

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Haystack Butte Analog Communications Site Retirement

Project Manager: Molly Kovaka TEP-CSB-2

Location: Klickitat County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.23 Demolition and Disposal of Buildings

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to decommission and remove the Haystack Butte Analog Communications Site, which is comprised of the communications building, propane tank, 30-foot tower with mounted communications antennas, and a concrete pad. The analog communications site has reached the end of its life and has been replaced by a new Haystack Butte facility adjacent to the site. Now that the new digital facilities are operational, the old analog site is ready to be decommissioned. In addition, the lease agreement for the site expires in 2018 and BPA has decided not to renew the lease.

Site decommissioning would take about 2-3 weeks to complete. A propane truck, dump trucks, and back hoes with bucket and jackhammer attachments would be used to remove the structures. Building decommissioning would involve the removal of the engine generator and the communications equipment, which includes a battery. After removing all recyclable materials, the building would be sent to an approved waste facility. The propane tank would be pumped dry and removed, and the concrete foundation pads would be removed or jackhammered on site and removed. Existing gravel from the site or nearby native fill materials would be distributed to fill in locations where foundations are removed.

Access to the site would be via an existing, rocky access road. All work would occur within a previously disturbed area.

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/ Claire McClory

Claire McClory

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 08/14/2017

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 site is located on a small parcel situated on a level bench at the summit of Haystack Butte on the north rim of the Columbia River gorge directly north of the confluence of the Deschutes and Columbia rivers. The site is within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (CRGNSA). Much of the area has been impacted by ongoing agricultural practices and pastoral farming. Several radio communication facilities and towers are immediately adjacent to the communications 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> BPA initiated consultation and made a determination of no adverse effect with Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), US Forest Service CRGNSA, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, and the Nez Perce Tribe. BPA received concurrence from DAHP on June 12, 2017. No response was received from the Tribes or USFS.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Ground disturbance around the communications site would result in temporary impacts to surrounding soil.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Best management practices (BMPs) for erosion and sediment control would be implemented. Native rock and gravel would be used to fill in where concrete footings are removed. ✓ The area would be recontoured and smoothed to match surrounding grade. ✓ If necessary, the surrounding area would be reseeded using local seed mix to reduce erosion potential. 		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> All proposed work would be in previously disturbed areas. No special-status species present.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Area has been used for grazing. No special-status species present.</p>		

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



Explanation: None present.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: None present.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No impact, because little to no ground disturbance expected.

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



Explanation: The site is immediately adjacent to several existing radio communication facilities. Building removal would restore a small section of land to its original contour, but the surrounding area would continue to be used for communication facilities and grazing.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The site is within a tribal allotment that is within the CRGNSA. Tribal allotments are exempt from CRGNSA review; however, removal of the analog communications site would result in an improvement to the CRGNSA viewscape at several key viewing areas, including Highway I-84, Washington State Route 142, Dog Mountain Trail, and the Columbia River.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Small amount of temporary dust and vehicle emission due to construction.

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:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: The Haystack Butte analog site is located on a parcel that is leased from tribal allottees. The lease agreement will expire in 2018. BPA does not wish to renew the terms of the lease and has notified the allottees about BPA's intent to remove the facilities.

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

Signed: /s/ Claire McClory
Claire McClory ECT-4

Date: 08/14/2017