

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Pacificorp Colocation at BPA's Sunnyside Radio Station

Project No.: P06616- N0997

Project Manager: Erik Lane, TPCV-TPP-4

Location: Yakima County, WA

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.19 Microwave, meteorological and radio towers. B4.6 Additions and modifications to transmission facilities

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA is proposing to allow Pacificorp to mount four antennas on BPA's radio tower at the Sunnyside Radio Station, add coax/waveguide to the tower and under the ice bridge, and through the wall of the building. New radio racks would also be installed inside the building. All work would be conducted within the fence line and no ground disturbance would be required.

BPA authorizes the use of and manages its fee-owned lands pursuant to its authority under sections 2(e) and 2(f) of the Bonneville Project Act. 16 U.S.C. § 832a(e)-(f).

Findings: In accordance with Section 1021.102 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; 89 FR 34074, April 30, 2024; 90 FR 29676, July 3, 2025 [Interim Final Rule]) and *DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Implementing Procedures* (dated June 30, 2025), BPA has determined the following:

- 1) The proposed action fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021;
- 2) The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion; and
- 3) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal (see attached Environmental Evaluation).

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.¹

¹ BPA is aware that the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), on February 25, 2025, issued an interim final rule to remove its NEPA implementing regulations at 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500–1508. Based on CEQ guidance, and to promote completion of its NEPA review in a timely manner and without delay, in this CX BPA is voluntarily relying on the CEQ regulations, in addition to the interim final rule to revise DOE NEPA regulations implementing NEPA at 10 C.F.R. Part 1021 and NEPA Implementing Procedures (dated June 30, 2025), to meet its obligations under NEPA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 *et seq.*

Christopher H. Furey
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Katey C. Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Evaluation

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: Pacificorp Colocation at BPA's Sunnyside Radio Station

Project Site Description

The project is located at BPA's Sunnyside Radio Station facility located in Yakima County, WA. The site is located in Washington Township 12 North, Range 23 East, Section 31. The radio station is located in a rural location in a high elevation arid landscape with minimal vegetation.

No wetlands are within the vicinity of the radio station. The intermittent Washout Creek is located about 1,400 feet east of the radio station.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The BPA archaeologist reviewed the proposed activities and determined that these activities at the Sunnyside Radio Station do not have potential to cause effects to historic or cultural resources.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground disturbing work would take place as part of the proposed activities. Some minor soil compaction may occur from vehicles and equipment at the sites. There would be no substantial impacts to geology and soils.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No vegetation removal would take place as part of the proposed activities with the occasional exception of very minor removal of branches brush or grasses that may interfere with access to equipment vaults or buildings. Some minor soil compaction may occur from vehicles and equipment at the sites. There would be no substantial impacts to plants. There would be no effect to ESA-listed plant species or to sensitive plant species.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wildlife habitat removal would take place as part of the proposed activities. Some very minor noise and visual disturbance could occur at select locations, but these disturbances would be temporary, transitory and likely similar to background levels of noise and visual disturbance. No substantial impacts to wildlife are expected. There would be no effect to ESA-listed wildlife species or to sensitive wildlife species.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would take place at existing facilities and within existing radio station site boundaries. No in-water work would take place. No sediment or hazardous material releases are expected from the proposed actions. No impacts to water bodies, floodplains or fish are expected.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would take place at existing facilities and within existing radio station site boundaries. No work in wetlands would take place. No sediment or hazardous material releases are expected from the proposed actions. No impacts to wetlands are expected.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would take place at existing facilities and within existing radio station site boundaries. No sediment or hazardous material releases are expected from the proposed actions. No impacts to groundwater or aquifers are expected.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would take place at existing radio station facilities with a new radio communications tower. No changes in land use are proposed. No impact to land use or specially-designated areas is expected.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would take place at existing radio station facility with other antenna and wireless network equipment. Some minor changes in the visual appearance of antennas, wiring or equipment may occur, but these would be consistent with the existing uses of the site and would generally not be overtly noticeable. No substantial impacts to visual quality are expected.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Small amounts of fugitive dust and vehicle emissions may occur during site work, however these would be temporary and minor. No significant impacts to air quality are expected.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Some minor noise associated with construction equipment and vehicles may occur but would be temporary and during daylight hours. No significant impacts from noise are expected.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No release of hazardous material is expected.

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: Sunnyside Radio Station is a BPA-owned facility.

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

Signed:

Christopher H. Furey
Environmental Protection Specialist