



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Shawnee National Forest
Hidden Springs/Mississippi Bluffs
Ranger Districts

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Vienna, IL 62995
618-658-2111

File Code: 2700

Date: December 9th, 2015

To: Interested Persons and Organizations:

The Shawnee National Forest is seeking comment on the proposed categorical exclusion from analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of the amendment of a special-use permit issued to Ameren Illinois. We plan to amend the special-use permit to allow for the reconstruction of an overhead 161,000 Volt circuit extending from Ameren's Cape Substation to the Joppa 161 Substation. Approximately 2.6 miles of this line is located in existing right of way within the Shawnee National Forest. Ameren is proposing to replace seven wooden H-frame structures with new structures of adequate height and strength. The new structures will be placed in the same location as the old structures. Access to the structure locations will utilize existing National Forest System roads and access routes across private property. There will not be any tree removal or new access roads being built. This letter is to advise you of our proposal and to solicit your comment on our use of the categorical exclusion (CE) described below.

We expect to utilize CE 36 CFR 220.6(e) (2) Additional construction or reconstruction of existing telephone or utility lines in a designated corridor.

Additional project information is available for review at the Forest website:
www.fs.usda.gov/projects/shawnee/landmanagement/projects.

The proposed permit activities may be categorically excluded from analysis and documentation in an environmental assessment only if there are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action. My preliminary assessment is that the proposal may be categorically excluded from further NEPA analysis and, in accordance with the Forest Service Handbook 1909.15:32.2, project record and decision memo are required.

If you have questions regarding the above proposal, please contact Angela Kelley, Realty Specialist, at the above address and phone. Please submit comments by mail, email ajkelley@fs.fed.us, or fax to (618) 658-1300.

Sincerely,

TIM POHLMAN
District Ranger

