

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Camas Creek Property Acquisition and Stewardship Funding

**Project No.:** 1995-057-00; BPA-011330

**Project Manager:** Sandra Fife

**Location:** Elmore County, Idaho

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B1.25 Real property transfers for cultural resources protection, habitat preservation, and wildlife management

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to fund the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) to purchase the Camas Creek property, a 641-acre parcel of land located 17 miles west of Fairfield, ID, in Elmore County, ID. The IDFG would hold fee ownership of the property to permanently protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife and their habitat. BPA would also provide stewardship funds toward protection, preservation, and enhancement of its conservation values under the terms and conditions of the 2014 Southern Idaho Wildlife Mitigation Memorandum of Agreement between the State of Idaho and Bonneville Power Administration (SIWM MOA).

Funding the purchase of the property and long-term stewardship would serve as partial mitigation for the construction and operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System which includes dams on the main stem Columbia and Snake Rivers. This land purchase would specifically satisfy some of BPA's commitments made in the SIWM MOA.

The property is currently used for dry land farming and consists of upland habitat. The primary purposes of the acquisition are to protect mule deer and elk summer range as well as shorebird and waterfowl habitat; to establish riparian habitat along Camas Creek; to establish wetlands; and to improve habitat conditions for animals moving between winter ranges. The Camas Creek parcel would be managed under the existing Centennial Marsh Wildlife Management Area (WMA) plan to guide the protection and enhancement of habitat and other resources on the property. The management plan would be updated to reflect the Camas Creek addition and reviewed by BPA for consistency with the purpose of the acquisition. If BPA proposes to fund any additional activities on the property, further environmental review may be conducted.

**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/ Kelly Hope

Kelly Hope  
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist  
ACS Professional Staffing

Reviewed by:

/s/ Chad Hamel

Chad Hamel  
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange

Katey Grange  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: May 27, 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.

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## Project Site Description

The property is situated within an area known as Camas Prairie. Topography is mostly flat and open, at an elevation of approximately 5,070 feet above sea level. Camas Creek bisects the northeast corner of the property. Historic uses include ranching, agriculture, and cattle grazing. There are no permanent buildings or structures on the property or public roadways entering the property. Adjoining properties to the north, south, and west are privately-owned and used for agricultural purposes. The adjoining property to the east (the Centennial Marsh WMA) is owned by IDFG for conservation purposes.

## Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. <b>Historic and Cultural Resources</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There would be no effect due to the land acquisition, which includes transfer of title. To the extent that future activities on the property may have an effect, it is expected that the IDFG would comply with all applicable laws and regulations.		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> See explanation for #1 above.		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> See explanation for #1 above.		
4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> See explanation for #1 above.		
5. <b>Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish</b> (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> See explanation for #1 above.		
6. <b>Wetlands</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> See explanation for #1 above.		

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

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

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

### **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:

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### **Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

**Description:** A public notification letter and map of the property would be mailed to neighboring landowners, stakeholders, and relevant elected officials and other interested parties prior to the property closing. Advertisements would also be placed in local newspapers, and information would be posted on BPA's website.

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

Signed: /s/ Kelly Hope

Date: May 27, 2020

Kelly Hope – EC-4  
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist  
ACS Professional Staffing