

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: AT&T Winona LTE Antenna Upgrade

Project No.: OR2021055

Project Manager: Jonathan Toobian – TELP-TPP-3

Location: Polk County, Oregon

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 AT&T Mobility (AT&T) to upgrade existing long-term evolution (LTE) antenna equipment on existing communications equipment owned by BPA and leased to AT&T. The communications structure is located adjacent to the BPA Salem Substation in Polk County, Oregon and is referred to as the Winona Site by AT&T. The existing antennas would be replaced due to technological advancements.

Specifically, a BPA-certified contractor would remove six existing antennas, three existing remote radio units, and one existing fiber cable and install six new antennas, nine new remote radio units, and one new fiber cable. In addition, the replacement and/or addition of corresponding telecommunications equipment would occur within AT&T's fenced area underneath the transmission structure on BPA fee-owned property. AT&T would access the communications structure using a bucket truck and by climbing the structure. The project would not involve ground disturbance and would use established access roads and work areas.

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/ Douglas Corkran

Douglas Corkran
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey C. Grange May 3, 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.

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Project Site Description

The project site is located on BPA fee-owned property at BPA Salem Substation in Polk County, Oregon. It is located in Township 7 South, Range 3 West, Section 29. The project site is a fenced communications structure located in a grassy area between the Dallas Highway and the BPA Salem Substation. The site consists of one 120-foot-tall monopole structure and various telecommunications equipment in cabinets at the structure's base. The communications structure is located along the access road used to access the BPA substation. The area is level, vegetated with non-native grasses, and routinely mowed. The surrounding area is comprised primarily of agricultural and rural residential land uses. In addition, the Willamette River is located less than one-quarter mile south of the project site.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing work would occur. On April 23, 2021 BPA archeologists determined that no historic properties would be affected

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed activities would not require ground-disturbing activities.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work in existing equipment area; no special-status species present or disturbed. Existing roadways and established work areas would be used.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work in existing communications equipment area; no habitat present.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed activities would not require in-water work or ground disturbance that would produce sediment that could enter nearby waterways.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed activities would not require ground disturbance that would produce sediment that could enter nearby wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground disturbance proposed.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no change to land use at this location and it is not located in a specially-designated area.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The new antennas would be a like-for-like replacement of the existing antennas; therefore, they would be visually consistent with existing conditions.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The activities would generate a small amount of vehicle emissions and dust during construction.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Some temporary construction noise would occur during daylight hours. The operational noise of the antennas would not change.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Workers would follow all standard safety protocols. 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: 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: No notification – all work on BPA fee-owned property and no visual or other effects to adjacent landowners.

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

Signed: /s/ Douglas Corkran May 3, 2021
Douglas Corkran, ECT-4 Date
Environmental Protection Specialist