

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Granite Mountain Radio Station and Colville Substation Communication Upgrades

Project Manager: Jennifer Bachman, TEP-CSB-2

Location: Stevens 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 replace telecommunications equipment at its Granite Mountain Radio Station and Colville Substation in Stevens County, Washington. The existing equipment is outdated and the technology is being phased out.

At the Granite Mountain Radio Site, a new radio and associated rack would be installed on the existing tower. No additional work is proposed at this site.

At the Colville Substation, telecommunication equipment upgrades would be required inside of the control house including replacement of equipment in the telecommunication rack as well as a battery charger upgrade. Work outside the control house would include construction of a new 60-foot tall tower, relocation of an existing storage container, and excavation of a 290-foot long trench (to a depth of 3 feet) to bring power to the box. The substation fence would be pushed out by 12 feet, resulting in an expansion of 564 square feet into the existing access road and driveway. The current wood pole that holds the UHF radio dish would be abandoned in place.

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/ Elizabeth Siping

Elizabeth Siping

Contract Environmental Protection Specialist

Flux Resources, LLC

Reviewed by:

/s/ Gene Lynard

Gene Lynard
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: April 21, 2017

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.

Proposed Action: Granite Mountain Radio Station and Colville Substation Communication Upgrades

Project Site Description

The proposed actions would occur at BPA’s existing Granite Mountain Radio Station and Colville Substation. Granite Mountain Radio Station is located on Granite Mountain in a rural forested area southwest of Colville, Washington. Work at Granite Mountain Radio Station would occur solely on an existing radio tower.

Colville Substation is located approximately 11.5 miles northeast of Granite Mountain, east of the town of Colville, in a rural area. Work at the Colville Substation would occur within the existing control house and on previously disturbed graveled areas within and adjacent to the substation electrical yard

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> BPA’s archaeologist determined that the communication upgrades would have no potential to effect historic properties or cultural resources.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project would have no impact to soils at Granite Mountain Radio Station. The expansion at Colville Substation would impact 564-square feet in the existing driveway entrance. The trenching to connect the storage container would be 290-feet long and 3-feet deep. No previously undisturbed soil would be impacted.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project actions would occur in previously disturbed areas. No special-status species are known to occur in the area.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project areas are not suitable for wildlife habitat. No special-status species are known to occur.		
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 fish are present in the project areas.		

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: No wetlands are present in the project areas.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: No new wells or use of groundwater is proposed.

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

Explanation: The project actions would be consistent with existing land uses. There are no specially designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: Proposed equipment modifications would look similar to existing equipment at Granite Mountain Radio Station. The addition of the tower and expansion of Colville Substation yard would be visually similar to the existing substation.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: The project actions would not impact air quality at Granite Mountain Radio Station. The project actions at Colville Substation would produce a small amount of dust and vehicle emissions during construction.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: The project actions would not impact noise at Granite Mountain Radio Station. The project actions at Colville Substation would produce a temporary increase in noise during construction.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: No impact to human health and safety is anticipated at either project location.

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: No nearby residences and work would be consistent with BPA's normal maintenance work on existing equipment and visually consistent with existing facilities.

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

Signed: /s/ Elizabeth Siping
Elizabeth Siping – ECT-4

Date: April 21, 2017