

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Continued Funding for Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT) Resident Fish Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation (RM&E).

Project No.: 2008-109-00

Project Manager: J. Cleveland, EWU-4

Location: Ferry, WA.

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B3.3 - Research related to conservation of fish and wildlife.

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to continue funding the CCT for ongoing work for RM&E focusing on the protection and conservation of Upper Columbia redband rainbow trout. The project began in 2008 through the Columbia River Fish Accords to conserve and protect the Sanpoil River system and Lake Roosevelt populations, and other native redband trout populations on and near the CCT Reservation. Redband trout are a non-Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species of concern. The proposed actions goals are to understand population dynamics and estimates of survival during key life stages. This project would implement four objectives to support management of redband trout in the Sanpoil River system including Lake Roosevelt, which includes: monitoring recruitment, monitoring harvest, monitoring movements/entrainment, and monitoring escapement.

1. **Monitoring Recruitment:**

The project would use PIT tag arrays, PIT tag markings and a screw trap to collect, mark and estimate redband trout juvenile recruitment to Lake Roosevelt from the Sanpoil River basin. Two existing PIT tag arrays would be operational all year long. One located at the mouth of the Sanpoil River, and one located at the mouth of the West Fork Sanpoil River.

2. **Monitor Harvest:**

The project would obtain creel information on wild redband rainbow trout capture and harvest. Creel clerks scan all wild rainbow trout for PIT tags. Tissue samples and otolith samples would be collected. Some DNA analysis (i.e. fin clip) would be conducted to determine the proportion of wild trout harvest from the Sanpoil River and other CCT tributaries.

3. **Monitor Escapement:**

The project would monitor escapement into the Sanpoil River from a temporary weir trap installed near the mouth of the river during summer and fall. The existing main stem PIT tag array would also be used to track river entry timing of adult spawning fish.

4. **Monitor Movements/Entrainment:**

The project would continue an existing acoustic tracking study of redband trout seasonal movement for adults originating in the Sanpoil River. Acoustic tags would be implanted into juvenile Redband Trout leaving the Sanpoil River. The project would download and maintain the previously-installed receivers located in the Sanpoil Arm and Rufus Woods reservoir.

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/ Luca T. De Stefanis

Luca T. De Stefanis
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Motus

/s/ Chad Hamel

Chad Hamel
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange

Katey Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: April 30, 2020

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: Continued Funding for Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT) Resident Fish Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation (RM&E).

Project Site Description

All activities would occur at either existing facilities and/or field sites associated with Sanpoil River system and Lake Roosevelt.

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"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There would be no ground disturbing activities, thus the proposed activities would not have the potential to affect historic properties or cultural resources. All work would be carried out from within existing facilities or at existing field sites.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbing activities proposed, thus the proposed activities do not have the potential to affect geology and soils. All work would be carried out from within existing facilities or at existing field sites.		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbing or vegetation removal activities proposed. All work would be carried out from within existing facilities or at existing sites associated with Sanpoil River drainage and Lake Roosevelt, Washington.		
4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbing or other activity that may affect wildlife or wildlife habitat is proposed. Field crews from 1-3 people hiking with backpacks would yield avoidance or minor disturbance through human presence of walking through the woods. There would be no effect on federally- or state-listed sensitive species.		

5. **Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish**

(including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)



Explanation: This project work concentrates on screw trap and weir trap operations, maintenance, and data collection. There would be physical handling of redband trout fish to administer the installation of a screw or weir trap. All fish captured in the screw trap and weir trap are measured, and weighted. Redband trout would have a tissue sample taken (i.e. fin clip) for DNA analysis and is injected with a PIT tag. During installation of these traps, no fish are handled. There would be no impact to adjacent waterbodies or floodplains because no ground disturbing activities are proposed. All work would be carried out from within existing facilities or at the existing field sites. There would be no effect to ESA listed species, including bull trout.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No ground disturbing activities are proposed thus the action does not have the potential to impact wetlands. All work would be carried out from within existing facilities or at the existing field sites.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No ground disturbing activities that may affect groundwater or aquifers are proposed.

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



Explanation: Access to field sites is on existing road networks and all activities are compatible with local land use on public roads, public lands or CCT reservation lands.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The proposed action would not impact visual quality as the action reflects operations and maintenance of existing equipment. All existing equipment was installed from previous year's sites and remains as a designated RM&E site. No new equipment or installation exists in the proposed actions.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: All work would be carried out from within existing facilities or at the existing field sites and would have no effect on air quality. Any increase in emissions from vehicles accessing field sites would be very minor and short term.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: All work would be carried out from within existing facilities or the existing field sites and would not result in an increase in ambient noise.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: All work would be carried out from within existing facilities or the existing sites. Workers carrying the proposed actions of RM&E activities are trained in proper equipment management techniques. This activity is not considered hazardous nor does it result in any health or safety risks to the general public.

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: No notification necessary. RM&E field work occurs on Colville Tribal Trust Land. All work is at existing facilities and field work at established sites that are accessed on existing roads and adjacent public lands.

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

Signed: /s/ Luca T. De Stefanis

Date: April 30, 2020

Luca T. De Stefanis
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
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