

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Upstream Migration Timing Project at Bonneville Dam Adult Fish Facility

Project No.: 2008-518-00

Project Manager: Christine Petersen, EWP-4

Location: Skamania County, Washington

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 Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) to capture returning adult Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), sockeye salmon (*O. nerka*), and steelhead trout (*O. mykiss*) at the existing Bonneville Dam Adult Fish Facility. These fish would then be PIT-tagged, sampled for biological information, and released. This work is associated with existing CRITFC monitoring programs and would better assess Chinook, steelhead, and sockeye salmon adult migratory timing, survival, and fall back through the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) and, in some cases, straying in tributaries. All work would be internal to the adult fish facility and the activities would not change adult fish facility operation.

Funding the proposed activities fulfills Bonneville's commitments to the CRITFC under the 2018 Columbia River Fish Accord Extension agreement, while also supporting 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 September 15, 2020

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: Upstream Migration Timing Project at Bonneville Dam Adult Fish Facility

Project Site Description

All fish handling activities would occur within the existing Bonneville Dam Adult Fish Facility located adjacent to the second powerhouse at river km 235 of the Columbia River in Skamania County, Washington.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There is no ground disturbance proposed by this project and all action would occur at existing infrastructure. Therefore, actions proposed by this project would not impact historic or cultural resources.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There is no ground disturbance proposed by this project and work would occur at an existing collection facility. Therefore, geology and soils would not be impacted by the proposed activities.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No plants exist within the immediate work area. Also, there would be no ground disturbance proposed by this project and, therefore, there are no anticipated impacts to any plant species.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All activity would take place within the adult fish facility. There is no wildlife in the project area and there would be no effect to wildlife due to typical operation of the adult fish facility.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Fish research on hatchery and wild-origin anadromous salmonids is a common and widespread activity within the Columbia River basin, and these project activities would involve the direct take of several Endangered Species Act (ESA)- listed species (Chinook, steelhead, and sockeye). The ESA coverage for handling listed fish would be secured through Section-10 permits from the National Marine Fisheries Service (Sec 10 Permit 1379) and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (Sec 10 Permit TE227268-3). There is no ground disturbance or change in fish facility operations proposed by this project. Therefore, actions proposed would not impact waterbodies or floodplains.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There is no ground disturbance proposed by this project and work would occur at an existing collection facility. Therefore, the activities would not impact wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There is no ground disturbance proposed by this project and work would occur at an existing collection facility. Therefore, the activities would not impact or change groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The activities would not impact or change land use.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The activities would not impact visual quality as they would occur at existing facilities.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The activities would not impact air quality.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The activities would not impact aural quality.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: 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: NA

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

Explanation: NA

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: NA

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: NA

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: This work would be implemented at Bonneville Dam on property managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers. The project sponsor has coordinated with the US Army Corps of Engineers to obtain site access.

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 September 15, 2020
Israel Duran, ECF-4 Date
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Salient/CRGT