

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Monitoring and Evaluation Activities in Support of Johnson Creek Artificial Propagation Program

Project No.: 1996-043-00

Project Manager: J. McCloud, EWM-4

Location: Various locations in the South Fork Salmon River Sub Basin in Idaho: Idaho and Valley Counties, Idaho

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B3.16 Research activities in aquatic environments

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to provide ongoing funds to the Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho (Nez Perce Tribe) to monitor natural and hatchery fish production and life history traits in support of the Johnson Creek Artificial Production Program. This monitoring and evaluation (M&E) program collects baseline life-history characteristic information, to examine survival of the natural and hatchery fish in Johnson Creek and the South Fork Salmon River Subbasin (i.e., East Fork South Fork Salmon River, South Fork Salmon River, Secesh River) and any potential effects that the Johnson Creek supplementation program may have on natural Chinook and steelhead populations.

Specific M&E activities may include the collection of juvenile and adult spring/summer Chinook and steelhead data through the use of rotary screw traps, spawning ground surveys, existing PIT tag arrays, and adult weir operations. Juveniles captured in the rotary screw traps may be PIT tagged and monitored to help inform abundance, survival, and life history characteristics. Adult spawning ground surveys and weir operations help to inform adult abundance, spawner distribution, and life history characteristics. No new weirs would be installed.

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/ Katey Grange

Katey Grange
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: December 13, 2016

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: Monitoring and Evaluation Activities in Support of Johnson Creek Artificial Propagation Program

Project Site Description

Adult and juvenile M&E activities would be conducted throughout the South Fork Salmon River sub basin. Weirs and PIT tag arrays have been previously established. Screw trapping and spawner surveys are largely conducted within the waterbodies or from the stream banks.

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> No new receivers or weirs would be installed; therefore, there would be no ground disturbance or attachment to potentially-historic structures. No potential to effect.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance would be required.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance that would disturb plants, including any ESA-listed plants, would be required.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Work would be conducted at existing locations and would be passive in nature. No wildlife or wildlife habitat, including ESA-listed wildlife, would be disturbed.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Capture of ESA-listed salmon is covered under National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA-Fisheries) Section 10 permit 1134 - 6R, which expire in December of 2017. Bull trout capture is covered under US Fish and Wildlife Service Section 10 permit TE001598-5, which expires in January of 2017. A new Section 10 permit will be obtained after January 2017.		
6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance that would disturb wetlands would be required.		

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: No ground disturbance or excavation that would disturb groundwater or introduce contaminants into groundwater would be required.

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

Explanation: All fixed monitoring locations (PIT tag arrays and weirs) are previously-established and continued use would not alter existing land uses.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: All fixed monitoring locations (PIT tag arrays and weirs) are previously-established and continued use would not alter existing visual quality of the area.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: No ground disturbance or use of heavy equipment that would produce increased dust or emissions would be required. Some vehicle emissions would be generated to access data collection sites. These emissions would be temporary and similar to those generated in the area by vehicles.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: No activities would be noise generating.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: Appropriate safety measures, such as the use of floatation devices, would be employed for staff working near the water.

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: Coordination with several entities, including the FWS-Lower Snake River Compensation Plan and Idaho Fish and Game, who operate or fund various hatchery and monitoring facilities in the area, and other regional partners is ongoing and part of the regular annual planning process.

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

Signed: /s/ Katey Grange

Katey Grange

Environmental Protection Specialist

Date: December 13, 2016