ADOPTION OF EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (EA/EIS)

Part I. Proposed Action Description

Applicant/Contact Name & Address: Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc. (LEC)
PO Box 628, Eureka, Montana 59917

Contact: M. Jamie Stark, Engineering Manager

Type of Action: To issue a utility easement for the replacement of failing electrical transmission cables across the portion of Lake Koocanusa that was an historic river bed and was recognized as a navigable stream.

Location Affected by Action: The Project Area is located approximately 6 air miles west of Eureka, Montana and extends from the west side of Koocanusa Reservoir to the east side. It contains approximately 1.9 acres within the upper geographic area of the Upper Kootenai Drainage. It includes all or portions of Sections 13 and 19, Township 37 North, Range 27 and 28 West.

Narrative Summary of Proposed Action:

The purpose of the project is to replace the failing underwater electrical transmission cables in Lake Koocanusa. An assessment of the existing cables conducted in 2007 resulted in the decision that the cables needed to be replaced, rather than repaired, in order to prevent power losses to residents on the west side of Lake Koocanusa. LEC seeks to replace these electrical cables by placing new cables along a new alignment approximately 3 miles north of the existing route. This alignment would cross shallow and deep water habitats from Murray Springs Hatchery on the eastern shore, to the Young Creek Road end on the western shore. The State of Montana would issue an easement for the utility to occupy state land.

Part II. Existing Environmental Review Information

Title: Lake Koocanusa Underwater Cable Replacement Environmental Assessment

Publication Date: **September 2010**

Lead Agency: USDA Forest Service
Responsible for Environmental Assessment Preparation: Michelle Havey
Jon Houghton, PhD
Hart Crowser, Inc.
120 Third Avenue South, Suite 110
Edmonds, Washington 98020

Location Where Interested Parties Can View or Obtain the Document:

Lincoln Electric Cooperative
PO Box 628,
Eureka, MT 59917

Or,

Kootenai National Forest
Eureka Ranger Station
949 US Highway 93 North
Eureka, MT 59917-9550

Part III. Criteria for Adopting Existing Environmental Review

☒Yes ☐No	Does the existing environmental review cover an action paralleling or closely related to the proposed action?
☒Yes ☐No	Is the information in the existing environmental review accurate and clearly presented?
☒Yes ☐No	Is the information in the existing environmental review applicable to the action being considered?
☒Yes ☐No	Were all appropriate Agencies consulted during preparation of the existing environmental review?
☒Yes ☐No	Were alternatives to the proposed action evaluated as part of the existing environmental review effort?
☒Yes ☐No	Have all of the impacts of the proposed action been accurately identified as part of the existing environmental review?
☒Yes ☐No	If the existing environmental review identifies any significant impacts as a result of the proposed action, will they be mitigated below the level of significance?

Part IV. Conclusion

If the answers to ALL of the questions listed above are "Yes", the existing environmental review can be considered sufficient to satisfy DNRC's MEPA review responsibilities.

Name: Brian Manning
Title: Unit Manager
Date: 1-5-11