

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Okanogan Basin Monitoring & Evaluation Program Funding

Project No.: 2003-022-00

Project Manager: Maureen Kavanaugh

Location: Okanogan County, WA

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B3.3 Research related to conservation of fish, wildlife, and cultural resources

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation for ongoing monitoring and evaluation activities for the Okanogan Basin Monitoring & Evaluation Program

BPA funding for OBMEP would help to address actions outlined in the NOAA fisheries 2008 Biological Opinion for the Federal Columbia River Power System, specifically fish population and habitat status monitoring for listed summer steelhead within the Okanogan River.

The activities to be funded include collection, generation, and validation of field and lab data. More specifically, the activities include the following:

1. Juvenile steelhead population estimates, fish densities, and watershed health indicators
 - Juvenile salmonid data is gathered using snorkel surveys, mark-recapture electrofishing, PIT tag data and rotary screw trap data
2. Enumerate adult returns to the Okanogan River basin:
 - Various methodologies including redd surveys for summer steelhead, picket weir traps, video counters, and PIT-tags
3. Monitor threats to salmonid habitats
 - Information will be collected pertaining to presence and composition of large woody debris, riparian vegetation structure, canopy cover, human disturbance, substrate composition, embeddedness, side channel habitat, stream channel habitat types (pool, riffle, glide, etc.), and channel widths and depths.
4. Water temperature and discharge monitoring data collection
 - Colville staff collects discharge data and maintains discharge sites and equipment.

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 B 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
SalientCRGT, Inc.

Reviewed by:

/s/ David K Kennedy

Dave Kennedy
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L Mason

Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: March, 7 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: Okanogan Basin Monitoring & Evaluation Program Funding

Project Site Description

Adult and juvenile M&E activities would be conducted throughout the Okanogan River basin.

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> No new receivers or weirs would be installed; therefore, there would be no ground disturbance or attachment to potentially-historic structures. No potential to effect.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance would be required.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance that would disturb plants, including any ESA-listed plants, would be required.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Work would be conducted at existing locations and would be passive in nature. No wildlife or wildlife habitat, including ESA-listed wildlife, would be disturbed.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Capture of ESA-listed steelhead is covered under National Marine Fisheries Service Tribal 4(d) rule for Tribal Resource Management Plans (TRMPs). Bull trout capture is covered through consultation with USFWS on NMFS 4(d) determination for the TRMP.		
6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance that would disturb wetlands would be required.		

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: No ground disturbance or excavation that would disturb groundwater or introduce contaminants into groundwater would be required.

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

Explanation: All fixed monitoring locations (PIT tag arrays and weirs) are previously-established and continued use would not alter existing land uses.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: All fixed monitoring locations (PIT tag arrays and weirs) are previously-established and continued use would not alter existing visual quality of the area.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: No ground disturbance or use of heavy equipment that would produce increased dust or emissions would be required. Some vehicle emissions would be generated to access data collection sites. These emissions would be temporary and similar to those generated in the area by vehicles.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: No activities would be noise generating.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: Appropriate safety measures would be employed for staff working near the water.

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

Coordination with NMFS, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and other regional partners is ongoing and part of the regular annual planning process.

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

Signed: /s/ Ted Gresh

Ted Gresh

Environmental Protection Specialist

Date: March 7, 2017