

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Wireless Communication Upgrades at T-Mobile Carson

**Project Manager:** Jonathan Toobian—TELP-TPP-3

**Location:** Skamania County, Washington

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B1.19 Microwave, meteorological and radio towers

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow T-Mobile to upgrade its antennas and equipment at an existing wireless site on a BPA transmission tower, located in Carson, Washington on the North Bonneville-Midway No. 1 transmission line. The work would consist of removing three existing panel antennas and replacing those with three new antennas. Additionally, four new remote radio units (RRU) and two new coaxial cables would also be installed. Equipment upgrades would also occur in T-Mobile's equipment compound. To ensure safety, BPA workers and their subcontractors would complete the wireless antenna and coaxial cable installation work. The project would not involve any ground excavation.

**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, July 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/ Beth Belanger

Beth Belanger  
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist  
Motus Staffing & Recruiting

Reviewed by:

/s/ Katey Grange

Katey Grange  
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: December 13, 2018

Attachment: 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:** Wireless Communication Upgrades at T-Mobile Carson

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## Project Site Description

Antenna equipment replacements would occur on the North Bonneville-Midway No. 1 transmission line, tower 10/2 in Skamania County, Washington. The project area is in Section 28, Township 3 North, Range 8 East. The underlying land is owned by BPA; however, it is leased out for agricultural production and is currently used as a hay field.

## Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. <b>Historic and Cultural Resources</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> BPA cultural staff have reviewed the proposed activities and determined that there is no potential to cause effects to historic properties because the project area has been previously surveyed with negative results, and because there is no soil excavation associated with the project. No further review under the National Historic Preservation Act is required.</p>		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The proposed project does not involve ground disturbance. Minor soil compaction may occur due to bucket trucks driving around the site.</p>		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The project location has been previously disturbed and native plant communities are not present. The project would have no impacts to any special-status or Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed plants. To prevent the spread of noxious weeds, the construction vehicles would be required to be cleaned before entering a new project location.</p>		
4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species or habitats are present at the project location. The project would have no impacts to special-status or ESA-listed wildlife. If any active nests are found on the structure prior to construction, the construction would be delayed until the nests are unoccupied.</p>		
5. <b>Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish</b> (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The project area does not have any water bodies, floodplains, or listed fish species; therefore, there would be no impacts to these resources.</p>		

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|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 6. <b>Wetlands</b>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> The project is not in or near wetlands; therefore, there would be no impact to wetlands.   |                                     |                          |
| 7. <b>Groundwater and Aquifers</b>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> The project does not involve any ground disturbance; therefore, there would be no impact to groundwater and aquifers.  |                                     |                          |
| 8. <b>Land Use and Specially Designated Areas</b>  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> There would be no change to land use at the project locations. The project is within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, in a designated Urban Area for which there are no special management considerations. |                                     |                          |
| 9. <b>Visual Quality</b>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> The wireless antennas and equipment are consistent with the existing use of the utility corridor.  |                                     |                          |
| 10. <b>Air Quality</b>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> 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. <b>Noise</b>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> Construction noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours. Operational noise would not change.   |                                     |                          |
| 12. <b>Human Health and Safety</b>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <u>Explanation:</u> There would be no impact 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, if necessary:

- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation, if necessary:

- 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, if necessary:

- 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, if necessary:

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**Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description: The utility right-of-way is BPA fee-owned. No landowner notification would be required for this project.

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

Signed: /s/ Beth Belanger

Beth Belanger, ECT-4  
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist  
Motus Staffing & Recruiting

Date: December 13, 2018