

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Wireless Communication Upgrade at AT&T's Indian Trail Site

Project Manager: Jonathan Toobian—TELP-TPP-3

Location: Spokane 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: BPA proposes to allow AT&T to upgrade their antennas and equipment at their existing wireless site called Indian Trail on a BPA transmission tower in eastern Washington. The work would consist of removing six panel antennas and replacing those with three new antennas. Additionally, six remote radio heads (RRH) would be removed and replaced with three new RRHs; and nine tower mounted amplifiers (TMA) would be removed and replaced with six TMAs. To ensure safety, BPA workers and their subcontractors would complete the wireless antenna installation work. The project would not involve any ground excavation.

The upgrade would occur at the following location:

AT&T's Indian Trail site: Spokane County, WA. Section 16, Township 26 North, Range 42 East. Grand Coulee-Bell No. 3 Transmission Line.

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 Staffing & Recruiting

Reviewed by:

/s/ Dave Kennedy FOR

Nancy Wittpenn

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Office

Date: September 7, 2018

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: Wireless Communication Upgrade at AT&T's Indian Trail Site

Project Site Description

The AT&T antenna and equipment replacements would occur on an existing transmission structure located within an existing transmission line right-of-way. The structure is located near a residential housing subdivision. The site has an existing access road to the tower base. The project area has prior ground disturbance.

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 Cultural staff have reviewed the proposed activities and determined there is no potential to cause effects to cultural properties. The project area has been extensively disturbed from development of the utility corridor and the structure is easily accessible by an existing access road. Additionally, the area was previously surveyed in 2012 and no cultural resources were identified. The BPA Historian also reviewed the proposed project and determined that this undertaking has no potential to cause effect to historic properties. No further review under the National Historic Preservation Act is required.</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 from 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 project location has been previously disturbed and native plant communities are not present. The project would have no impacts to any special-status plants.</p> <p>Note: To prevent the spread of noxious weeds, construction vehicles will be cleaned before entering the project area.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species or habitats are present in the project area. The project would have no impacts to special-status wildlife.</p> <p>Note: If any active nests are found on the structure prior to construction, construction would be delayed until the nest is unoccupied.</p>		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The project area does not have any water bodies, floodplains, or listed fish species; therefore, there would be no impacts to these resources.</p>		

6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project is not in or near wetlands; therefore, there would be no impact to wetlands.		
7. Groundwater and Aquifers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There would be no change to land use at the project location. There are no specially designated areas at the project location.		
9. Visual Quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The wireless antennas and equipment are consistent with the existing use of the utility corridor.		
10. Air Quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Construction noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours. Operational noise would not change.		
12. Human Health and Safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> 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 easements for their facilities from underlying landowners.

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 Staffing & Recruiting

Date: September 7, 2018