

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Communication Equipment Removals (#WC Projects)

**Project Manager:** Benjamin Deschuytter, TEP-CSB-1

**Location:** Chelan, Douglas, Grant and Pend Oreille counties, 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 decommission communication components at multiple substations and radio facilities listed below in Washington. Replacement equipment has already been installed, and now BPA seeks to remove obsolete equipment. The proposed work would improve work areas and structural integrity of structures that support network operations. Work would include, but is not limited to, removing decommissioned antennas, waveguides, batteries and chargers, and analog equipment from substations and radio communication facilities. This work would not result in any new ground disturbance, and would occur at the following BPA facilities:

- Valhalla Substation
- Malaga Communication Site
- Columbia Substation
- Grand Coulee 500kV Substation
- Grand Coulee 3<sup>rd</sup> Power House
- Chief Joseph Substation
- Sickler Substation
- Waterville Radio Station
- Foster Creek Radio Station
- Del Rio Communication Site
- Grand Coulee Radio
- Potholes Substation
- Sacheen Substation
- Metaline Communication Site
- Boundary Substation
- Usk Substation
- Bell Substation
- Munro Control Center

**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/ Becky Hill

Becky Hill  
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist  
David Evans and Associates, Inc.

Reviewed by:

/s/ Gene Lynard

Gene Lynard  
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: October 21, 2015

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:** Communication Equipment Removal (#WC Projects)

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### Project Site Description

All work would take place within BPA substations and radio facilities on BPA fee-owned property in Washington. This work would not result in any new ground disturbance. All project areas have previously been disturbed.

### 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"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> BPA archaeologist reviewed proposed activities and determined that these types of activities do not have the potential to cause effects to historic properties.		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance proposed.		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> All work in existing substation yards and radio facilities. No disturbance to plants would occur.		
4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> All work in existing substation yards and radio facilities. No potential habitat present. Bald Eagle and Osprey nests are known to occur within 1 mile of Boundary, Usk and Chief Joseph substations. No work will occur during the nesting season (January through August) at these three project sites.  At the remaining 15 project sites, all work will stop immediately and resume during non-nesting season, should a raptor nest be discovered in the project vicinity.		
5. <b>Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish</b> (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No water bodies, floodplains, or fish are present in the project areas.		

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: No wetlands present.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: No ground disturbance proposed.

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

Explanation: All work within existing substation yard and radio facilities.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: No impact to visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: Minimal amount of dust and vehicle emissions anticipated during work activities.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: Temporary construction noise during daylight hours.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: No impact.

### **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: No notification. All work on BPA fee-owned property and no visual or other effects to adjacent landowners.

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

Signed: /s/ Becky Hill  
Becky Hill, KEC-4

Date: October 21, 2015