

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: T-Mobile Antenna Upgrade at Hazel Dell – Ross

Project Manager: Chuck Wedick and Mike Borrows

Location: Clark 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 (BPA) proposes to allow T-Mobile to upgrade the existing wireless antennas at the Hazel Dell wireless site located at BPA's Ross MW Radio Station at the Ross Complex in Clark County, Washington. Project activities would include removing (6) existing antennas, installing (6) new antennas, removing (6) existing remote radio units (RRU), installing (6) new RRUs, replacing antenna mounts, removing existing Hybrid Cables, installing new Hybrid Cables with Pendants, and removing all existing Coax. T-Mobile would be taking over a legacy Sprint location acquired by T-Mobile upon the merger of the two companies. All equipment removals and replacements would occur on an existing standalone communication tower and the area directly below, including the existing control house. No ground disturbance would occur.

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

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 site is located within an urban area of Clark County in the State of Washington (Township 2 North, Range 1 East, Section 14). Work would occur on and directly under a standalone communications tower on the north side of NE North Road across from the Ross Substation. Immediately northeast of the tower is a small stand of trees. An intermittent stream runs east-west approximately 120 feet north of the tower. Immediately east and south of the tower a maintained grassy slope runs approximately 40 feet to NE North Road. Access to the site is available using an existing road.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed project activities to upgrade the antenna at the microwave radio station site would have no potential to cause effect. Although originally constructed in 1950, the site was previously determined to be not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. A BPA Historian review has shown that, as no ground disturbance would occur as a result of this undertaking and no built historic resources are present, the proposed work would not impact the integrity of historic resources.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no ground disturbance within the proposed project actions.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The vegetation around the project site is maintained grass. There are no known occurrences of special-status plants located within the project area.

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 within the project areas. Project locations are not located within or adjacent to any critical habitat areas.

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: Project location is not located within water ways. No ground disturbance would occur; therefore, there would be no potential for impact on the nearby intermittent stream.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project location is not in a wetland.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project actions would not involve ground disturbance and would not impact groundwater.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no change of land use. The project site houses 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.

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 on BPA-owned land. No coordination required.

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 August 18, 2021
Kali Levy, ECT-4 Date
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Portland State University