

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Acquisition of Greer Gulch Mobile REDI Radio Site

Project No.: P06519, TER ID 16-0175

Project Manager: Charley Majors - TEPF-CSB-2

Location: Jefferson County, Montana

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.24 Property Transfers

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to acquire Greer Gulch Radio Site in Jefferson County, Montana to support the development of its Mobile REDI program. BPA would purchase a 1-acre parcel of land (Tract ID: GRGH-RS-1) from Doddridge Living Trust. The parcel is currently undeveloped with no existing structures or equipment. In addition, BPA would acquire perpetual easements on access roads for ingress and egress to the site on three parcels owned by Doddridge Living Trust (Tract ID: GRGH-SAR-1), Jerry and Bonnie L. Ward (Tract ID: GRGH-SAR-2), and Anne Marie Carey (Tract ID: GRGH-SAR-3). BPA would conduct environmental analysis for any proposed facility or new construction on the parcel, if and/or when the actions are proposed.

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.

Jillian Cosgrove
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Sarah T. Biegel
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: Acquisition of Greer Gulch Mobile REDI Radio Site

Project Site Description

Greer Gulch Radio Site is located in the NE1/4SW1/4 of Section 11, Township 1 North, Range 2 West, Principal Meridian, of Jefferson County, Montana. The site is located along a sparsely vegetated ridgeline between Interstate 90 to the north and Jefferson River and Highway 2 to the south. This site is 14 miles east of the town of Whitehall. There are three other radio towers within 500 feet of the site along the same access road. The land surrounding the site is owned privately by Doddridge Living Trust. The Bureau of Land Management owns land 0.5 miles to the west and south of the site, and Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park is located 2.5 miles southwest of the site.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action is a land acquisition only and involves no ground disturbance. The BPA archaeologist reviewed the project and concluded that the purchase of land would have no potential to cause effect to historic properties.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action is a land acquisition only and involves no ground disturbance. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact geology and soils.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action is a land acquisition only and involves no ground disturbance. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact plant species.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action is a land acquisition only and involves no ground disturbance or noise. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact wildlife species or habitat.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action is a land acquisition only. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact water bodies or floodplains and would have no effect on fish species or habitats.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action is a land acquisition only. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action is a land acquisition only. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no change in zoning or land use from this acquisition. BPA would conduct environmental analysis for any proposed facility or new construction on the parcel, if and/or when the actions are proposed. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact land use or specially-designated areas.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action is a land acquisition only. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact visual quality.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action is a land acquisition only. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact air quality.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action is a land acquisition only. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact noise.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action is a land acquisition only. There are no existing structures or equipment on the property. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact 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: BPA's Realty Specialist has been in communication with landowners Doddridge Living Trust, Jerry and Bonnie L. Ward, and Anne Marie Carey.

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

Signed:

Jillian Cosgrove
Environmental Protection Specialist