

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** T-Mobile Wireless Upgrades at Tiger Mountain

**Project Manager:** Chuck Wedick – TELP-TTP-3

**Location:** King County, Washington

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B4.9 Multiple use of powerline rights-of-way; B1.19 Microwave, meteorological and radio towers

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow T-Mobile to make upgrades to antennas and associated equipment at the Tiger Mountain wireless site. Work would occur on and in the equipment yard of structure 4/3 of the Echo Lake-Maple Valley Nos. 1 & 2 lines, which houses existing wireless communication equipment. Project actions would include removing six antennas and installing three new larger antennas that would be approximately 1 foot longer and 1 foot wider than the removed antennas. All tower-mounted amplifiers and coax cable would be removed. Six new remote radio units and two hybrid cables with pendants would be installed. In the equipment yard, three cabinets would be removed and replaced with two new cabinets and associated equipment on an existing concrete slab. Two new junction boxes would be installed on an existing support structure. There would be no ground disturbance with this action and the site would be accessed via existing access roads. Equipment used would likely include pickup trucks, a bucket truck, and hand tools.

**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, Jul. 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/ Kali Levy

Kali Levy  
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist  
Portland State University

Reviewed by:

/s/ Carol Leiter

Carol Leiter

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey C. Grange 11/30/2021

Katey C. Grange and Date

NEPA Compliance Officer

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.

**Proposed Action:** T-Mobile Wireless Upgrades at Tiger Mountain

## **Project Site Description**

Project actions would take place on and in the equipment yard of structure 4/3 of the Echo Lake-Maple Valley Nos. 1 & 2 lines in King County, Washington (Township 23 North, Range 7 East, and Section 20). The structure is in a BPA easement right-of-way in a forested area approximately 550 feet south from a highway. An unimproved access road provides access to the tower. The equipment yard is approximately 20 feet from the structure. There is a wetland approximately 600 feet to the north, which the access road crosses.

## **Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources**

### **1. Historic and Cultural Resources**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA historian review of the proposed project actions found no potential to cause effects to historic resources.

### **2. Geology and Soils**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no ground disturbance associated with this project.

### **3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No special-status plants are known to be in the project areas. Additionally, an unimproved access road provides access to the structure. Some vegetation may be crushed.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: The project location is not located within or adjacent to critical habitat areas. However, the surrounding area contains suitable habitat for two species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act: marbled murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) and northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*). The project would not impact any potential habitat, but would temporarily increase noise in the area. Marbled murrelet and northern spotted owl are most sensitive to sound during nesting periods, which are respectively April 1st to

September 23rd and March 1st to September 30th. Project work occurring outside of the nesting periods would have no effect on either species.

Any local wildlife in the area may be temporarily disturbed by noise generated from project work.

Notes:

- If any active nests are found on the structures prior to construction, the construction would be delayed until the nests are unoccupied.
- To avoid any potential effects on marbled murrelet or northern spotted owl that may be present in the area, project work should be completed between October 1st and February 28th, which is outside of the nesting periods for either species.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project site is not located in or near water bodies.

## **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: The access road to get to the project site crosses a wetland. No work would be performed in the wetland as the structure is approximately 600 feet southwest. Utilizing the existing access road would not impact the wetland.

Notes:

- All vehicles/equipment are required to remain on existing access roads to reach the structure.

## **7. Groundwater and Aquifers**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no ground disturbance with this project. There would be no impact to groundwater or aquifers.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no change of land use. The project site houses existing communications equipment.

## 9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be minimal changes to the appearance of the project site. The increased size of some of the antennas but decreased number would remain consistent with the visual character of the existing facilities.

## 10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Construction noise would be temporary and would occur during daylight hours. Operational noise would not change.

## 12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All applicable safety standards would be followed during project work. The project would not create conditions that would increase risk 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: N/A

**Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.**

Explanation: N/A

**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: N/A

**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: N/A

### **Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description: The project would occur in BPA easement right-of-way. T-Mobile would be responsible for notifying the landowner and coordinating access.

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

Signed: /s/ Kali Levy

Kali Levy, ECT – 4

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Portland State University

11/30/2021

Date