

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Sprint Upgrades at Brockdale, Clear Creek, Cotton Mills, Covington Square, and Sea Tac Mall

Project Manager: Jonathan Toobian—TELP-TPP-3

Location: King, Mason, Pierce and Snohomish 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: BPA proposes to allow Sprint Corporation to upgrade their antennas and equipment at existing wireless sites on BPA towers. The work would consist of removing six antennas at each site and replacing those with three new, slightly larger antennas. Remote Radio Heads (RRHs) would be added to the antenna mounts and new coaxial cables would be installed, connecting the RRHs to existing equipment located on the ground, beneath, or adjacent to the tower base. To ensure safety, BPA workers and subcontractors would complete the wireless antenna and coaxial cable installation work. The project does not involve any ground excavation.

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/ Beth Belanger

Beth Belanger

Contract Environmental Protection Specialist

Motus Recruiting & Staffing

Reviewed by:

/s/ Gene Lynard

Gene Lynard

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: November 24, 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.

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Project Site Description

Brockdale: Mason County, WA. Section 26, Township 21 North, Range 4 West. Occurring on a transmission tower on the Shelton-Fairmount-4 line.

Clear Creek: Pierce County, WA. Section 36, Township 20 North, Range 3 East. Occurring on a radio tower at the Cowlitz Substation.

Cotton Mills: Snohomish, WA. Section 20, Township 27 North, Range 5 East. Occurring on a radio tower at the SNO-King Substation.

Covington Square: King County, WA. Section 36, Township 22N, Range 5 East. Occurring on a transmission tower on the Covington-Maple Valley-2 line.

Sea Tac Mall: King County, WA. Section 16, Township 21N, Range 4 East. Occurring on a transmission tower on the Tacoma-Covington-3 line

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> The BPA contract historian has thoroughly reviewed the proposed project activities and has determined that this is a type of activity that does not have the potential to cause effects to historic properties, per 36 CFR 800.3 (a). Additionally, a BPA contract archaeologist also reviewed these projects and determined that they are not located in, or near, known archaeological sites. Since there is no proposed ground disturbance and the sites are in previously disturbed areas, there is no potential to affect cultural resources.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The proposed project does not involve ground disturbance. Some insignificant compaction of soils may occur, due to bucket-trucks driving around the site.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The projects locations are on graveled or landscaped areas. The project would have no impacts to special-status plants.</p>		

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

Explanation: No special-status species or habitat is present at any of the locations. The project would have no impacts to special-status wildlife.

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

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

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: The project locations do not have hydric soils or any other wetland indicators; therefore, there would be no impacts 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 the locations either.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: The amount of antennas at each site is decreasing, and the wireless antennas and equipment are consistent with the existing use of the utility corridor.

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 their own easements on non-BPA owned land.

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
Beth Belanger—ECT-4
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Motus Recruiting & Staffing

Date: November 24, 2017