

memorandum

DATE: November 8, 2013

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Anne Creason
Project Manager – KEWL-4

Proposed Action: Grays River Confluence property funding

Fish and Wildlife Project No. and Contract No.: 2010-073-00, BPA-007491

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

Location: Township 10 North, Range 8 West, Sections 28 and 33 Wahkiakum County, Washington

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund the Columbia Land Trust for the purchase of 113.65 acres of property, referred to as the Grays River Confluence in Wahkiakum County, Washington. The Columbia Land Trust will own and manage the Grays River Confluence property for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and BPA will receive a conservation easement to ensure that the habitat values on the property are always protected.

The property is being acquired as partial mitigation for the construction and operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System, and because of the riparian and floodplain natural resource values. It also satisfies some of BPA's mitigation requirements for the Columbia River estuary as identified in the National Marine Fisheries Service 2008/2010 Biological Opinion that guides BPA's protection of salmon and steelhead listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. The property is important for providing habitat to coho and Chinook salmon, steelhead, cutthroat trout, black bear, elk, river otter, and other wildlife. The easements will protect the conservation values for which the properties are being acquired by restricting activity such as residential, non-agricultural commercial and industrial development.

The Columbia Land Trust will provide long-term stewardship for the land and will develop a management plan to guide the protection and enhancement of habitat and other resources on the property. Prior to any funding of 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.

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/ Jesse Wilson

Jesse Wilson

Environmental Protection Specialist – KEC-4

Concur:

/s/ Stacy Mason

Stacy Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: November 8, 2013

Attachment(s):

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Grays River Confluence Map

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Grays River Confluence property funding

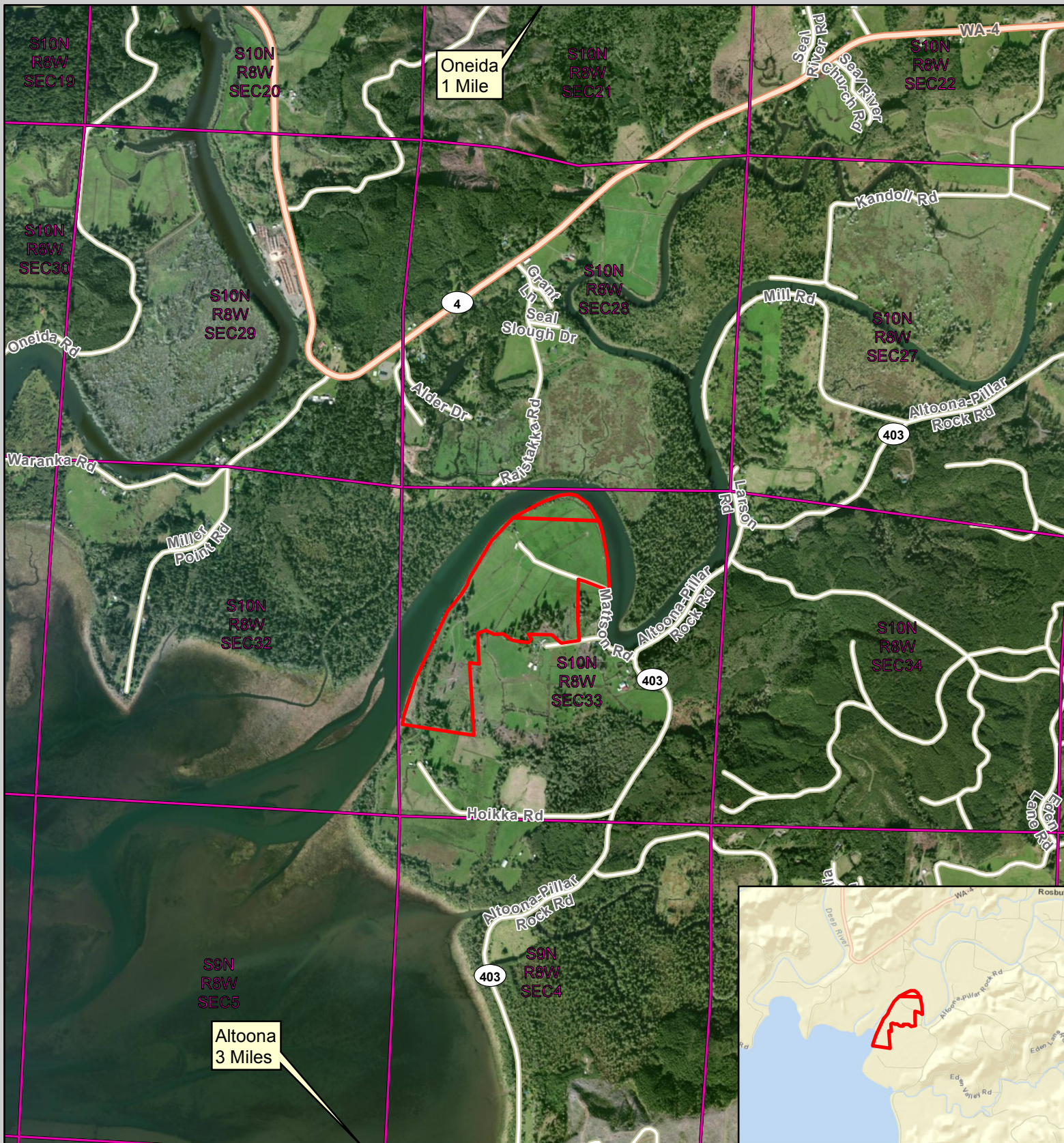
Work Order #: Project 2010-073-00, Contract # BPA-007491

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 effect as this is funding for a land acquisition. BPA Archeologists completed a literature search and the area is in a very high probability area for pre-contact resources. There will be no adverse effect from funding the land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) No effect as this is funding for a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands No effect as this is funding for a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation No effect as this is funding for a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety No effect as this is funding for a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime or unique farmlands The site is mapped as prime farmland if drained. The property is currently dominated by non-native reed canary grass and utilized for grazing. A grazing lease on the property will be maintained for the foreseeable future.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water No effect as this is funding for a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Other (describe) No effect as this is funding for a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Signed: /s/ Jesse Wilson

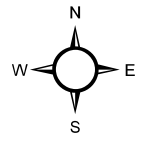
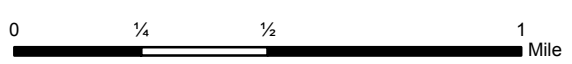
Date: November 8, 2013



Grays River Confluence Land Acquisition

Wahkiakum County, WA
(113 Acres)

-  Subject Property
-  TRS Boundary



8/26/2013

