

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: July 29, 2010

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Joe DeHerrera
Project Manager – KEWM-4

Proposed Action: Provision of funds to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to purchase conservation easements on Cottom and Beyeler Properties

Fish and Wildlife Project No.: 2008-601, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)
Contract #: 005420

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.25 Transfer of land/habitat preservation, wildlife management.

Location: Lemhi County, Idaho

Proposed by: BPA and the State of Idaho

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA is currently working with the State of Idaho to fund TNC's acquisition of an approximately 2,354-acre conservation easement in Idaho's Upper Lemhi River Watershed for protection and restoration of anadromous fish habitat. The conservation easement would preserve and restore anadromous fish habitat through funding from the 2008 Columbia Basin Fish Accords. Funding this acquisition would provide BPA with credits for partial mitigation of anadromous and resident fish habitat losses due to the development, operation, and management of the Federal hydroelectric Facilities on the Columbia River and its tributaries.

The conservation easement encompasses streamside, wetland, and upland habitat on two properties in the area of Lee, Canyon, Little Springs and Big Timber creeks. The properties provide habitat for spring and summer Chinook salmon, bull trout and summer steelhead trout, classified as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. Habitat areas have been established in the conservation easements that will permanently protect approximately 630 acres of streamside habitat and approximately seven and a half miles of river and creek frontage to benefit salmon, steelhead and other fish.

BPA is funding TNC'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/ Stephanie Breeden

Stephanie Breeden

Environmental Project Manager

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: July 29, 2010

Attachment:

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Upper Lemhi River Easement Acquisition

Work Order #: 218707

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 The land purchase has no effect to this resource.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) The land purchase has no effect to this resource.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands The land purchase has no effect to this resource.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation The land purchase has no effect to any areas of special designation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime agricultural lands The land purchase has no effect to this resource.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water The land purchase has no effect to this resource.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Consistency with state and local laws and regulations Land purchase is consistent with laws and regulations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Pollution control at Federal facilities There are no Federal facilities on properties	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List supporting documentation attached (if needed):

Signed: /s/ Stephanie Breeden Date: July 29, 2010