

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: April 24, 2012

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Virgil Lee Watts
Project Manager – KEWM-4

Proposed Action: AMENDED Provision of funds to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) to purchase the Rapid Lightning Creek Property.

Fish and Wildlife Project No.: 1992-061-00

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B 1.25 Real property transfers for cultural resources protection, habitat preservation, and wildlife management.

Location: Township 58 North, Range 1 West, Section 24 of Bonner County, Idaho

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and IDFG

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to provide funds to IDFG for a fee-simple title acquisition of an approximately 27-acre parcel of land adjacent to the Rapid Lightning and Trout Creek Habitat Segments of the Pend Oreille River Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The subject property is located in Bonner County, Idaho, approximately 0.25 mile east of the Pack River. Acquisition of this property would add to the land base of the Pend Oreille River WMA and would protect a wetland area, and associated waterfowl habitat, on the southern portion of the property. Several non-game wildlife species would also benefit from the protection of this property.

In funding IDFG's purchase of the property, BPA would be provided with partial mitigation credits for the construction and operation of the Albeni Falls Dam. BPA's funding would be consistent with an existing Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between BPA and IDFG. After property purchase is complete, IDFG would own and manage the property to maintain habitat for wildlife. The property would be incorporated into the Pend Oreille WMA and the associated wildlife management and operations. Also consistent with the MOA, BPA would have an executory limitation on the property deed to ensure that the property is being managed for wildlife. This document is amending a December 1, 2011, environmental clearance memorandum, where BPA indicated that the parcel would be placed under a conservation easement after purchase.

Prior to funding any management activities on the property, BPA would 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, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011). 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, has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion, 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, (iv) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, or (v) 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.

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/ Katey Grange
Katey Grange
Environmental Project Manager

Concur:

/s/ Stacy Mason
Stacy Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: April 24, 2012

Attachment:
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: AMENDED Rapid Lightening Creek Property Acquisition

Work Order #: BPA- 006471

This project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts on the following environmentally sensitive resources. See 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B for complete descriptions of the resources. This checklist is to be used as a summary – further discussion may be included in the Categorical Exclusion Memorandum.

<u>Environmental Resources</u>	<u>No Potential for Significance</u>	<u>No Potential, with Conditions (describe)</u>
1. Historic Properties and Cultural Resources No potential to cause adverse effect	<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 or unique farmlands 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. Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List supporting documentation attached (if needed):

Signed: /s/ Katay Grange

Date: April 24, 2012