

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: T-Mobile Maple Valley Generator Replacement

Project Manager: Chuck Wedick, 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 modify its existing unmanned telecommunications facility located adjacent to BPA's Maple Valley Substation in Renton, King County, Washington (Township 23 North, Range 5 East, Section 20). T-Mobile would replace an existing generator with a larger, 36-kilowatt liquid propane model, which would require increasing the size of the existing concrete pad from 25 square feet to 45 square feet (final pad dimensions would be 5 feet by 9 feet). Expansion of the concrete pad would require excavating up to 18 inches deep. T-Mobile would also install a new H-frame with a new automatic transfer switch and a conduit connection to the generator. The site would be accessed via existing gravel access roads, and all work would occur within the existing fenced compound.

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

Salient CRGT

Reviewed by:

/w/ Carol P. Leiter

Carol P. Leiter

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel November 17, 2021

Sarah T. Biegel

Date

NEPA Compliance Officer

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.

Proposed Action: T-Mobile Maple Valley Generator Replacement

Project Site Description

The project site is an existing T-Mobile unmanned telecommunications facility located on BPA fee-owned property adjacent to BPA's Maple Valley Substation in Renton, King County, Washington (Township 23 North, Range 5 East, Section 20). The facility consists of a 120-foot-tall monopole communications structure and additional equipment mounted on concrete pads within a fenced area around the base of the structure. All ground-disturbing activities would be carried out within the fenced area, which was previously cleared, graded, and covered in gravel during construction of the substation and the communications structure. A small amount of weedy herbaceous vegetation is present within the project site, and some shrubs and young trees surround the perimeter of the fence. In addition to the adjacent substation and associated transmission lines, surrounding land use is primarily characterized by residential development interspersed with isolated stands of forested land. The primary native soil type underlying the site is the Alderwood soil series, which is not hydric, and there are no known wetlands or water bodies within 1,000 feet.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Maple Valley Substation is not eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, the fenced telecommunications facility was constructed adjacent to the Maple Valley Substation in 1994, and as such is not considered a historic resource. The proposed action would not adversely impact the integrity of archaeological resources, as all ground-disturbing activities would occur within an area that was previously cleared, graded, and covered in gravel during construction of the substation and telecommunications facility. Therefore, the proposed undertaking would have no potential to cause effects to historic properties.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All soil disturbance would occur within the fenced telecommunications facility, which was previously cleared, graded, and covered in gravel during construction of the substation and the communications structure. Standard construction best management practices (BMPs) would prevent erosion and sedimentation. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact geology and soils.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A small amount of weeds and grasses growing within the fenced telecommunications facility could be crushed, buried, or removed during construction. No special-status plant species or plant species protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) are present near the project site. Therefore, the proposed action would have no effect on special-status plant species or habitats.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Minor and temporary disruption of normal wildlife behavior could occur from elevated noise and human presence during construction. However, current ambient noise and disturbances are high in the area due to routine maintenance and operations at the substation. As such, wildlife species that could be present in the area would likely already be habituated to human activity. The proposed action would not require removal or modification of wildlife habitat. There are no known occurrences of any special-status wildlife species or wildlife species protected under the Federal ESA, and no suitable species habitat is present. Therefore, the proposed action would have no effect on special-status wildlife species or habitats.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No waterbodies, floodplains, or fish-bearing streams are known to be present within 1,000 feet of the project site. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact water bodies and floodplains and would have no effect on special-status fish species or habitats.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands are known to be present within 1,000 feet of the project site. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Ground excavation is unlikely to reach a depth that would intersect groundwater. Standard construction BMPs would reduce the potential for inadvertent spills of hazardous materials that could contaminate groundwater or aquifers. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would be consistent with current land uses, and the project site is not located in a specially-designated area. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact land use or specially-designated areas.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Because the new generator would be larger than the existing generator, the proposed action would result in a perceptible change in the appearance of the telecommunications facility. However, the final appearance would be consistent with the existing visual quality of the area and would not be visible from adjacent properties.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Construction activities would result in a minor and temporary increase in dust and emissions in the local area. T-Mobile would be responsible for acquiring and maintaining all applicable local, state, and Federal air quality permits, if required. The new generator would not substantially increase emissions above levels associated with the current generator.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: During construction, use of vehicles and equipment and general construction activities could temporarily and intermittently produce noise at levels higher than current ambient conditions. No private residences or other noise-sensitive receptors are present within 500 feet of the project site. Because the new generator would produce noise at similar levels as the current generator, there would be no long-term change in ambient noise following completion of the project.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Standard construction BMPs would minimize risk to human health and safety. Therefore, the proposed action would not be expected to impact 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: 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 located on BPA fee-owned property, and the proposed action would not impact adjacent properties. No landowner notification, involvement, or coordination would be required.

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

Signed: <u>/s/ W. Walker Stinnette</u>	<u>November 17, 2021</u>
W. Walker Stinnette, EC-4	Date
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist	
Salient CRGT	