

# Categorical Exclusion Documentation

## A. Background

**BLM Office:** Prineville Field Office

**NEPA Log #:** DOI - BLM - OR – P060 – 2014- 0032 - CX

**Project/Lease/Serial/Case File #:** OR 68091

**Proposed Action Title:** ODOT Grizzly Mtn. Communications Lease Renewal and Replacement of Existing Facilities.

**Location:** Grizzly Mountain, which is approximately 10 air miles northwest from the center of Prineville, Oregon. This radio communication site area is located at:

Willamette Meridian, Oregon  
T. 13 S., R. 15 E., Sec. 17, NWSE;

The propose action and the project that it covers (collectively, the “Project”) lies within the area described above and affects approximately 4,800 square feet (approximately 0.11 acre) within such area.

**Description of the Proposed Action:** The proposed Project covers the Oregon Department of Transportation’s (ODOT’s) request to amend its Communication Use Lease ORE 06262 to remove several outdated communications structures on Grizzly Mtn. and upgrading its site by replacing such structures with modern digital signal based communications technology. This replacement upgrading project will consolidate several existing user sites, as described below, within a single communications facility on Grizzly Mtn.; the existing user sites that would be removed and replaced are those of the Oregon State Police, Oregon Public Broadcasting, and the U.S. Forest Service. ODOT’s activities on Grizzly Mtn. are part of its State Radio Project which is intended to modernize and broaden the coverage statewide of various Oregon state agencies and emergency service providers. The proposed Project also covers the planned work of ODOT’s contract provider of electric power (Central Electric Cooperative, “CEC”) to extend CEC’s current underground power distribution system on Grizzly Mtn. by removing and replacing approximately 150 feet of electrical distribution power line to connect and provide power to ODOT’s proposed replacement facility. The removal and replacement of CEC’s power distribution to ODOT’s site on Grizzly Mtn. would occur under a minor renewal/amendment to CEC’s right-of-way ORE 04704 or under a successor right-of-way thereto.

The existing facilities that are proposed for removal and replacement consist of:

- 1.) Three existing equipment shelters used by, respectively, the U.S. Forest Service, Oregon Public Broadcasting, and ODOT;
- 2.) ODOT’s existing 30’ tall steel lattice communications tower and its foundation;

- 3.) ODOT's 40' tall wood communications line pole;
- 4.) The Oregon State Police's 80' tall steel lattice communications tower and its foundation;
- 5.) The USFS's 60' tall steel lattice communications tower and its foundation; and
- 6.) The USFS's 60' tall guy tower and anchor.

The proposed replacement facilities to be constructed and installed would consist of:

- 1.) A new perimeter fence around the facility's approximately 4,800 square foot footprint;
- 2.) A new approximately 11' wide by 31' long by 16' high equipment shelter;
- 3.) A new approximately 11' wide by 12' long by 16' high shelter for a backup power generator to be installed therein;
- 4.) a new 120' tall steel communications tower;
- 5.) Installing two 1,500 gallon propane fuel tanks within the facility's fenced perimeter for the backup generator (each placed on two approximately 4 feet long by 2 feet wide concrete support footings),
- 6.) Replacing approximately 150 feet of underground electrical distribution line of CEC with upgraded electrical lines buried in a three inch conduit that would run from the existing power junction box supporting ODOT's existing support equipment building to its proposed replacement support building.

The footprint and layout of the proposed facilities are generally outlined on a siting diagram prepared in connection with this Categorical Exclusion Documentation. The proposed lease would have an expiration date of December 31, 2034.

## **B. Land Use Plan Conformance**

Land Use Plan Name: The Upper Deschutes Record of Decision (ROD) and Resource Management Plan (RMP).

Date approved: September 2005.

The proposed action is in conformance with the above plan even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following land use plan decisions, objectives, terms or conditions: Page 135, Transportation and Utilities, Objective TU-1, "Provide new or modified rights-of-way for transportation/utility corridors and communication/energy sites to meet expected demands and minimize environmental impacts". Guideline 1 states, "BLM administered lands will continue to be available for rights-of-way, including multiple use and single use utility/transportation corridors, following existing routes, and roads".

### C. Compliance with NEPA

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 Departmental Manual (DM) 516 11.9, E. Realty, (13) "Amendments to existing rights-of-way, such as the upgrading of existing facilities, which entail no additional disturbances outside the right-of-way boundary." In addition, the Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with Departmental Categorical Exclusions, 516 DM 2, Appendix 1, Effective Date June 21, 2005 . . . "1.7 Routine and continuing government business, including such things as supervision, administration, operations, maintenance, renovations, and replacement activities having limited context and intensity (e.g., limited size and magnitude or short-term effects)." Supporting rationale with regard to the foregoing citation is that a.) the Project is part of a continuing government replacement program (Oregon Department of Transportation is replacing/upgrading many of its existing analog equipment communications facilities with digital equipment facilities, all in connection with implementation of Oregon's State Radio Project, b.) the replacement activities on Grizzly Mtn. will occur within a small land area, being approximately less than ½ acre in size, and c.) magnitude wise, the Project is not a major construction project; it is expected that the Project would be completed within less than a four month period.

The noted categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply. See attached CX Extraordinary Circumstances Documentation checklist.

### D. Signature

I considered this communication site has been in existence for over 10 years and have found that it has had no significant affect either individually or cumulatively on the human environment.

Authorizing official:  7/31/14  
Molly M. Brown Date  
Field Manager, Deschutes Resource Area

### Contact Person

For additional information concerning this review, contact, Michael Kroll, Realty Specialist, Prineville Field Office, 3050 NE 3rd Street, Prineville, OR 97754, telephone (541) 416-6752, or email [mkroll@blm.gov](mailto:mkroll@blm.gov).

<b>CX EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION</b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
The proposed categorical exclusion action will:			
2.1	Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
Rationale: The proposed action would not have significant impacts on public health or safety. All construction, maintenance and operational activities under the proposed project are required to follow the United States' established Occupational Safety and Health Administration rules concerning health and safety.			
2.2	Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		X
Rationale: The proposed action and the project that it covers (collectively, the "Project") would occur within the area of and in accordance with the terms of the established Communications Site Plan for Grizzly Mtn. which is approximately 10 miles northwest of Prineville, Oregon. There are no Wilderness Study Areas or lands with wilderness character within the proposed project area. The Project would not be located in park or refuge lands; therefor the proposed action will not have a significant effect on any such lands. Regarding recreation activities, while the general public may conduct various recreational activities such as hiking and bike riding on BLM administered lands on Grizzly Mtn., the public is not permitted to tamper with, damage or otherwise interfere with the communications sites on Grizzly Mtn. which are private property. The Project would not conflict with current recreation use of the site. The Project would not be located within an area designated as Federal Wild and Scenic River and therefor would not affect any such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics. The Project would not be located on or in the vicinity of any national natural landmarks, national monuments, sole or principal drinking water aquifers, or prime farmlands, wetlands (Executive Order 11990), or floodplains (Executive Order 11988), therefore the Project would have no significant effect on any such ecologically significant or critical areas. There are no historic or cultural resources within the proposed project area, so the Project would not have any significant effect on historic or cultural resources.			
2.3	Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)]		X
Rationale: The Project is occurring within the well-established Communications Site Plan area on Grizzly Mtn., and is for an addition to an existing communications site which has been in operation since 1968. Because of the well-developed nature of the Grizzly Mtn. Communications Site Plan area, the Project would not have highly controversial effects or unresolved conflicts with available resources.			
2.4	Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
Rationale: The proposal is for a routine project in an already disturbed area. Similar proposals have been reviewed by specialists (e.g, Bonneville Power Administration's facility addition on Grizzly Mountain in 2012) and it has been determined that the proposal would have no highly uncertain and potentially environmental effects or unique or unknown environmental risks.			

2.5	Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: BLM's approval of the Project would not commit the BLM to pursuing further such actions, and as such would not establish a precedent or decision for future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.			
2.6	Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: There are no other actions occurring in the proposed project area that would have cumulatively significant environmental effects.			
2.7	Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		X
Rationale: The BLM has conducted surveys for cultural resources in the project area, and has determined that the proposed action would not result in significant impacts to cultural resources. Based on the findings of the District's cultural/historic expert, the proposed action would not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, nor will it cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.			
2.8	Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		X
Rationale: The Project would not change the overall habitat function of the Grizzly Mtn. Communications Site Plan area, or result in the loss of critical habitat, or otherwise have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species. Regarding wildlife, the communications use lease grant will include a stipulation that there will be no construction activity by the grantee or its agents and contractors during the period from January 1 through August 31, unless such restriction is waived by the BLM in writing. Such restriction is for the protection of an eagle nesting area.			
2.9	Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
Rationale: The issuance of proposed communications use lease for this Project is in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended. The proposed Project and lease is designed to conform to all Federal, State, local and tribal laws and requirements including those relating to the protection of the environment. Accordingly, the proposed right-of-way grant does not violate any Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. In addition, this Project conforms to the direction given for the management of public lands in the Prineville District's Upper Deschutes Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan, and such management direction complies with all applicable laws, such as the Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act and others.			
2.10	Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X
Rationale: This Project would not affect low income or minority populations.			
2.11	Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).		X

Rationale: A recent cultural clearance was completed for the Grizzly Mtn. Communications Site Plan area in late 2012 and no sacred sites were identified. Accordingly, the proposed Project would not limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites because the Project would occur in an area that does not include sacred sites or limit access to any known Indian sacred sites or affect the access to any such sites.

2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		X
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Rationale: Equipment brought into the area for construction or alteration of the lease facility will be washed prior to entering onto BLM land. In addition, other standard practices would apply to this Project such as care to avoid present weed populations when parking/traveling through the site, care to check one's clothing and shoes before entering and leaving site. These stipulations would ensure that the proposal would not contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or be an action that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species.