

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: T-Mobile Silverwood Antenna Upgrade Project

Project No.: WO # 00484330

Project Manager: Jonathan Toobian – TELP-TPP-3

Location: Kootenai County, ID

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 modify the existing wireless facility located on structure 13/2 of BPA's Lancaster-Noxon No.1 230-kV transmission line, located near the town of Athol, ID. The facility modifications include:

- Removing (8) antennas and associated communication equipment
- Adding (8) new antennas and associated communication equipment
- Adding (1) new cabinet within an existing building to house new communication equipment

The existing equipment is located approximately 50' above the ground on a 76' steel lattice tower. The new equipment would be installed in the approximate location of the existing equipment. The new cabinet would be installed within an existing building located beneath the tower.

No ground disturbing activities would occur as a result of this project.

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/ Michael Henjum

Michael Henjum

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: January 31, 2019

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.

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Project Site Description

Wireless communication equipment replacements would occur on BPA’s structure 13/2 of BPA’s Lancaster-Noxon No.1 230-kV transmission line, located in a rural area outside the town of Athol, ID. The tower is located approximately 200’ away from a paved county road. Access to the project area is currently available via a well maintained gravel road. No improvements or modifications to the existing road would occur as a result of this project.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. Historic and Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> This project would use established access roads to access this facility and no ground-disturbing activities are proposed. A BPA historian and cultural staff verified that the small additive features to the transmission tower do not affect the integrity of the tower and there is no potential to affect historic or cultural resources.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance would occur as a result of this project.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbing activities would occur as a result of this project; therefore this project is not anticipated to have impacts to any state or federally protected plant species. Access to the site would occur via an existing gravel road.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No wildlife habitat exists within the project area. If any active nests are observed on the tower prior to construction, the construction would be delayed until the nests are unoccupied.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No water bodies, floodplains, or other fish habitat exists near the project area.		
6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No wetlands are present or in close proximity to the project area.		

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No ground disturbance, drilling, or excavation would occur as a result of this project; thus, neither groundwater nor aquifers are anticipated to be affected.

8. **Land Use and Specially Designated Areas**



Explanation: There would be no change to the land use at the project location, as the proposed action is replacing existing equipment of the same purpose.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The wireless antennas and equipment are consistent with the existing use of the site.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: No air quality effects would occur during this equipment replacement project.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Installation noise would be minimal, temporary, and occur during daytime hours. Operational noise would not change.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: 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:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: The project area is owned by a private citizen. Rights to perform this work would be verified by BPA realty specialists prior to project implementation.

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

Signed: /s/ Michael Henjum
Michael Henjum
Environmental Protection Specialist

Date: January 31, 2019