

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Umatilla Natural Production Monitoring and Evaluation FY17

**Project No.:** 1990-005-01

**Project Manager:** Tracy Hauser, EWL-4

**Location:** Umatilla County, Oregon

**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:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to fund the Umatilla Confederated Tribes (CTUIR) to provide information to tribal, state, and Federal fisheries managers by monitoring tribal harvest, juvenile outmigration, water temperatures, age and growth, adult salmon passage, and natural spawning of salmon and steelhead in the Umatilla River Basin. These objectives would be conducted collaboratively with CTUIR's Lamprey, Habitat, Passage, Artificial Production, and Biomonitoring Projects as well as the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW) Outmigration Monitoring Project.

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

1. **Outmigration monitoring**  
Collaborate with ODFW's smolt monitoring project to estimate the total number of natural steelhead smolts leaving the Umatilla River Basin annually. Both steelhead and bull trout would be PIT tagged.
2. **Salmon passage evaluations**  
Passage conditions would be evaluated for coho below Three Mile Falls Dam and for fall Chinook salmon at Brownell Dam and the falls above Chinaman's Hole. Fall Chinook and coho would be PIT tagged.
3. **PIT tagging up to 7,000 steelhead and bull trout**  
Implant PIT tags in up to 7,000 Middle Columbia River (MCR) DPS steelhead and bull trout that are collected at the rotary fish traps.

**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/ Travis Kessler  
Travis Kessler  
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist  
SalientCRGT, Inc.

Reviewed by:

/s/ Chad J Hamel  
Chad Hamel  
Acting Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel  
Sarah T. Biegel  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: August 22, 2017

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.

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### Project Site Description

Adult and juvenile M&E activities would be conducted throughout the Umatilla River Basin. Project activities would occur within the Umatilla River in Umatilla near its confluence with the Columbia River and in Meacham Creek to the south of Gibbon. The areas surrounding the Umatilla River are generally flat in topography and consist of agricultural land. Areas surrounding Meacham Creek consist of mountaineous areas within the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. <b>Historic and Cultural Resources</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There are no ground-disturbing activities associated with this project. Therefore, there is no potential to affect historic properties. A BPA archaeologist was consulted regarding the potential for historic and cultural resources and agreed that there would be no impacts as a result of the project activities.		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There are no ground-disturbing activities associated with this project. Therefore, geology and soils would not be affected.		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There are no ground-disturbing activities associated with this project. Therefore, plants would not be affected.		
4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There are no ground-disturbing activities associated with this project. Therefore, no wildlife or wildlife habitat would be affected.		
5. <b>Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish</b> (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There are no ground-disturbing activities associated with this project. Therefore, no waterbodies or floodplains would be affected. ESA-listed Middle Columbia River (MCR) steelhead and bull trout would be handled and PIT tagged. MCR steelhead would be covered under Umatilla HGMP BiOp 2010/06511, which contains no expiration date. A Section 10 permit (#TE-844468-11), which expires 4/29/19, covers the incidental take of bull trout. NMFS standard and approved fish-handling techniques would be applied to minimize impacts		

to ESA-listed species.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: There are no ground-disturbing activities associated with this project. Therefore, there would be no impacts to wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: There are no ground-disturbing activities associated with this project. Therefore, there is no potential to affect groundwater.

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



Explanation: There would be no change in land use and no work in specially designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: There are no ground-disturbing activities associated with this project and no potential to cause impacts to visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: There are no ground-disturbing activities or emissions-emitting equipment operations associated with this project.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: There are no ground-disturbing activities or noise-generating activities associated with this project.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: There are no hatchery operational changes proposed. Therefore, there is no potential for changing the risk environment for human health and safety.

### 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:

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**Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description: No landowner or neighbor engagement necessary; there are no ground-disturbing activities and all activities occur at previously-existing facilities. All actions are consistent in character with ongoing operations at these facilities.

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

Signed:  /s/ Travis Kessler

Travis Kessler

Environmental Protection Specialist ECF-4

Date:  August 22, 2017