

memorandum

DATE: August 22, 2012

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Dorie Welch
Project Manager – KEWM-4

Proposed Action: Railroad Island Property Funding.

Fish and Wildlife Project No.: 2011-003-00, Contract # BPA-006468

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.25 Real Property transfers for cultural protection, habitat preservation and wildlife management.

Location: Monroe Quadrangle, in Lane County, Oregon (near Junction City, Oregon).

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: The BPA is proposing to fund The Mackenzie River Trust (the Trust) to acquire a 63-acre parcel that will be known as Railroad Island. The Trust will provide BPA a conservation easement over the entire 63-acre property that will prevent habitat conversion and secure rights to restore and maintain fish and wildlife habitat conservation. The property will be granted to The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde (the Tribe) who will own and manage the property.

BPA is currently working with the Trust to acquire and manage a 63-acre parcel of land located in the Willamette River south of Harrisburg. The property proposed for acquisition contains habitat that will provide BPA with credits for partial mitigation of wildlife habitat losses due to the construction and operation of the federal hydroelectric facilities on the Willamette River. The acquisition will provide long-lasting benefits as part of a growing network of conservation lands in the Willamette Valley by protecting habitat for fish and wildlife. Railroad Island is a dynamic river island composed of floodplain forest, riparian willow shrub habitat, gravel bar, and backwater sloughs. These habitats support a variety of species of concern (as identified by the Oregon Conservation Strategy) including migratory birds, Northwestern pond turtles, red-legged frogs, and Upper Willamette Chinook salmon. The dynamic river conditions that have contributed to the formation and maintenance of these critical habitats are increasingly rare in the Willamette River. The acquisition of this island ensures that this area of the river continues to serve as an important riparian and aquatic refuge for both juvenile and adult native fish and wildlife on the Willamette in perpetuity.

The Trust will develop a management plan for Railroad Island as part of the conservation easement process that will allow for restoration, fish and wildlife enhancements, and provide longterm stewardship of the land. The management plan will be developed in coordination with and approved by BPA and its Willamette MOA partners, (Oregon Watershed Enhancement

Board and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife). Prior to funding 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, 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.

/s/ Israel Duran

Israel Duran

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy Mason

Stacy Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: August 23, 2012

Attachment:

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Railroad Island

Work Order #: Project 2011-003-00, Contract # BPA-006468

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime or unique farmlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Other (describe)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed: /s/ Israel Duran

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