

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Antoine Valley Ranch Property Acquisition

Fish and Wildlife Project No. and Contract No. : 2008-104-00; BPA-008936

Project Manager: Sandra Fife

Location: Okanogan County, WA

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

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund the Confederated Tribes of the Coleville Reservation (CCT) for the purchase of approximately 2,562 acres, referred to as the Antoine Valley Ranch in Okanogan County, WA. The CCT would own and manage the Antoine Valley Ranch property for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and BPA would receive a conservation easement to ensure that the habitat values on the property are always protected.

This land purchase would serve as partial mitigation for the construction and operation of the dams on the main stem Columbia and Snake rivers. It also satisfies some of BPA's mitigation requirements for the Columbia River basin identified in the National Marine Fisheries Service 2008 Biological Opinion that guides the protection of salmon and steelhead listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. The Antoine Valley Ranch property provides habitat for Chinook salmon and steelhead.

The CCT would provide long-term stewardship for the land and would develop a management plan to guide the protection and enhancement of habitat and other resources on the property. The management plan would be reviewed by BPA for consistency with the conservation easement and the purpose of the acquisition. If BPA proposes to fund any additional activities on the property, further environmental review may be conducted.

Findings: In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) 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), BPA has determined that the proposed action:

- (1) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix A of 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D (see attached Environmental Checklist;
- (2) does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- (3) has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

/s/ Ted Gresh

Ted Gresh
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
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Reviewed by:

/s/ Kevin Cannell

Kevin Cannell
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: July 13, 2016

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Checklist

This checklist documents environmental considerations for the proposed project and explains why the project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources and would meet other integral elements of the applied categorical exclusion.

Proposed Action: Antoine Valley Ranch Property Acquisition

Project Site Description

The Antoine Valley Ranch property is located roughly four miles northeast of Tonasket in unincorporated Okanogan County, Washington. The property consists of a total of 67 tax parcels totaling approximately 2,524 acres, a small portion of which are irrigated croplands. The majority of the property is dry rangelands. As an operating ranch, the property has numerous ranching related improvements (barns, fencing, irrigation equipment, etc.), as well as five single-family homes of varying conditions and sizes.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. Historic and Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There would be no effect due to the land acquisition which includes transfer of title and the creation of a conservation easement.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> See explanation for #1 above.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> See explanation for #1 above.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> See explanation for #1 above.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> See explanation for #1 above.		

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

8. **Land Use and Specially Designated Areas**

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

Evaluation of Other Integral Elements

The proposed project would also meet conditions that are integral elements of the categorical exclusion. The project would not:

- Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted

releases.

Explanation, if necessary:

- 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, such as those of the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health.

Explanation, if necessary:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

A public notification letter would be sent to adjacent property owners of the proposed land acquisition and advertisements placed in local newspapers prior to funding.

Based on the foregoing, this proposed project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts on any environmentally sensitive resources.

Signed: /s/ Ted Gresh Date: July 13, 2016
Ted Gresh
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist