

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: T-Mobile Antenna Upgrades on BPA Structures

Project Manager: Jonathan Toobian—TELP-TPP-3

Location: Clallam, Clark, King, Kitsap, Mason, and Snohomish Counties, Washington and Multnomah County, Oregon

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 their antennas and equipment at existing wireless sites on BPA transmission towers and radio towers in western Oregon and Washington. The work would consist of removing antennas and replacing those with new antennas. In some cases, the number of antennas on the towers would decrease or increase from the original installation and/or the antenna configuration would change. Additionally, remote radio units (RRUs) or tower mounted amplifiers (TMAs) would be added to the antenna mounts and new coaxial cable would be installed, connecting the RRUs or TMAs to existing equipment located on the ground at the tower base. 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.

The upgrades would occur at the following locations:

- **Auburn Black Diamond site:** King County, WA. Section 11, Township 21 North, Range 5 East. Covington-White River No. 1 Transmission Line.
- **Auburn Ridge site:** King County, WA. Section 5, Township 21 North, Range 5 East. Tacoma-Covington No. 3 and No. 4 Transmission Line.
- **Ballfield site:** King County, WA. Section 28, Township 23 North, Range 5 East. Covington-Duwamish No. 1 Transmission Line.
- **Beaver Lake site:** King County, WA. Section 2, Township 24 North, Range 6 East. Sammamish-Maple Valley No. 1 Transmission Line.
- **Black Lake site:** Thurston County, WA. Section 33, Township 18 North, Range 2 West. Black Lake Radio Station.
- **Cedar Creek site:** Kitsap County, WA. Section 28, Township 26 North, Range 1 East. Kitsap-Bangor No. 1 Transmission Line.
- **Cedar Mill site:** Multnomah County, OR. Section 15, Township 1 North, Range 1 West. West Portland Radio Station.
- **Custer site:** Whatcom County, WA. Section 1, Township 39 North, Range 1 East. Murry-Custer No. 1 Transmission Line.
- **Doloff Lake site:** King County, WA. Section 11, Township 21 North, Range 4 East. Tacoma-Raver No. 1 Transmission Line.
- **Golf Course (Echo Falls) site:** Snohomish County, WA. Section 20, Township 27 North, Range 6 East. Sno-King Tap to Echo Lake-Monroe No. 1 Transmission Line.
- **Grass Lake site:** King County, WA. Section 6, Township 21 North, Range 6 East. Raver-Covington No. 2 Transmission Line.
- **Grouse Ridge site:** King County, WA. Section 29, Township 23 North, Range 9 East. Rocky Reach-Maple Valley No. 1 Transmission Line.

- **Issaquah Hobart Road site:** King County, WA. Section 3, Township 23 North, Range 6 East. Sammamish-Maple Valley No. 1 Transmission Line.
- **Lake Sawyer site:** King County, WA. Section 3, Township 21 North, Range 6 East. Raver-Covington No. 1 Transmission Line.
- **Lookout Mountain site:** Whatcom County, WA. Section 13, Township 37 North, Range 3 East. Lookout Mountain Radio Station.
- **Maltby site:** Snohomish County, WA. Section 20, Township 27 North, Range 5 East. Sno-King Substation.
- **Maynard Peak site:** Jefferson County, WA. Section 10, Township 29 North, Range 2 West. Blyn Radio Station.
- **Minnehaha site:** Clark County, WA. Section 15, Township 2 North, Range 1 East. Ross Complex.
- **Mirrormont site:** King County, WA. Section 30, Township 23 North, Range 7 East. Echo Lake-Maple Valley No. 1 & 2 Transmission Line.
- **NE 8th Street site:** King County, WA. Section 26 and 35, Township 25 North, Range 6 East. Sammamish-Maple Valley, No. 1 Transmission Line.
- **PCC site:** Clallam County, WA. Section 14, Township 30 North, Range 6 West. Port Angeles Substation.
- **Shelton site:** Mason County, WA. Donation Land Claim 37, Township 20 North, Range 4 West. Shelton Substation.
- **Skykomish site:** Snohomish County, WA. Section 10, Township 27 North, Range 7 East. Echo Lake-Monroe No. 1 Transmission Line.
- **Twin Lakes site:** King County, WA. Section 19, Township 21 North, Range 4 East. Tacoma-Covington No. 3 & 4 Transmission Line.
- **Union Hill site:** King County, WA. Section 35, Township 26 North, Range 6 East. Monroe-Novelty Hill No. 1 Transmission Line.
- **Windsor Blvd site:** King County, WA. Section 2, Township 24 North, Range 6 East. Sammamish-Maple Valley No. 1 Transmission Line.
- **Winona site:** Polk County, OR. Section 29, Township 7 South, Range 3 West. Salem Substation.

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/ Beth Belanger

Beth Belanger
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Flux Resources, LLC

Reviewed by:

/s/ Carol Leiter

Carol Leiter
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange

Date: December 3, 2019

Katey Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

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.

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Project Site Description

Antenna equipment replacements would occur on existing transmission and communication structures located within existing transmission line rights-of-way or at BPA facilities and substations. The structures are located in urban and rural areas. The sites have existing access roads to the tower bases and radio towers. All of the sites have had prior ground disturbance.

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> As no ground disturbance would occur and minor additive features do not adversely impact the integrity of historic transmission infrastructure, BPA has determined that the activities have No Potential to Effect historic properties.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The proposed activities do not involve ground disturbance. A small amount of soil compaction may occur due to bucket trucks driving around the sites.</p>		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Some vegetation would be crushed during antenna replacement activities, but no Federal/state special-status or Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed plants would be impacted.</p> <p>To prevent the spread of noxious weeds, the construction vehicles would be required to be cleaned before entering a new project location.</p>		

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

Explanation: Construction activities may temporarily displace non-listed wildlife but there would be no long-term impacts to wildlife. An osprey nest is located on the project tower for the site named Skykomish River (Echo Lake-Monroe No. 1, tower 26/4) and another osprey nest is located on a manmade platform, approximately 275 feet from the Winona site at the Salem Substation. The nest near the Winona site is situated north of a busy highway and east of the substation. It is likely that these ospreys are habituated to loud noises and would therefore not be impacted by the antenna replacement there.

No other special-status or ESA-listed species or habitats are present at the project locations.

Note: To minimize osprey impacts at the Skykomish River site, the following minimization measures would be implemented:

- Work would occur between September 1 and March 31 at the Skykomish River site to avoid impacts to ospreys.
- If any active nests are found on the other structures 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, ESUs, and habitats)

Explanation: The project areas do not have any water bodies, floodplains, or listed fish species; therefore, there would be no impacts to these resources.

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: The projects are not in or near wetlands; therefore, there would be no impact to wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: The project does not involve any ground disturbance; therefore, there would be no impact to groundwater and aquifers.

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

Explanation: There would be no change to land use at the project locations. There are no specially designated areas at any of the locations.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: The wireless antennas and equipment are consistent with the existing use of the utility corridor and radio tower facilities.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: 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. **Noise**

Explanation: Construction noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight 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 proponent is responsible for acquiring and maintaining easements for their facilities from underlying landowners.

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

Date: December 3, 2019

Beth Belanger, ECT-4
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Flux Resources, LLC