

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Minot Peak Radio Station Antenna Installation

Project Manager: James Hall - TPC-TPP-4

Location: Grays Harbor County, State

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.19 Microwave, meteorological and radio towers

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to install two antennas on the radio tower at BPA's Minot Peak Radio Station. One antenna would be placed about 80 feet high on the radio tower and a second antenna would be installed at the top of the radio tower. No ground disturbance would occur.

Vehicles would be parked on the radio station spur road. Existing roads would be used to access the radio station.

Findings: In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) of the Department of Energy's (DOE) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Regulations (57 FR 15144, Apr. 24, 1992, as amended at 61 FR 36221-36243, Jul. 9, 1996; 61 FR 64608, Dec. 6, 1996, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011), BPA has determined that the proposed action:

- (1) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D (see attached Environmental Checklist);
- (2) does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- (3) has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

/s/ Tish Eaton

Tish Eaton
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange

Katey Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: April 30, 2020

Attachment: Environmental Checklist

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Checklist

This checklist documents environmental considerations for the proposed project and explains why the project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources and would meet other integral elements of the applied categorical exclusion.

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Project Site Description

Minot Peak Radio Station is located at about 500 feet in elevation on Minot Peak in hilly Washington coast range terrain. There are five other radio stations and eight towers located on Minot Peak all accessed by the same road. The small (3.6 acre) parcel underlying BPA's radio station, managed by the Washington Department of Natural Resources, is surrounded by private timber lands. A few trees are located adjacent to the north fence of the radio station with grasses and shrubs around the other sides. The project vicinity has been logged with second and third growth stands present around the radio stations.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. Historic and Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Because the radio tower was built in 2008 (is not considered historic) and no ground disturbance would occur, a determination of no potential to effect was made by the BPA Archaeologist on April 14, 2020.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbing activities would occur.		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> All work would be on the radio tower; no plants present/disturbed.		
4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Minot Peak Radio Station is located about 1.3 miles from a marbled murrelet surrounding section for a detection section. Because no trees would be removed, the project area lacks contiguous old-growth forest stands and other habitat characteristics affiliated with this species' nesting requirements, and the work would occur over 0.25 mile from all the habitat areas, there would be no effect on marbled murrelet. For other sensitive species, because suitable habitat is not present for streaked horned lark, yellow-billed cuckoo, Oregon spotted frog, Kincaid's lupine, Nelson's checker-mallow, and water howellia, there would be no effect on these species.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No water bodies, floodplains or fish present at the radio site. Because suitable habitat is not present for bull trout, there would be no effect on this ESA-listed species.		

6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No wetlands present at the radio site.		
7. Groundwater and Aquifers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance proposed.		
8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There would be no changes to land use and the project area is not part of a specially-designated area.		
9. Visual Quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The two additional antennas would be visible from a close distance although they may not be noticeably different from the current view of Minot Peak; with eight other towers in the same area it likely would not degrade the existing visual quality on Minot Peak.		
10. Air Quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No dust would be generated at the radio station although some dust may be generated during use of the gravel access road to the project site.		
11. Noise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Noise generated would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours.		
12. Human Health and Safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No impacts to human health and safety are anticipated.		

Evaluation of Other Integral Elements

The proposed project would also meet conditions that are integral elements of the categorical exclusion. The project would not:

- Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.
Explanation, if necessary:
- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.
Explanation, if necessary:
- Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases.
Explanation, if necessary:
- Involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those of the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health.
Explanation, if necessary:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: BPA requires that WSDOT contact Washington Department of Natural Resources as the underlying landowner for the radio station before work begins.

Based on the foregoing, this proposed project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts to any environmentally sensitive resource.

Signed: /s/ Tish Eaton
Tish Eaton, ECT-4

Date: April 30, 2020