

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Lemhi Stream Restoration Informational Kiosk

Project No.: 2010-072-00

Project Manager: Tim Ludington, EWM-4

Location: Lemhi County, Idaho

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B3.14 Small-scale Educational Facilities; B1.20 Protection of Cultural Resources, Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposed to provide funding to the Lemhi Regional Land Trust to install a new information kiosk to display information about the aquatic restoration actions in the Lemhi Valley. A kiosk is proposed for installation along Idaho State Highway 28, in a turnout 2.7 miles northwest of the junction with State Highway 29 at the town of Leadore, Idaho. There is a view at this location of planned and completed stream restoration actions along Big Springs, a tributary of the Lemhi River. The approximately 4-foot by 8-foot sign board would be erected on two 6-inch by 6-inch wooden posts and would include information about the Upper Big Springs Habitat Improvement Project's background and goals as well as Lemhi-specific fisheries and watershed restoration information. The kiosk's support posts would be placed in existing road fill along an existing state highway turnout.

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/Robert W Shull

Robert W Shull

Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
CorSource Technology Group

Reviewed by:

/s/ Chad Hamel

Chad Hamel

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey C. Grange

June 8, 2021

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: Lemhi Stream Restoration Informational Kiosk

Project Site Description

The kiosk would be located within an existing turnout along Idaho State Highway 28. The turnout is gravel-surfaced and the shoulders of this turnout, within which the signposts would be placed, are constructed of imported gravel fill. There is no vegetation on this turnout or its shoulders. The turnout itself is adjacent to Little Springs, a small tributary to the Lemhi River, which is a small, meandering, slow-flowing creek within a broad, lush, treeless floodplain with scattered willows.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The kiosk would be erected on road fill along an existing highway turnout. No native soils would be disturbed. There would be no potential to disturb historic or cultural resources.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The kiosk would be erected on road fill along an existing highway turnout. No native soils would be disturbed.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The kiosk would be erected on vegetatively-barren road fill along an existing highway turnout. There are no plants present in the road fill, the turnout, or in any location where vehicles or workers might damage them. No plants would be disturbed.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The kiosk would be erected on a vegetatively barren road fill along an existing highway turnout. No riparian or upland habitats would be modified by these actions since no soil or plants would be impacted. Wildlife in habitats nearby would be disturbed by human activities, but this impact would be temporal (one day or less) and minimal.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The kiosk would be erected on road fill along an existing highway turnout, with all work occurring on dry land. No waterbodies or floodplains would be affected. No fish habitat or fish would be impacted.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The kiosk would be erected on road fill along an existing highway turnout. No wetlands would be affected.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No water would be withdrawn.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There is no potential for the kiosk to affect land uses. The location of the sign is not within a Specially-designated Area.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The kiosk, by design, would be highly visible with the goal of attracting the attention of people driving by. Its written content would direct people's attention to nearby completed and planned in-stream restoration activities that would temporarily alter the foreground scenery. The sign would be designed to be fitting for the landscape, as is typical of such informational kiosks, and the focal point of its instruction would be completed actions that improve the landscape by increasing stream structure diversity, increase vegetative diversity and abundance, and attract fish and wildlife. This level of effect is low.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Driving of motor vehicles by construction workers would produce emissions, but the amount would be minimal and short term, and consistent with that produced by recreational and local ranching and agricultural activities.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Noise sources would be from trucks and use of hand tools by workers. Noise-creating actions would be 3.7 miles from the nearest town or residence; would be consistent with that produced by local ranching and agricultural activities; and would be short term. These impacts would occur during daylight hours only.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No long-term public safety hazards would be created with this project. Routine, short-term safety hazards would be expected from the incremental addition of vehicle traffic on local roads, and the workers in the highway turnout for a couple of hours.

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: N/A

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

Explanation: N/A

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: N/A

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: N/A

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: The work is proposed along State Highway 28. The project sponsor has coordinated with the Idaho Department of Transportation.

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

Signed: /s/ Robert W Shull June 8, 2021
Robert W Shull Date
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
CorSource Technology Group