

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Radio Communication Equipment Removal – #KC Disturbance and Non-Disturbance

Project No.: P00214

Project Manager: Benjamin Younce – TEP-CSB-2

Location: Oregon Counties: Crook, Deschutes, Harney, Klamath, Lake, Lane, Linn Clark 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 decommission communication components at multiple substations and radio facilities in its #KC region in Oregon and Washington. Replacement equipment has already been installed and now BPA needs to remove obsolete equipment. The proposed work would improve work areas and the structural integrity of structures that support network operations.

Non-ground disturbing work at the following BPA facilities would include, but is not limited to, removing decommissioned antennas and waveguides on towers or buildings, towers, propane tanks, analog equipment on racks, and cables in the control house. As part of this equipment removal, some circuit work would be done and DATS related phone cards installed in the control house.

- Adel Radio Site – remove antenna
- Captain Jack Passive – remove antenna and tower
- Grizzly Mountain Radio Site – remove tower and propane tank
- Grizzly Substation – remove antenna and racks
- Hall Ridge – install cards
- Hampton Butte Radio Site – remove radios
- Malin Passive – remove antenna and tower
- Mary's Peak – install cards

Ground disturbing work at the following BPA facilities would include, but is not limited to, removing tower foundations, conduit, and icebridge posts to below grade; and moving ambient temperature sensors from removed towers to new pedestals in rock yards. The tower foundations would either be completely removed if the foundation is less than 36" deep or the pedestals would be jack hammered to a minimum of 12" below grade and covered with surrounding soil after cutting anchor bolts and any exposed rebar. Pedestals are typically 24" square. The conduit and cables would be removed by pulling cables out of the ground and digging the conduit up with a backhoe for removal. Ice bridge post foundations are 12-16" in diameter and 36" deep. They would be pulled out of the ground with a backhoe. New pedestals for the relocated temperature sensors would be bolted to a 2.5 x 2.5 foot square foundation, 24" below grade.

- Alcoa Substation – remove tower foundation and ice bridge posts
- Alvey 230-kV Substation – remove tower foundation

- Captain Jack Passive – remove tower foundation
- Harney Substation – remove tower foundation and conduit
- Malin Passive – remove tower foundation
- Sycan Substation – remove tower foundation, move ambient temperature sensor from removed tower to a new pedestal in rocked yard and add conduit
- Wolf Mountain Radio Site – remove ice bridge posts and tower foundation

Removed material at all locations would be loaded onto trucks, transported, sorted, and recycled or disposed of in approved facilities.

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/ Nancy A. Wittpenn

Nancy A. Wittpenn
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: August 27, 2018

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

All work would take place within BPA substations and radio sites on BPA fee-owned property, Forest Service property, or BLM property, in Oregon and Washington. All project areas have previously been disturbed and most are rocked or in graveled areas.

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’s archaeologist and built environment historian reviewed proposed activities (undertakings) and determined that no historic properties will be affected by them as defined by 36 CFR 880.4(d)(2).</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance would occur at the Captain Jack, Grizzly Mountain, Grizzly Substation, Hall Ridge, Mary’s Peak, and Malin locations. The equipment to be removed at the remaining locations would cause ground disturbance but all work would occur within previously rocked and disturbed areas. All soil would be backfilled and the area re-rocked after equipment removal.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance would occur at the Captain Jack, Grizzly Mountain, Grizzly Substation, Hall Ridge, Mary’s Peak, and Malin locations. The equipment to be removed at the remaining locations would cause ground disturbance but all work would occur within previously rocked and disturbed areas. No plants exist in these areas.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> A No Effect Determination has been completed for federally listed threatened and endangered species that could possibly be found in the project areas.</p> <p>For the Wolf Mountain site, BPA will schedule work outside of the critical nesting period, March 15th through July 15th, to minimize potential impacts to the Northern Spotted Owl.</p> <p>Documented eagle nests are located within a mile of Captain Jack, Grizzly Mountain, and Sycan radio sites or access roads to these sites. If documented nests are active or new nests are observed and occupied, work at these sites would be scheduled outside of the breeding and nesting period (January through August).</p> <p><u>Note:</u> Before work begins, the project PM or PE will contact the environmental protection specialist to review work schedules and site access. The EPS will then contact the appropriate agency to confirm the presence of eagles and other raptors.</p>		

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



Explanation: No water bodies, floodplains, or fish are present at the communication sites.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No wetlands are present at the communication sites.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No ground disturbance would occur at the Captain Jack, Grizzly Mountain, Grizzly Substation, Hall Ridge, Mary's Peak, and Malin locations. The equipment to be removed at the remaining locations would cause ground disturbance but all work would occur within previously rocked and disturbed areas at high elevations. No records of groundwater or aquifers being encountered during original installation of the communication sites exists.

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



Explanation: All work would occur within the existing communication sites and are allowed uses.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: Equipment would be removed which may actually improve the immediate visual quality of these sites.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Dust would be generated while equipment is being removed but the amount and duration would be temporary.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Sites are located in urban/industrial and rural areas. Noise would occur from vehicles on access roads travelling to the site and from equipment removal at the site; but duration would be during daylight hours and would be temporary. See Wildlife above.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: All safety requirements would be followed for equipment removal which should minimize impacts 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: Most sites are owned in fee by BPA. Others are owned by the USFS and BLM. All access rights have been acquired. The BPA Realty Specialist and Project Manager will coordinate required notification and entry protocol with the landowner/manager before work begins at each site.

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

Signed: /s/ Nancy A. Wittpenn
Nancy A. Wittpenn – ECT-4

Date: August 27, 2018