

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: T-Mobile Maple Valley Monopole Antenna Upgrade

Project Manager: Jonathan Toobian – TELP-TPP-3

Location: King 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 an existing telecommunications facility located on BPA fee-owned property at the BPA Maple Valley Substation in Renton, Washington. Tower-mounted equipment on an existing 120-foot steel monopole communications structure would be removed and replaced, including:

- Removing three existing panel antennas
- Removing nine existing tower-mounted amplifiers
- Removing all existing coaxial cable
- Removing the existing microwave dish and associated cables
- Installing nine new panel antennas
- Installing six new remote radio units
- Installing two 175-foot hybrid cables

In addition to upgrading tower-mounted equipment, the proposed project would involve work within the fenced, ground-level equipment area at the base of the monopole communications structure, including:

- Removing three existing equipment cabinets
- Installing two new equipment cabinets
- Removing and/or installing remote radio units (RRUs), diplexers, triplexers, routers, junction boxes, and other related equipment

The project would not involve any ground excavation or grading, and the site would be accessed via existing routes.

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.

/s/ W. Walker Stinnette

W. Walker Stinnette
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Portland State University – Hatfield Resident Fellow

Reviewed by:

/s/ Douglas F. Corkran

Douglas F. Corkran
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: July 15, 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

The project site is an existing T-Mobile telecommunications facility on BPA fee-owned property adjacent to the BPA Maple Valley Substation in Renton, King County, Washington (Section 20, Township 23 North, Range 5 East). Access to the site is via an approximately 230-foot existing unpaved road from Cedar Ridge Drive SE. The T-Mobile facility consists of a 120-foot steel monopole communications structure as well as a fenced, ground-level equipment area surrounding the base of the structure. The equipment area includes a propane tank, generator, H-frame, and three equipment cabinets, all of which are mounted on concrete pads. Ground cover largely consists of exposed soils and gravel with little to no vegetation within the project site. The project site is immediately surrounded by a stand of trees, with the Maple Valley Substation to the south and maintained electrical transmission line rights-of-way to the north, east, and west. There are no surface water bodies within 1,000 feet of the site.

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"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The proposed project would use established access roads and work areas and does not involve ground excavation or grading of soils. All work would occur on the monopole structure itself and within the fenced area at the base of the structure. Such minor additive features would not adversely impact the integrity of historic resources. The BPA historian reviewed the proposed activities and determined that this undertaking has No Potential to Effect historic properties. No further review under the National Historic Preservation Act is required.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Geology and soils within and around the project site were likely previously disturbed during the initial development of the existing telecommunications facility. Although the proposed project would use established access roads and work areas and does not involve ground excavation or grading of soils, minor soil compaction may occur due to the use of vehicles and heavy equipment.</p>		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Although project-related activities (e.g., vehicle and equipment use) may result in removal of vegetative cover in small areas, no tree or vegetation removal is proposed. There are no documented occurrences of any state special-status plant species or plant species protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). Therefore, the proposed project would have no effect on protected plant species.</p>		

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



Explanation: Minor and temporary disruption of normal wildlife behavior could occur from elevated noise and human presence during completion of the project. There are no documented occurrences of any state special-status wildlife species or wildlife species protected under the Federal ESA. Therefore, the proposed project would have no effect on protected wildlife species.

If any active nests are found on the monopole structure prior to construction, then construction would be delayed until the nests are unoccupied.

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



Explanation: The project site is not in or near any mapped water bodies or floodplains, and there are no documented occurrences of any state special-status fish species or fish species protected under the Federal ESA. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact on these resources.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: The project site is not in or near any mapped wetlands. The project would use established access roads and work areas, and would not include ground excavation or grading of soils. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact on wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The project would not involve any ground excavation. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact on groundwater and aquifers.

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



Explanation: There would be no change to land use at the project site. No specially-designated areas are in the project vicinity.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: There would be no change to visual quality at the project site. The tower-mounted and ground-level equipment is consistent with the existing use of the site as a telecommunications facility.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Temporary and minor dust and vehicle emissions would increase in the local area from use of vehicles and equipment. However, there would be no long-term changes in air quality following completion of the project.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Construction noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours. Operational noise would not change.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No impacts to human health and safety would be 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, 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 site is on BPA fee-owned property, and BPA would notify adjacent easement lessees of the upcoming project. There would be no affect to adjacent landowners.

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

Signed: /s/ W. Walker Stinnette

Date: July 15, 2019

W. Walker Stinnette – EC-4

Contract Environmental Protection Specialist

Portland State University – Hatfield Resident Fellow