

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Verizon Wireless Upgrades at Kitts Corner and Lea Hill

Project Manager: Chuck Wedick, TELP-TPP-3

Location: King County, Washington

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 proposes to allow Verizon to upgrade antennas and associated equipment at two wireless sites located on BPA transmission structures.

Kitts Corner: Project actions would occur at the Kitts Corner wireless site, located on structure 4/2 of the Tacoma-Covington Nos. 3 & 4 lines. Proposed work would include removing six antennas, removing six remote radio units (RRU), installing nine new antennas, and installing six new RRUs.

Lea Hill: Project actions would occur at the Lea Hill wireless site, located on structure 13/3 of BPA's Tacoma-Covington Nos. 3 & 4 lines. Proposed work would include removing nine antennas, removing 12 combiners, removing 12 lines of coax, installing 9 new antennas, installing 2 new OVP, and installing 2 hybrid cables.

There would be no ground disturbance associated with this project.

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/ Kali Levy

Kali Levy
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Portland State University

Reviewed by:

/s/ Carol Leiter

Carol Leiter
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey C. Grange September 23, 2021

Katey C. Grange Date
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment(s): 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.

Proposed Action: Verizon Wireless Upgrades at Kitts Corner and Lea Hills

Project Site Description

Kitts Corner: Project actions would occur on and below structure 4/2 of the Tacoma-Covington Nos. 3 & 4 line located in King County, Washington (Township 21 North, Range 4 East, and Section 19). The structure is in a BPA right-of-way in a greenway between neighborhoods. There are no water bodies or wetlands in the project area. An unimproved BPA access road provides access to the structure.

Lea Hills: The project actions would occur on and below structure 13/3 of the Tacoma-Covington Nos. 3 & 4 line located in King County, Washington (Township 21 North, Range 5 East, and Section 4). The structure is in a BPA right-of-way in a greenway between neighborhoods. There is a wetland area approximately 350 feet east. An unimproved BPA access road provides access to the structure.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA historian review found these actions would not have the potential to cause effects on historic properties, assuming such historic properties were present. A no potential to cause effects memo for Lea Hill was issued on September 3, 2021. A no potential to cause effects memo for Kitts Corner was issued on September 16, 2021.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no ground disturbance associated with the project actions.

3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no known occurrences of special-status plants in the project areas. Access to the structures is provided by unimproved roadways, meaning no to very little vegetation would be impacted in accessing the towers.

4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: No known occurrences of special-status wildlife are located with the project areas. Project locations are not located within or adjacent to any critical habitat areas. Any local wildlife in the area may be temporarily disturbed by noise generated by project work.

Notes:

- If any active nests are found on the structures prior to construction, the construction would be delayed until the nests are unoccupied.

5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project sites are not located in or near water bodies.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project sites are not located in wetlands. The Lea Hill site is adjacent to a wetland, but there would be no effect to wetland soils as access to the structure is provided by an existing roadway.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no ground disturbance; therefore, there would be no impact to groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no change of land use. The project sites house existing communications equipment.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Visual quality would remain the same as existing conditions. Project actions would replace existing equipment with similar equipment.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions would occur during construction; however, there would be no significant changes to air quality during or after construction.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Construction noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours. Operational noise would not change.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All applicable safety standards would be followed during project work. The project would not create conditions that would increase risk to human health and safety.

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: N/A

Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation: N/A

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: N/A

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: N/A

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: The project would occur in BPA right-of-way easements.

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

Signed: /s/ Kali Levy Septemer 23, 2021
Kali Levy, ECT – 4 Date
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Portland State University