

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Revais Creek Property Acquisition Funding

Fish and Wildlife Project No. and Contract No. : 2002-003-00; BPA-09888

Project Manager: Cecilia Brown

Location: Township 18 North, Range 22 West, Section 22, Sanders County, Montana

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 is proposing to fund the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes to purchase the Revais Creek property, a 20-acre parcel of land located about 3 miles southwest of Dixon in Sanders County, Montana. The United States would hold a conservation easement, which BPA would manage, to permanently protect, mitigate and enhance fish and wildlife and their habitat.

Funding the purchase of the property would serve as partial mitigation for the construction and operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System which includes dams on the main stem Columbia and Snake Rivers. This land purchase would specifically satisfy some of BPA's commitments made in the current extension of the 2012-2014 Memorandum of Understanding between the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the Bonneville Power Administration.

The property consists of upland grassland and forested riparian habitat. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes 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/ Jennifer Snyder

Jennifer Snyder
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Flux Resources, LLC

Reviewed by:

/s/ Chad J. Hamel

Chad J. Hamel
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: March 28, 2018

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

The Revais Creek property is comprised of 20 acres of undeveloped riparian forest and upland grassland, and includes a reach of about 0.2 miles of Revais Creek located in the western half of the site. Surrounding uses are primarily mountainous open space, agricultural and rural residential. The property appears to have served as agricultural land for livestock grazing in the past due to evidence of corral fencing; other than a boundary fence, there are no other structures. However, the intensity of agricultural use has lessened significantly in recent years as the evidence of grazing is sporadic.

The property supports a variety of wildlife species including grizzly bear, black bear, mountain lion, bobcat, gray wolf, white-tailed and mule deer, red fox, beaver, and a variety of small mammals and birds. The current fish assemblage of Revais Creek in this vicinity is the result of past land management activities typical to western mountain drainages such as forest harvesting, road building, livestock grazing and irrigation diversion practices. Fish species present include native westslope cutthroat trout and an unidentified species of sculpin, along with introduced brook trout. Importantly, this site adjoins other Tribal land that is being managed for fish and wildlife values. Indeed, the parcel is an existing Tribal allotment.

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)



Explanation: 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 and map of the property will be mailed to neighboring landowners, stakeholders and relevant elected officials and other interested parties prior to site closing. Advertisements will also be placed in local newspapers, and information will be posted on BPA's public website.

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

Signed: /s/ Jennifer Snyder
Jennifer Snyder ECF-4
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Flux Resources, LLC

Date: March 28, 2018