

memorandum

DATE: September 4, 2012

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Dave Roberts
Project Manager – KEWU-4

Proposed Action: Provision of funds to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to purchase two parcels of land from the Trust for Public Land in Okanogan County, Washington.

Fish and Wildlife Project No.: 2007-232-00

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

Location:

The two parcels are located in Township 40 North, Range 25 East, Sections 17 and 21 of the Nighthawk 7.5' USGS quadrangle map, in Okanogan County, Washington (northwest of the town of Oroville).

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund the acquisition of two parcels of property, totalling approximately 787 acres, by the WDFW. WDFW will purchase these two parcels from the Trust for Public Land (TPL). BPA will be granted a perpetual conservation easement over the property as a condition of funding the acquisition. The property is being acquired because of its outstanding riparian natural resource values. The acquisition is an opportunity to enhance, restore, and manage high quality habitat for wildlife species that include a variety of waterfowl and songbirds, upland game birds, and raptors, as well as coyote, cougar, and black bear that are also common in the area. The project also benefits bull trout.

WDFW agree that this acquisition and the permanent protection of the properties that will result are ultimately being undertaken for the benefit of the public. Ownership by the WDFW 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 the WDFW acquisition of the properties and is receiving a conservation easement. Prior to any funding 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/ Jenna Peterson

Jenna Peterson

Environmental Protection Specialist – KEC-4

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: September 4, 2012

Attachment:

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusion

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Similkameen River Land Acquisition

Project #/Contract # 2007-224-00

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.

Environmental Resources	No Potential for Significance	No Potential, with Conditions (describe)
1. Historic Properties and Cultural Resources No effect as this is strictly funding a title of transfer for a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) No effect as this is strictly funding a title of transfer for a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands No effect as this is strictly funding a title of transfer for a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation No effect as this is strictly funding a title of transfer for a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety No effect as this is strictly funding a title of transfer for a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime or unique farmlands No effect as this is strictly funding a title of transfer for a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water No effect as this is strictly funding a title of transfer for a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed: /s/ Jenna Peterson

Date: September 4, 2012