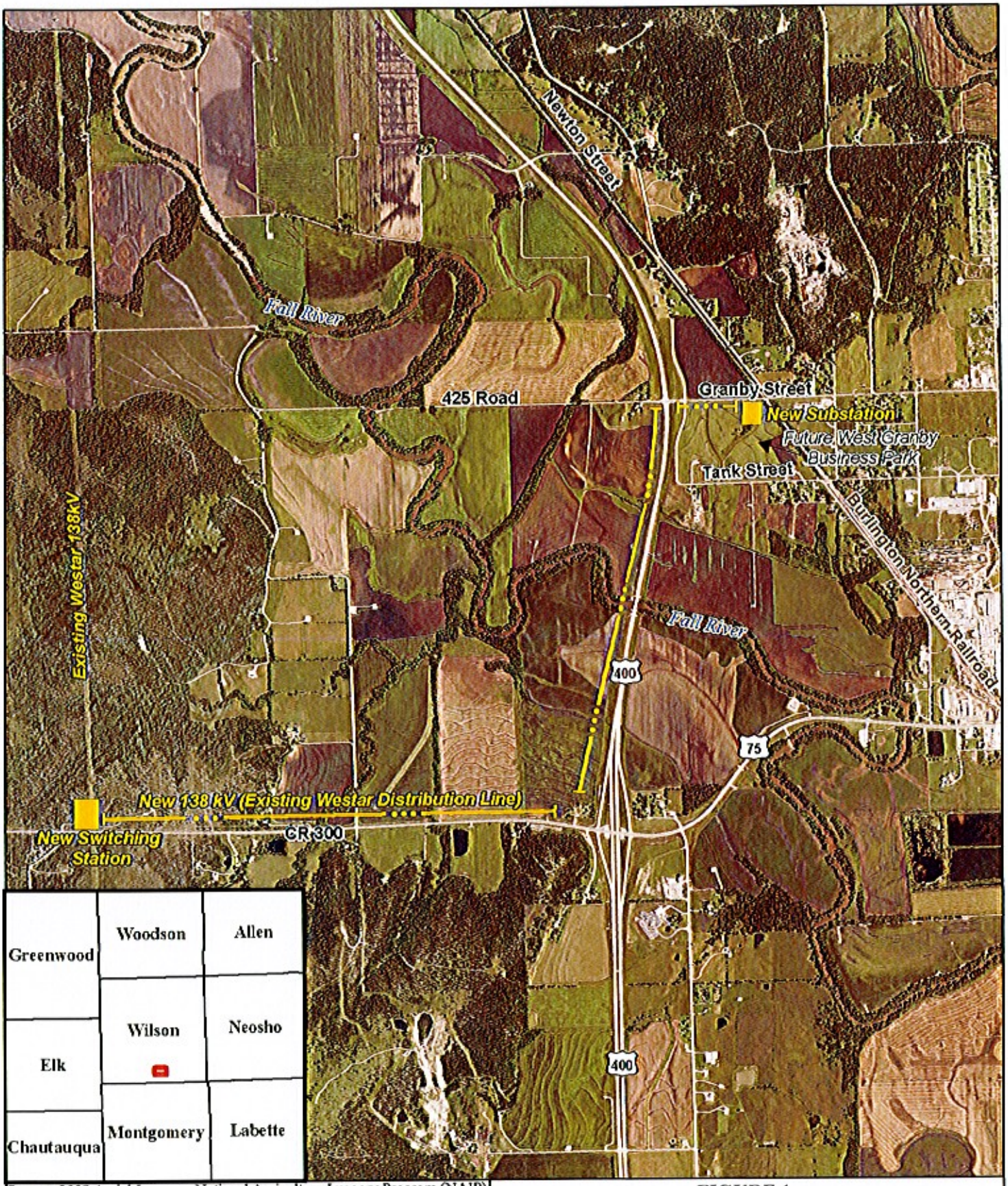
Circle adjacent habitat types:

Rangeland Pasture Impoundment
Cropland Woodland Odd Area Stream

INTERSPERSION (IV) – value added to each habitat type to assess the diversity of adjacent habitat types. Used in determining the habitat's quality rating (R). **Regardless of the interspersion value no R-value score should exceed 10.0**.

	Number of Adjacent Habitat Types				
Adjacent Habitat Types: (woodland, rangeland, pasture, wetlands, cropland, odd area, stream, and impoundment)	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4+**
Use the following IV scores for all habitats	-0.5	0	+0.5	+1.0	+1.5

NOTES: Observed possible E. Spotted Skunk on road just to the E. of site. 1st time I've ever seen One



Source: 2008 Aerial Imagery, National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP)

SCALE

0 1,000 2,000 Feet

N

FIGURE 1
LOCATION MAP
NEODESHA SUBSTATION PROJECT
NEODESHA, WILSON COUNTY, KANSAS

AECOM

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AECOM
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T 512.472.4519 F 512.472.7519 www.aecom.com

April 6, 2009

Mr. Jeffrey Schmidt
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service
930 N 2nd ST
Fredonia, KS 66736
620-378-2128

Re: Neodesha Substation Project
Neodesha, Wilson County, Kansas

Dear Mr. Schmidt:

As a result of damage sustained during flooding in between June 30 and July 2, 2007, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is considering funding the construction of a switching station, an industrial substation and replacing an existing transmission line just west of the city of Neodesha. FEMA is preparing an Environmental Assessment for the above referenced project in Wilson County, Kansas. The location of the new site for the proposed industrial substation is located along Granby Avenue, east of US 400 in Neodesha, KS. The proposed substation is located on a 2.5-acre rectangular site is west of Granby Avenue. The footprint of the substation would be approximately 150 feet by 200 feet. A plan view of the project depicted on an aerial image is attached.

According to the NRCS Web Soil Survey 2.1, the proposed switching station site is not mapped as prime farmland. However, the substation site is mapped as Dennis silt loam 1 to 3 percent slopes, Dennis silty clay loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes, and Woodson silt loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes. The Dennis silt loam and Woodson silt loam are considered prime farmland, and the Dennis silty clay loam is considered farmland of statewide importance. The substation site is located on a previously disturbed open field with mostly native grasses.

The purpose of this letter is to invite comment from your agency on the existence of prime farmlands on the project site. Your timely response is greatly appreciated. Should you require any additional information, please contact me at (512) 457-7725.

Sincerely,

Tricia Bruck

Tricia Bruck
Environmental Scientist

Attachment

APPENDIX B
Public Notice

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
9221 Ward Parkway, Suite 300
Kansas City, Missouri, 64114-3372

FEMA

PUBLIC NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
NEODESHA SUBSTATION PROJECT
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
NEODESHA, WILSON COUNTY, KANSAS
FEMA-1711-DR-KS

Interested parties are hereby notified that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) for the construction of a substation and related facilities. The original power plant was substantially damaged by the storms and flooding between June 30 and July 2, 2007. Due to the high cost associated with restoring and elevating the facility out of the 100-year floodplain, the city of Neodesha has decided to apply to FEMA to use the eligible funds for an alternate project. FEMA was authorized under a Presidential disaster declaration (FEMA-1711-DR-KS) to provide Federal disaster assistance to city of Neodesha in Wilson County, Kansas as a result of damages incurred during the incident period beginning on June 30 and July 2, 2007 (Section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 USC 5121-5206, as amended (Stafford Act, Public Law 93-288).

A new 138kV switching station would be constructed in the existing Westar 138 kV transmission line right-of-way. A 3.2 mile 138 kV transmission line would be constructed from the switching station to West Granby Business Park. The transmission line would be located from the switching station beginning on the north side of CR 300 for approximately 1.4 miles. At the intersection of CR 300/US 400 the transmission line would turn north-east and continue along the west side of US 400 for approximately 1.2 miles. At the intersection of U.S. 400/ Granby Street it would turn west and continue along the south side of Granby Street for approximately 0.6 mile to West Granby Business Park. The transmission line would replace the existing 60kV Westar distribution line. It would consist of 75/H1 poles spaced approximately 300 feet apart connecting fiber optic shield wire. A new 138 kV to 13.2 kV industrial substation would be constructed within the West Granby Business Park. The construction of the new facilities would consist of site preparation (grading and/or excavation) and construction of the switching station and substation. The existing utility poles would be removed and replaced with new H1 poles.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4371 *et seq.*), and associated environmental statutes, a DEA has been prepared to evaluate the proposed action's potential impacts on the human and natural environment. The DEA summarizes the purpose and need, site selection process, affected environment, and potential environmental consequences associated with the proposed action. The DEA is available for review between April 16, 2009 to May 15, 2009 at the Neodesha Rankin Library located at 502 Indiana Street, Neodesha, Kansas. The DEA can also be viewed and downloaded from FEMA's website at http://www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/envdocuments/index.shtm. Written comments on the DEA can be faxed to FEMA's Regional Office in Kansas City, Missouri at (816) 283-7018. Comments should be received no later than 5:00pm on May 15, 2009. If no substantive comments are received, the DEA will become final and this initial Public Notice will also serve as the final Public Notice. The DEA will then be moved to the archives page at http://www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/envdocuments/archives_index.shtm.