

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Verizon Upgrades at Multiple Washington Locations

Project Manager: Chuck Wedick – TELP-TTP-3

Location: Snohomish, Kistap, and King Counties, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.9 Multiple use of powerline rights-of-way; B1.19 Microwave, meteorological and radio towers

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow Verizon to make upgrades to antennas and associated equipment at multiple wireless sites. Work would occur on structures and in equipment yards under or adjacent to the structures which house existing wireless communication equipment. Project actions would include removing, replacing, or installing new antennas, remote radio units, coaxial cable, diplexers, cabinets, and other associated equipment. There would be no ground disturbance associated with this project. Equipment used would likely include pickup trucks, a bucket truck, and hand tools.

Forney: Work would occur on and in the equipment yard of structure 5/2 of the Sno-King Tap to Echo Lake-Monroe No. 1 line.

Orweiler: Work would occur on and in the equipment yard of structure 14/5 of the Kitsap-Bangor No. 1 line.

Soos Creek: Work would occur on and in the equipment yard of structure 4/1 of the Covington-Duwamish No. 1 line.

Snoqualmie Ridge: Work would occur on and in the equipment yard of structure 3/6 of the Echo Lake-Monroe No. 1 line.

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 October 20, 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 Upgrades at Multiple Washington Locations

Project Site Description

Project sites are BPA rights-of-way easements in residential areas of varying density.

Forney: Work would occur on and in the equipment yard of structure 5/2 of the Sno-King Tap to Echo Lake-Monroe No. 1 line in Snohomish County, Washington (Township 27 North, Range 6 East, and Section 26). The structure is approximately 20 feet south of 164th Drive in a field of grasses and weeds.

Orweiler: Work would occur on and in the equipment yard of structure 14/5 of the Kitsap-Bangor No. 1 line in Kitsap County, Washington (Township 26 North, Range 1 East, and Section 28). Access is provided an unimproved access road.

Soos Creek: Work would occur on and in the equipment yard of structure 4/1 of the Covington-Duwamish No. 1 line in King County, Washington (Township 22 North, Range 5 East, and Section 22). Access is provided an unimproved access road.

Snoqualmie Ridge: Work would occur on and in the equipment yard of structure 3/6 of the Echo Lake-Monroe No. 1 line in King County, Washington (Township 24 North, Range 7 East, and Section 25). An unimproved access road runs approximately 25 feet from the tower.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA historian review of the proposed project actions found no potential to cause effects to historic or archaeological resources.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground disturbance would occur with this project.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: No special status plants are known to be in the project areas. Additionally, the structures are located within approximately 25 feet, or less, of unimproved or paved roadways, the use of which would minimize impacts to vegetation. Some vegetation would be crushed in accessing the structures

Notes:

- To prevent the spread of noxious weeds, the construction vehicles would be required to be cleaned before entering a new project location if traveling off road.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: There are no known occurrences of special-status species near project locations and project locations are not located within or adjacent to critical habitat areas. Any local wildlife in the area may temporarily be disturbed by noise generated from 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: Project locations are not located within or near water bodies.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Project locations are not located within or near wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no ground disturbance associated with this project; 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: There would be minimal changes to the appearance of the project sites.

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: Project actions would occur on BPA rights-of-way easements. Verizon would be responsible for notifying the landowners and coordinating access.

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 October 20, 2021
Kali Levy, ECT – 4 Date
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Portland State University