

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Lake Roosevelt Net Pen Improvements Project

Project No.: 1991-046-01

Project Manager: Carlos Mathews

Location: Lincoln County, WA

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.20: Small-scale activities undertaken to protect, restore, or improve fish and wildlife habitat, fish passage facilities (such as fish ladders or minor diversion channels), or fisheries.

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund the Spokane Tribe of Indians (STI) to implement the Lake Roosevelt Net Pen Improvements Project. BPA funds would be used to procure new frames and netting to replace existing net pens. The net pens are operated by the Lake Roosevelt Development Authority to rear rainbow trout. The Spokane Tribal Hatchery operates in conjunction with the Sherman Creek Hatchery and Lake Roosevelt Rainbow Trout Net Pen Projects for a collective annual release goal of 750,000 rainbow trout and 100,000 kokanee salmon. The Lake Roosevelt Net Pens have been in continuous operation for over 20 years with very few upgrades. This project would upgrade the infrastructure for the net pens improving safety, increasing the ability to fend off predators, and setting the program up for another 20 years of operation.

New Net pen frames would be manufactured off-site and delivered to Lake Roosevelt, which STI would assemble and move out into place, replacing the exiting net pen infrastructure.

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.

Ted Gresh
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Sarah T. Biegel
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: Lake Roosevelt Net Pen Improvements Project

Project Site Description

The reservoir behind Grand Coulee Dam, Lake Roosevelt, extends approximately 150 miles to the Canadian border with a total surface area of about 125 square miles. Activities would also occur in and around the tributaries that feed into Lake Roosevelt.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: This project does not involve ground disturbance of any kind. If any new ground disturbance is proposed outside of disturbed areas, a cultural resources Section 106 consultation would be initiated.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance:

Explanation: There is no ground disturbance associated with these actions. Therefore, there is no potential to affect geology and soils.

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

Potential for Significance: No.

Explanation: The proposed action does not include any vegetation management, ground disturbance, or actions that would substantially impact vegetation. Therefore, there is no potential to affect plant communities.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed actions would take place in the reservoir behind Grand Coulee Dam. There would be no actions that would occur on upland areas; therefore, there is no potential to affect wildlife or wildlife habitat.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The net pens would be used to rear rainbow trout in Lake Roosevelt. The fish are reared and then released to provide harvest opportunities in Lake Roosevelt. Bull trout are the only ESA-listed species that are potentially in Lake Roosevelt. But no impacts are expected, because the area where activities would occur is not suitable for bull trout.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would not take place within or around wetlands and therefore, there is no potential to affect wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There is no ground disturbance associated with this project and therefore, there is no potential to affect groundwater and aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No or No with Conditions

Explanation: There would be no changes to land use and no impacts to specially-designated areas and therefore, there is no potential to affect land use or specially-designated areas.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no changes to visual quality associated with this project and therefore, there is no potential to impact visual quality.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no new emissions associated with this project and therefore, there is no potential to impact air quality.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no new sources of noise associated with this project and therefore, there is no potential for noise impacts.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: STI staff would be working in and around water, which poses some risk to human health and safety. The current net pens are 20 years old and walkways are narrow. The new net pens would have wider walkways and so would greatly improve safety for the volunteers that maintain the net pens when fish are on site.

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: Project activities would occur on open water and no special permissions are required.

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

Signed:

Ted Gresh
Environmental Protection Specialist