



## Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3621  
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

09/22/2020

In reply refer to: ECF-4

### ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DETERMINATION

**Proposed Action:** Reducing Predation Impacts on At-Risk Fish by California and Steller Sea Lions in the Columbia River Basin

**Environmental Project Manager:** Anne Creason, EWL-4, 503.230.3859, [amcreason@bpa.gov](mailto:amcreason@bpa.gov)

**Location:** Multnomah County, OR

**Proposed by:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) cooperating with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville proposes to provide funding to the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho and Columbia River Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC)<sup>1</sup> for a sea lion barge and transfer cages (and related equipment) large enough to handle Steller sea lions, and to fund CRITFC's activities supporting the intentional take, by lethal methods, of sea lions in the mainstem of the Columbia River as allowed under the conditions of NMFS' section 120(f) authorization to the eligible entities. These activities would test the efficacy of lethal removal of sea lions to reduce predation impacts on salmon and steelhead. Bonneville would fund such actions under its authority under Section 4(g)(3) of the Northwest Power Act, which allows Bonneville to "investigate possible measures" for inclusion in the Council's Power Plan (which includes its Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program).

**Class of Action to be Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):**  
Appendix C8 Protection of Cultural Resources and Fish and Wildlife Habitat

We have reviewed the description of the proposed action and found that the proposal is not encompassed within the classes of actions listed in Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021. Therefore, in accordance with 10 C.F.R. 1021.400 (d), we have determined that an environmental assessment (EA) will be prepared to assess the impacts of the proposed action. On the basis of

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<sup>1</sup> Congress amended the MMPA in 2018 such that Section 120(f) provides that the Secretary of Commerce may allow eligible entities . . . to delegate their authority under a permit under this subsection to CRITFC.

the analysis in the EA, Bonneville will prepare a finding of no significant impact and proceed with the action, or will prepare an environmental impact statement if the EA reveals the potential for significant environmental impacts.

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel  
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: September 22, 2020