

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Columbia Basin PIT Tag Support Project

Project No.: 1990-080-00

Project Manager: Tom Pansky, EWB-4

Location: Benton, Columbia, Franklin, Garfield, Idaho, Kittitas, Klickitat, Multnomah, Sherman, Skamania, Umatilla, Walla Walla, and Whitman counties in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.3 Routine maintenance; B3.3 Research related to conservation of fish, wildlife and cultural resources.

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration proposes to fund ongoing operation and maintenance (O&M) and installation of PIT (Passive Integrated Transponder) tag infrastructure for the administration and system operation of the Columbia River Basin PIT Tag Information System (PTAGIS). A comprehensive overview of the project is described online at <http://www.ptagis.org/learn>.

To operate and maintain the Columbia River Basin-wide database for PIT-tagged fish and to operate and maintain the established interrogation systems to provide that data in 'near-real' time, the following on-the-ground actions would occur:

- Operation and maintenance of equipment at remote sites.
- Distribution of PIT tags and associated equipment.

This project provides operations and maintenance (O&M) support for PIT tag actuated diversion gates at various fish facilities and installs and maintains the programmable logic controllers (PLCs) at various locations throughout the Columbia River Basin. At US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) facilities, the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and USACE operate under the following memorandum of understanding (MOU): <http://www.ptagis.org/docs/default-source/ptagis-program-documents/coe-and-bpa-mou-regarding-pit-tag-infrastructure.pdf?sfvrsn=10>.

PTAGIS also provides a repository for automated detection data collected at 283 interrogation sites operated by other entities.

If a new system is approved by BPA, PTAGIS coordinates with USACE or other agencies to install the electrical components of this system (transceivers, network, PLC, data collection computers) at the existing sites as noted in the MOU.

No new sites would be developed under the project.

Funding the proposed activities fulfills commitments under the 2020 National Marine Fisheries Service Columbia River System Biological Opinion (2020 NMFS CRS BiOp). These proposed activities also fulfill commitments specified in the 2020 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Columbia River System BiOp (2020 FWS CRS BiOp). The proposed activities also support ongoing efforts to mitigate for effects of

the FCRPS on fish and wildlife in the mainstem Columbia River and its tributaries pursuant to the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act of 1980 (Northwest Power Act) (16 U.S.C. (USC) 839 et seq.).

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, Jul. 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/ Israel Duran

Israel Duran
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Salient/CRGT

Reviewed by:

/s/ Chad Hamel

Chad Hamel
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey C. Grange May 10, 2021

Katey C. Grange Date
NEPA Compliance Officer

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: Columbia Basin PIT Tag Support

Project Site Description

Existing support infrastructure is located at USACE facilities throughout Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. The PSMFC office in Portland, Oregon houses the PTAGIS systems. The field office in Kennewick, WA is primarily responsible for operations and equipment maintenance of 30 key PIT tag interrogation sites.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed activities would occur within the confines of the existing structures, and would not require any ground-disturbing activities for the completion of this work. Ground disturbance or activities external to the existing structure are not planned.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed activities would occur within the confines of the existing structures, and would not require any ground-disturbing activities for the completion of this work. Ground disturbance or activities external to the existing structure are not planned.

3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Activities required for the completion of this work would be within the confines of the existing facilities. Ground disturbance or activities external to the existing structures are not planned and there would not be disturbance to vegetation..

4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Activities required for the completion of this work would be within the confines of the existing facilities. Ground disturbance or activities external to the existing structure are not planned.

5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Facilities may be located near major bodies of water. However, any work would occur in the footprint of existing structures and would not require any ground-disturbing activities for the completion of the work.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would occur in the existing structures and wetlands would not be impacted.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would occur in the footprint of existing facilities, and no ground excavation is planned.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would occur in the existing facilities footprints, and would not impact or change land use.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would occur in existing facilities, and would not impact visual quality.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The installation and O&M of the PTAGIS system would not impact air quality.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would occur in existing structures, and installation, operation and maintenance of the system would not raise noise levels above background.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would occur in the existing facilities, and safety regulations would be followed as necessary.

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: N/A

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

Explanation: N/A

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: N/A

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: N/A

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: This work would be implemented on USACE property according to the provisions outlined in the MOU.

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

Signed: /s/ Israel Duran May 10, 2021
Israel Duran, ECF-4 Date
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
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