

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: T-Mobile Wireless Upgrades at Covington and Lake Sawyer

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 proposes to allow T-Mobile to make upgrades to antennas and associated equipment at multiple wireless sites. Work would occur on and below transmission line structures which house existing wireless communication equipment. Project actions would include removing, replacing, or installing new antennas, remote radio units, cables, cabinets, and other associated equipment. The Lake Sawyer sites would include the addition of a new H-frame support structure within the existing and previously disturbed equipment yard. Equipment used would likely include a bucket truck, pickup trucks, and hand tools as necessary.

Covington: Project actions would occur on and below structure 15/5 of the Tacoma-Raver No. 1 line.

Lake Sawyer: Project actions would occur on structure 6/5 of the Raver-Covington No. 2 line and in the adjacent equipment yard.

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 November 15, 2021

Katey C. Grange

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 Covington and Lake Sawyer

Project Site Description

Project actions would take place in King County, Washington on BPA fee-owned and easement rights-of-way.

Covington: The project actions would occur on and below structure 15/5 of the Tacoma-Raver No. 1 line (Township 22 North, Range 5 East, and Section 35). The structure is on BPA fee-owned ROW between the Covington Substation and recycling facilities. An unimproved BPA access road runs approximately 20 feet north of the structure.

Lake Sawyer: The project site is structure 6/5 of Raver-Covington No. 2 (Township 21 North, Range 6 East, and Section 4). This site is in a residential area. There is a driveway which stops approximately 65 feet south of the structure.

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 or archaeological resources.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Ground disturbance would be limited to the installation of a new H-frame inside the equipment yard, which has been previously disturbed.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: No special-status plants are known to be in the project areas. Additionally, the towers are within 65 feet of unimproved roadways, the use of which would minimize impacts to vegetation. Some vegetation may be crushed.

Notes:

- To prevent the spread of noxious weeds, the construction vehicles would be required to be cleaned before entering a new project location if traveling off road.

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

Potential for Significance: No with Conditions

Explanation: No special-status wildlife are known to be near the project sites. Project locations are not located within or adjacent to any critical habitat areas.

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

Notes:

- If any active nests are found on the structures prior to construction, the construction would be delayed until the nests are unoccupied.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project sites are not located in or near water bodies.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project sites are not located in wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Ground disturbance would be limited to the installation of an H-frame in a previously disturbed area. 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 sites house existing communications equipment.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be minimal changes to the appearance of the project sites.

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 fee-owned and easement rights-of-way. T-Mobile would be responsible for notifying the landowners 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
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Portland State University

November 15, 2021

Date