

United States Government

Department of Energy  
Bonneville Power Administration

# memorandum

DATE: May 27, 2010

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: Israel Duran KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Dorie Welch  
Project Manager – KEWM-4

**Proposed Action:** Provision of funds to McKenzie River Trust for purchase of Big Island Addition (Hunsaker) Property

**Fish and Wildlife Project No.:** 1992-068-00, Contract # BPA-005027

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):**

**B1.25** Transfer, lease, disposition or acquisition of interests in uncontaminated land for habitat preservation or wildlife management, and only associated buildings that support these purposes. Uncontaminated means that there would be no potential for release of substances at a level, or in a form, that would pose a threat to public health or the environment.

**Location:** Township 17 South, Range 02 West, Section 26 of the Springfield Quad, in Lane County, Oregon (Near Springfield, Oregon)

**Proposed by:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and McKenzie River Trust (MRT)

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to fund the acquisition of the 92-acre Hunsaker property by the MRT. BPA will be granted a perpetual conservation easement over the entire property as a condition of funding the acquisition. The property is being acquired because of its outstanding riparian and floodplain natural resource values. The acquisition is an opportunity to enhance, restore, and manage high quality fish habitat for juvenile Chinook salmon, Oregon chub; mammals such as river otter, mink, ermine, deer, elk, bear, cougar and beaver; migratory and resident waterfowl, raptors, and songbirds; and other species dependent on riparian habitat for their survival. The easement will protect the conservation values for which the property is being acquired by restricting activity such as residential, non-agricultural commercial, and industrial development. The property also contains a house, garage, barns and other agriculture-related infrastructure, and 31 acres of water rights. Two unimproved roads provide access to the middle floodplain bench. A portion of the property's middle floodplain terrace would be included in a Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB) demonstration farm project that would:

- Demonstrate healthy riparian habitat, invasive weed control, and floodplain forest management;
- Show how agricultural land can coexist with and enhance riparian, floodplain and upland habitat;
- Incorporate soil and water conservation projects including efficient irrigation systems;
- Show how active agricultural and conservation easements can be used to protect land from future development;
- Track all aspects of transitioning from conventional pasture to organic food crops (the majority of farmland in the McKenzie is pasture); and
- Serve as an education tool for grades K-12 (including as an outdoor classroom and part of the farm-to-school program), and provide research and education opportunities for Lane Community College, Oregon State University and University of Oregon.

EWEB and MRT agree that this acquisition and the permanent protection of the property that will result are ultimately being undertaken for the benefit of the public. Ownership by the MRT and the perpetual conservation easement to be held by BPA will ensure that the critical fish and wildlife habitat values present on the property will be protected forever.

BPA is funding MRT's acquisition of the property and receiving a conservation easement. Prior to any management activities, BPA will conduct further environmental review.

**Findings:** BPA has determined that the proposed action complies with Section 1021.410 and Appendix B of Subpart D 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). The proposed action does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal. The proposal is not connected [40 C.F.R. 1508.25(a)(1)] to other actions with potentially significant impacts, is not related to other proposed actions with cumulatively significant impacts [40 C.F.R. 1508.25(a)(2)], and is not precluded by 40 C.F.R. 1506.1 or 10 C.F.R. 1021.211. Moreover, the proposed action would not (i) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, (ii) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities, (iii) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that pre-exist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases, or (iv) adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources.

Based on the provision that a cultural resource survey will be conducted prior to any ground disturbing activities, this proposed action meets the requirements for the Categorical Exclusion referenced above. We therefore determine that the proposed action may be categorically excluded from further NEPA review and documentation.

/s/ Israel Duran

Israel Duran

Environmental Protection Specialist – KEC-4

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer – KEC-4

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Attachment:

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

## Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: FY10 Willamette Basin Mitigation

Project #: 1992-068-00 Cont# BPA-005027

This project has been found to not adversely affect the following environmentally sensitive resources, laws, and regulations:

Environmental Resources	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect With Conditions
1. Cultural Resources No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime agricultural lands No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Consistency with state and local laws and regulations No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Pollution control at Federal facilities No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Other No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List supporting documentation attached (if needed):

Signed: /s/ Israel Duran

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