

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: T-Mobile PUD Power Route and Upgrades at BPA Shelton Substation

Project No.: WA20220216

Project Manager: Jonathan Toobian – TELP-TPP-3

Location: Mason, WA

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.19 Microwave, meteorological, and radio towers; B4.9 Multiple use of powerline rights-of-way; B1.31 Installation or relocation of machinery and equipment.

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow T-Mobile access to make upgrades to their equipment at the BPA Shelton Substation site. The proposed upgrades to T-Mobile's equipment would involve a 180-foot-long (2 feet deep by 1 foot wide) trench to supply a new 2-inch-diameter conduit power feed from the Mason County PUD-owned power pole to the T-Mobile wireless site located at the communication structure in the substation. The new power feed would connect to a new electrical combo meter with a support post located outside of and adjacent to the fenced-in area of the Shelton Substation communication structure. A proposed 10-foot-long trench (2 feet deep by 1 foot wide) would supply power from the combo meter to a new 50kVA isolation transformer, service light, GFCI outlet, and housing cube, which would be installed within the fenced-in communication structure area.

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/ Sylas Daughtrey

Sylas Daughtrey
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Katey C. Grange
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: T-Mobile PUD Power Route and Upgrades at BPA Shelton Substation

Project Site Description

All work would occur within the BPA Shelton Substation and the radio tower facility. The site is located in Mason County, WA. The legal parcel description is Township 20 North, Range 4 West, DC 37. The proposed site of construction has previous ground disturbance, and is located in areas that are graveled, mulched, paved, or have compacted soils. There are no water bodies or wetlands within close proximity to the project location. Shelton substation is surrounded by residential parcels, undeveloped timberland, and a public airport with a lighted runway.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed work does not include any ground-disturbing activities that would affect cultural or historic resources. BPA cultural resource review has stated the footprint of the substation, and the area directly around the substation leading up to the street, has seen substantial disturbance (to a depth of upwards of 5 feet and extends upwards of 4 feet from the substation) and it is highly unlikely archaeological resources would be identified. BPA Historian review has shown that the proposed project would have no potential to cause effect to historic properties.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Ground disturbance would occur at the existing communication site. The area of ground-disturbing activities would take place in and around previously-disturbed areas. These previously-disturbed areas include graveled, mulched, paved, and/or compacted soils. The Shelton Substation site would be returned to pre-project conditions from all disturbed soils surrounding the proposed construction area.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project location is unvegetated; therefore, there would be no impacts to vegetation, including Federal or state special-status species and/or habitats.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no Federal or state special-status species or habitats at any of the sites that would be impacted by the project. If any active nests are found on the tower prior to the project activities, the work would be delayed until the nest is unoccupied. The construction and work area is located within well-established areas outside critical habitat. Temporary disturbance to non-sensitive wildlife may occur during work periods, but it is anticipated that wildlife would distribute to adjacent habitats and that noise disturbance would be consistent with ongoing operations of the sites.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No water bodies, floodplains, or fish disturbance would occur at the existing communication site.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no wetlands at the existing communication site.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Ground disturbance would occur at the existing communication site; however, the construction area would take place in and around areas with previous ground disturbance. Excavation would not occur at a depth to intersect ground water. No disturbance to groundwater and aquifers would take place.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no change to land use at any of the locations. The site is not in a specially-designated area.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The presence of the proposed equipment would have minimal impacts and would be consistent with existing equipment. The visual quality would be similar to pre-project conditions.

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 substantial 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. Operation noise would not change.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All standard safety protocols would be followed during project activities to minimize risks to construction workers. The proposed work would not have hazardous substance activity that would pose a risk to work safety and construction operations.

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: BPA Shelton Substation is located on BPA owned property. No additional landowner notification, involvement, or coordination would be required.

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

Signed: /s/ Sylas Daughtrey January 23, 2023
Sylas Daughtrey, ECT-4 Date
Environmental Protection Specialist