

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Vault toilet installation at Sheep Creek Reservoir

Project No.: 1995-015-00

Project Manager: Cecelia Brown, EWM-4

Location: Humboldt County, Nevada

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.15 Support Buildings

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to provide funding to the Shoshone Paiute Indian Tribes for the installation of a prefabricated concrete CXT-style toilet. This sealed vault toilet would replace a portable toilet unit on site now. It would be located along existing roads at existing heavily impacted day-use area on the eastern shore of Sheep Creek Reservoir. Sheep Creek Reservoir is an artificial lake formed by a dam across Sheep Creek, a tributary to the Owyhee River.

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, July 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

Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
CorSource Technology Group

Reviewed by:

/s/ Chad Hamel

Chad Hamel
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: February 12, 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: Vault toilet installation at Sheep Creek Reservoir

Project Site Description

Activities would occur along the eastern shore of Sheep Creek Reservoir, an artificial reservoir on Sheep Creek, a tributary to the Owyhee River in Humboldt County in northern Nevada. The toilet location is at an existing shoreline recreation site characterized by a compacted barren core area surrounding roadway loops at the terminus of local access roads. The surrounding habitat type is the Intermountain Cold Desert Shrub, dominated by sagebrush and greasewood, with a willow-dominated riparian community along the reservoir's shores. The toilet would be located on un-vegetated compacted soils on the footprint of an existing portable toilet unit.

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> A cultural resource survey of the site was conducted in spring 2019. No cultural or historic properties were identified in the survey. Consultation with Nevada SHPO and tribes was completed on 2/10/2020 with concurrence that no historic properties would be affected.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There is no remarkable soil or geologic features at the sites. The site is denuded and compacted by heavy recreation use. Excavation for the vault and erection of the toilet would have limited, if any effect on soil and geologic values.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There are no plants to be disturbed at the construction sites. The site is denuded and compacted by heavy recreation use. Toilet construction would not damage vegetation, nor attract increased visitation that might denude a larger area.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There are no federal/state special status species present. The current level of recreational activity at the site has already displaced native wildlife that might otherwise use this upland or shoreline habitat. Construction of this toilet would neither increase nor reverse this impact.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The installation of this toilet would be along the shore of the reservoir, but it would be above the narrow riparian shoreline strip on a denuded upland site in what would otherwise be high desert scrub habitats. This toilet installation would have no effect on waterbodies, floodplains or fish.		

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: The installation of this toilet would be along the shore of the reservoir, but it would not be in wetlands. It would be installed above the narrow riparian shoreline on a denuded high desert upland site. This toilet installation would have no effect on wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: This is an installation of a sealed vault toilet, which would be pumped on a regular basis. There would be no open pit. There would be no potential to impact groundwater.

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

Explanation: This toilet construction would require no change in land use and the site is not within a specially designated area. There would be no changes to land use and no impact to specially designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: This toilet would be installed in a location currently occupied by a portable toilet unit that is not designed or colored to be compatible with the surrounding landscape. The new toilet is of concrete structure with a wood-textured exterior in a color designed to be compatible with the surrounding high desert landscape. Visual quality would be maintained or improved.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: This toilet unit would not emit pollutants and would have no potential to degrade air quality.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: This toilet unit would not be mechanized and would not produce noise. The soundscape around Sheep Creek Reservoir would not be altered by installation of this toilet.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: The new toilet would be more consistently available and reliable than the current temporary structure now in place. Human health and safety conditions would be maintained or improved by the replacement of the existing portable toilet with a permanent sealed-vault CXT toilet.

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: The landowner (Shoshone Paiute Tribes on the Duck Valley Indian Reservation) is the proponent for this action and there are no other landowners nearby. The tribe has an information and engagement process for tribal members for projects funded by BPA each year. This project has been reviewed by tribal members.

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

Robert W Shull – ECF-4
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
CorSource Technology Group

Date: February 12, 2020