

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Boistfort USGS Seismic Equipment Upgrade

Project Manager: James Hall—TPC-TPP-4

Location: Lewis 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: On behalf of United States Geological Survey (USGS), Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) would install a copper fiber cable below an existing ice bridge, between an outdoor equipment cabinet and BPA's indoor equipment building at BPA's Boistfort Radio Station. The fiber cable would then be routed in an existing conduit from the BPA equipment building to an adjacent Washington State Patrol building. Additionally, a 144-Watt circuit would be installed inside the outdoor equipment cabinet. Existing USGS circuits between BPA's Boistfort Radio Station and BPA's Covington Substation would be removed.

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/ Beth Belanger

Beth Belanger
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Flux Resources, LLC

Reviewed by:

/s/ David K. Kennedy

David K. Kennedy
Executive Manager, Environmental Planning & Analysis

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Date: September 12, 2019

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer
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

The project area is on Boistfort Peak in Lewis County, Washington, approximately fifteen miles southwest of the city of Chehalis. The peak is developed with several other communications facilities. The surrounding area consists of forests and timberlands. The proposed project is in Section 32, Township 12 North, Range 4 West.

The project location is graveled and devoid of vegetation. The nearest waterbody is Big Creek, located 0.35 miles west of the project location. There are no wetlands in the area.

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 cultural staff have reviewed the proposed project and determined that there is no potential to cause effects to historical or cultural resources because there would be no ground disturbance associated with the project. Additionally, the tower is not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The proposed project would not involve any ground disturbance; therefore, there would be no impact to geology and soils.		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The proposed project location is in a graveled, fenced area; therefore, there would be no impacts to plants.		
4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There are no Federal or state special-status wildlife species or habitat present at the site location; therefore, there would be no impacts. Construction activities may temporarily displace non-listed wildlife but there would be no long-term impacts to wildlife.		
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> The proposed project would not involve any ground disturbance. Additionally, there are no water bodies, floodplains, or fish present at, or near, the project location; therefore, there would be no impacts.		

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: The proposed project would not involve ground disturbance. Additionally, there are no wetlands present at, or near, the project location; therefore, there would be no impacts to wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: The proposed project would not involve ground disturbance; therefore, there would be no impacts to groundwater or aquifers.

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

Explanation: The project would not change the land use at the location and there are no specially-designated areas in the vicinity; therefore, there would be no impacts to these resources.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: The visual quality would not change at the site.

10. **Air Quality**

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**

Explanation: The site is in a remote location, with no nearby residences. Construction noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours. Operational noise would not change significantly.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: During project activities, all standard safety protocols would be followed. Project activities would not impact human health or 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, 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: The scope of the work is minimal and would not require landowner notification or coordination.

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

Signed: /s/ Beth Belanger
Beth Belanger, ECT-4
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Flux Resources, LLC

Date: September 12, 2019