

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Willamette Falls Pacific Lamprey Escapement Research

Project No.: 2008-308-00

Project Manager: Siena Lopez-Johnston, EWM-4

Location: Willamette Falls and Abernethy Creek, Oregon

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.20 Protection of cultural resources, fish and wildlife habitat

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, Oregon (CTWSRO) to study Pacific lamprey population trends through harvest and escapement estimates at Willamette Falls in Oregon City, Oregon. Escapement would be monitored from the spring through the fall at the fish ladder, temporary lamprey ramps installed by Portland General Electric, and at the natural fish way over the falls. Creel surveys would be used to document harvest abundance. Major components of the proposed action include:

- (1) Collect lamprey by hand or dip net. If not previously tagged, a tissue sample from the caudal fin would be collected and a PIT (passive integrated transponder) tag inserted for future tracking. Sampling would occur at Willamette Falls between February and August each year to inform regional Pacific lamprey management objectives. Lamprey would be released downstream in the Willamette River near the mouth of Abernethy Creek, and a private dock just south of the Oregon City Bridge.
- (2) Operate and maintain previously installed PIT tag arrays in the fish ladder to determine the rate of return of PIT tagged lamprey to the falls. Install and operate reader antenna on the slide gate in the natural fish way, and video-monitoring equipment at the fish ladder to record and count lamprey passage.
- (3) Conduct creel surveys to census harvest of adult Pacific lamprey. Voluntary interviews would be conducted throughout the harvest period (typically June and July). The first 10 lamprey per harvester would be measured for length and weight, and the remaining catch weighed.

The proposed action described encompasses the routinely BPA-funded actions of CTWSRO to conduct Pacific lamprey research at Willamette Falls to inform regional management and understanding for the recovery of the species. This categorical exclusion is intended to cover this action, as described above, for a period of 5 years from the date of publishing, or unless proposed activities and locations are changed substantially.

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/ Tabatha M. Rood

Tabatha M. Rood
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Triad Technology LLC.

Reviewed by:

/s/ Chad Hamel

Chad Hamel
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: August 12, 2019

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

Willamette Falls and Abernethy Creek near Oregon City, OR

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"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> This project does not typically involve ground disturbance of any kind. When needed, additional PIT tag arrays would be installed at existing passage structure sites that have been previously disturbed. If any new ground disturbance is proposed outside of disturbed areas, a cultural resource consultation would be initiated.</p>		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> There is no ground disturbance associated with these actions. Therefore, there is no potential to affect geology and soils.</p>		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The proposed action does not include any vegetation management, ground disturbance, or any actions that would significantly impact vegetation in work areas. Therefore, there is no potential to affect plant communities.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The proposed actions would take place entirely within mentioned waterways. There would be no ground disturbance and actions would only affect isolated, existing infrastructure. Therefore, there is no potential to affect wildlife or wildlife habitat.</p>		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Environmental considerations include those typical for stream habitat restoration projects where ESA-listed fish are present. Sampling methods and existing infrastructure upgrades are highly specified to target Pacific lamprey, and as such, would have no potential to affect water bodies, floodplains, or fish.</p>		
6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The proposed actions could take place within or around wetlands; however, the actions would not have any effects to their quality, condition, or size since there would be no ground disturbance or habitat modifications. Therefore, there is no potential to affect wetlands.</p>		

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: There is no ground disturbance associated with this project and actions would only affect isolated existing infrastructure. Therefore, there is no potential to affect groundwater and aquifers.

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



Explanation: There would be no changes to land use and no impacts to specially-designated areas. Therefore, no potential to affect land use or specially-designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: There is no ground disturbance associated with this project and actions would only affect isolated existing infrastructure. Therefore, there is no potential to impact visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: There could be short-term effects to air quality in the transportation of staff and equipment to project areas; however, they are not inconsistent with recreation and land use typical of the action area, and therefore would have no potential to affect air quality.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Impacts to noise at project sites would be minimal, short-term, and of low decibel; generated during daylight hours. Temporary maintenance noise would not have a potential to significantly affect noise levels.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: The proposed actions would not have any impacts to human health and safety, as the collection of information does not pose a human health or safety risk.

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

Description: Willamette Falls is an historical Pacific lamprey collection site for multiple Tribes of the Northwest, and the location has more recent historical context with the paper industry in Oregon. As such, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, Oregon are regularly involved with stakeholders in the area and are respectful of traditional fishing rights.

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

Signed: /s/ Tabatha M. Rood

Tabatha M. Rood

Contract Environmental Protection Specialist

Triad Technology Group

Date: August 12, 2019