

SCREENING FORM FOR DETERMINING LOW-EFFECT HABITAT CONSERVATION PLANS

I. Project Information

- A. Project name:
- B. Affected species:
- C. Project size (preferably in acres):
- D. Brief project description including minimization and mitigation plans:

II. Does the HCP fit the low-effect criteria in the HCP Handbook? [The answer must be yes to all three questions below in order to be considered a low-effect HCP. If the answer is no to any question, then the project should not be considered a low-effect HCP. Each "yes" must be accompanied with an explanation.]

A. Are the effects of the HCP minor or negligible on federally listed, proposed, or candidate species and their habitats covered under the HCP? (Handbook pg. 1-8 and 1-9)

B. Are the effects of the HCP minor or negligible on other environmental values or resources (e.g. air quality, geology and soils, water quality and quantity, socio-economic, cultural resources, recreation, visual resources, etc.) prior to implementation of the mitigation plan? (Handbook pg. 1-8 and 1-9) [In making this determination, actions undertaken by the applicant to avoid "take" are not considered mitigation.]

C. Would the impacts of this HCP, considered together with the impacts of other past, present and reasonably foreseeable similarly projects not result, over time, in cumulative effects to environmental values or resources which would be considered significant? (Handbook pg. 5-3).

III. Do any of the exceptions to categorical exclusions apply to this HCP? [If the answer is yes to any of the questions below, the project can not be categorically excluded from NEPA.] Each "No" must be accompanied by an explanation.

Would implementation of the HCP (refer to 516 DM 2.3, Appendix 2):

- A. Have significant adverse effects on public health or safety?
- B. Have adverse effects on such unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources, park, recreation or refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic rivers, sole or principal drinking water aquifers, prime farmlands, wetlands, floodplains, or ecologically significant or critical areas, including those listed on the Department's National Register of Natural Landmarks?

- C. Have highly controversial environmental effects?
- D. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?
- E. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?
- F. Be directly related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects?
- G. Have adverse effects on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places?
- H. Have adverse effects on listed or proposed species, or have adverse effects on designated Critical Habitat for these species?
- I. Have adverse effects on wetlands, floodplains or be considered a water development project thus requiring compliance with either Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), or the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act?
- J. Threaten to violate a Federal, State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION STATEMENT (EAS)

If the proposal fits the above criteria for a low-effect HCP, the proposal can be categorically excluded from the NEPA documentation in accordance with 516 DM 6, Appendix 1.4C (1) and (2). The following EAS should be prepared to provide an administrative record of the decision to categorically exclude the proposal in accordance with 550 FW 3.3C.

Within the spirit and intent of the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and other statutes, orders, and policies that protect fish and wildlife resources, I have established the following administrative record. Based on the analysis above, the _____ HCP qualifies as a "Low Effect" HCP as defined in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Conservation Planning Handbook (November 1996). Therefore this action as is a categorical exclusion as provided by 516 DM 2, Appendix 1 and 516 DM 6, Appendix 1 and no further NEPA documentation will be made.

Other supporting documents (list):

Habitat Conservation Plan

Signature Approval:

(1) Field Supervisor

Date