

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Teton Communication Tower Extension

Project Manager: Jonathan Toobian

Location: Teton County, Wyoming

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

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to allow AT&T to extend the height of their communications tower located on BPA's Teton Substation property. The existing 80-foot-tall tower has had ongoing signal issues since installation in 2014. AT&T has requested to extend the tower by 40 feet to provide better line of sight over existing trees in the area. To install an extension, existing antennas would be removed and a matching tower extension would be added atop the existing pole. The antennas would be placed in their new positions atop the tower extension piece. The tower was designed to accommodate the added load and would not require any reinforcement for the work to occur. Ground disturbance would be limited to construction vehicle traffic and staging in the previously disturbed and compacted parking area adjacent to BPA's Teton Substation and AT&T's communication tower. No new access road work is needed to perform this work.

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, July 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/ Claire McClory

Claire McClory

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: April 5, 2018

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.

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Project Site Description

All work would take place within the previously disturbed footprint of BPA's Teton Substation and the associated fee-owned access road, located in Teton County, Wyoming. Land use surrounding the project area is private and residential.

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> BPA contract historian Tama Tochiyara concluded the project would have no potential to effect historic properties on 3/16/18.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Minor soil compaction from construction equipment and staging in previously disturbed area.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No special status species present.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No special status species present.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> None present.		
6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> None present.		

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No potential to effect.

8. **Land Use and Specially Designated Areas**



Explanation: No change to land use.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: Increased tower height would result in more visible antennas above the existing tree line. Adjacent neighborhood Homeowners Association (HOA) has coordinated with AT&T about the tower extension proposal. AT&T has agreed to plant some landscape screening on HOA jurisdictional property to mitigate for the visual effects of the tower extension proposal.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Small amount of vehicle dust during construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Small amount of noise during construction. All work would take place during normal business hours.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No effect.

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: Teton Substation is owned by BPA in fee. An adjacent neighborhood HOA has been in ongoing discussions with AT&T about the tower extension. Because the tower is on BPA property, the HOA does not need to approve the tower extension for the project to move forward. However, AT&T has agreed to plant screening plants and landscaping off BPA property to mitigate for visual effects of the tower extension.

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

Signed: /s/ Claire McClory
Claire McClory, ECT-4

Date: April 5, 2018