

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: AT&T Wireless Upgrades at I-5 & 75th Site (Update to previous CX determination issued on May 12, 2025)

Project No.: W0926

Project Manager: Brian Keith – TELP-TPP-3

Location: Snohomish County, Washington

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: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow T-Mobile to move their antennas and related telecommunication equipment on transmission tower 5/6 of the Snohomish – Beverly Park #3 transmission line to transmission tower 5/5 of the Snohomish-Beverly Park #9 transmission line. This CX determination has been updated to reflect a change in proposed tower installation location.

The structures are located on private property with an existing easement. Telecommunications equipment would be removed from one transmission tower and installed on an adjacent transmission tower.

On Tower 5/6, work would include:

- Removing nine panel antennas, cables, and other associated equipment.

On Tower 5/5, work would include:

- Install nine antennas, six tower mounted amplifiers, cables, and other associated equipment.

BPA leases space on its transmission structures for wireless antenna facilities pursuant to its authority under sections 2(e) and 2(f) of the Bonneville Project Act. 16 U.S.C. § 832a(e)-(f).

Additional groundwork would be required for the communications site, including trenching from the structure to the compound, equipment cabinets, conduit, diplexers, remote radio heads, and other associated equipment. These additional activities would occur on property not on the BPA-owned structure. The additional work would not be constructed, authorized, or funded by BPA and would be addressed in the Federal Communications Commission's licensing process and associated environmental compliance.

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 the current *DOE*

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Procedures, 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.

Jessica A. Heppler
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Katey C. Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment(s): Environmental Evaluation

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Evaluation

This evaluation 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

Structure 5/6 of BPA's Snohomish – Beverly Park No. 3 transmission line and structure 5/5 of BPA's Snohomish-Beverly Park No. 9 transmission line are within private property on the transmission right of way (ROW) in Everett, Snohomish County, Washington (Township 28 North, Range 5 East, Section 8). The ground cover at the work site consists of regularly maintained common grasses, weeds, shrubbery, and gravel. South of the project site is characterized by a residential neighborhood. Running northwest of the project site is Interstate Five. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the National Wetland Inventory, there are no wetlands in the project area, nor are there hydric soils present.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: BPA initiated Section 106 consultation on June 1, 2026, with the Tulalip Tribes, the Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians, and the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). BPA determined that the proposed activities would result in no adverse effects to historic properties. On June 1, 2026, the DAHP concurred with BPA's determination of no adverse effects to historic properties. On July 1, 2026, the 30-day response period expired. No other comments were received.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: Project activities would not be expected to impact site soils, or geology.

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

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: There are no documented occurrences of any special-status plant species, or plant species protected under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) occurring at the project site. All project actions would be in areas with low-growing vegetation that is routinely managed.

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

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: Temporary disruption of normal wildlife behavior could occur from elevated noise and human presence during project implementation. However, wildlife species that could be present in the area are likely already habituated to human activity, including vehicle traffic and other activities associated with residential development. There are no documented occurrences of any federal or state special-status species or their habitats located within the project site, and no such species or suitable habitat are expected to occur at the project site.

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

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: The project site is not located near any surface waters or fish bearing streams and is not located within a floodplain.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: The project action area is not within or near a wetland.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: Project actions would be unlikely to reach depths affecting groundwater or aquifers. Therefore, the proposed action would not substantially impact these resources.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: There would be no change in land use or specially designated areas as a result of these project actions.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: All work would take place on or adjacent to the existing BPA transmission structures. Swapping the telecommunications equipment from one tower to another is expected to be a minimal visual impact, and consistent with the current visual quality of the project area.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: Temporary and minor dust and vehicle emissions would increase in the local areas from vehicle and equipment use during project implementation. There would be no long-term impact to air quality following completion of the project actions.

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 substantial impacts from noise are expected.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: This project would not generate or use hazardous materials and would not create conditions that would increase risk to human health and safety. No impact to human health and safety is expected as a result of project activities.

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: The project site is on private property with an existing easement. AT&T would be required to coordinate with BPA and all applicable landowners as required.

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

Signed:

Jessica A. Heppler
Environmental Protection Specialist