

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Lostine Weir Facility — Septic Installation and Security Upgrades

**Project No.:** 1998-002-02, Contract 74017, Work Elements J and K

**Project Manager:** Maureen Kavanaugh EFW-4

**Location:** Wallowa County, Oregon

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B2.1 Workplace enhancements

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to fund easement acquisition, a new security system, and a new septic tank and drain field at the Nez Perce Tribe's (NPT) Lostine River Weir facility in Wallowa County, Oregon. The work would support ongoing operations and maintenance of the weir facilities.

The easement acquisition would refine existing land rights, and would add new land rights where the new septic system and drain field would be located. The new easement would total about 1.1 acres in size.

The new security system would provide enhanced asset protection at the weir facility. Installation would include the addition of new security cameras, radio equipment, and supporting materials. All components would be installed at existing facilities and would not result in any new ground disturbance.

The new septic system would be located adjacent to existing unused bathroom facilities at the Lostine Weir site. Installation would consist of burying a 1,000 gallon septic tank with an Alternative Treatment Technology (ATT) pod connected to a 35 foot-long trenched drain pipe. After backfilling over the new drain pipe, excess soils would be spread around the site. Additional top soil would be brought in to provide cover for the cap and fill system. All ground work would be done using a back hoe. Ground disturbance would be limited to an area that is presently used as farm field. No new access road work is needed to support this portion of the project.

**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/ Claire McClory

Claire McClory

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Office

Date: June 5, 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.

**Proposed Action:** Lostine Weir Facility — Septic Installation and Security Upgrades

## Project Site Description

The project is within the Blue Mountain physiographic province of northeast Oregon. Most of the project area is developed with Lostine Weir support buildings and parking. The proposed septic area is located on flat agricultural bottom land currently used for grazing.

## 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> Oregon SHPO concurred with BPAs finding of no effect to archaeological or historic resources February 22, 2018. No response was received from consulted Tribes.		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Construction of the septic system would include excavating soils for drainage pipe and septic tank and ATT pod placement. Topsoils would be brought in from off-site to add about a foot of cover to the shallow cap and fill system. Any other excess soils would be spread on site and reseeded with grass.		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species present.		
4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No special-status species present.		
5. <b>Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish</b> (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The proposed project is about 150-feet from the Lostine River, which is listed for spring Chinook, summer steelhead, and bull trout. The Lostine weir parking area and outbuildings are between the River and the proposed septic system, acting as a buffer to any potential soil runoff or direct impacts to the water during construction. The ATT septic system is designed to pre-treat the raw sewage before dispersing it into the drainfield. Construction would occur in dry conditions, between June 1 and October 1 per Oregon DEQ permitting requirements.		
6. <b>Wetlands</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> None present.		

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: The water table is less than 24-inches below the ground surface. Oregon DEQ requires that an ATT system be used with a maximum drainfield depth of 12-inches to avoid meeting the shallow water table. The drainage field must have an additional foot of topsoil added to make up for the shallow depths. The ATT system is designed to pre-treat sewage before it is dispersed into the drainage field. Once the system has been installed, it must be inspected and approved annually by DEQ. Proper installation of the septic system would have no impact on the shallow water table.

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



Explanation: The new easement and drainage field area would continue to be used for grazing after construction is complete.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: No impact.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: Short-term increase in dust from construction activities.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Short-term noise increase during construction.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: Oregon DEQ permit number 250-17-000242-EVAL approves the site for construction. Oregon DEQ requires that construction occurs between June 1 and October 1 when conditions are dry. Oregon DEQ also requires that a post construction evaluation occur before a final permit is issued and that annual inspections take place.

### 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: BPA is in negotiations with the underlying landowner about the easement acquisition.

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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/ Claire McClory  
Claire McClory, ECF-4

Date: June 5, 2018