

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Growth Modulation in Salmon Supplementation

Project No.: 2002-031-00

Project Manager: Debbie Docherty - EWM-4

Location: Chelan, King, Kittitas, Okanagan, and Skamania counties in Washington; Union County in Oregon; Custer, Idaho, and Valley counties in Idaho

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B3.3 Research related to conservation of fish, wildlife and cultural resources.

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to fund the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service and University of Washington to conduct ongoing research to assess precociously maturing Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) males (jacks) in the Columbia River Basin. The project would quantify jacks, identify associated physiological developmental changes in hatchery-raised salmonids, and conduct research to revise and develop rearing protocols to reduce jack production. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and University of Washington would, within controlled laboratory settings, raise hatchery salmonids to test conditions for reducing undesirable phenotypes from hatchery populations. Additionally, the project would maintain the NMFS Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC) facilities.

These actions would support conservation of ESA-listed species considered in the 2020 ESA consultation with NMFS on the operations and maintenance of the Columbia River System, while also supporting ongoing efforts to mitigate for effects of the FCRPS on fish and wildlife in the mainstem Columbia River and its tributaries pursuant to the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act of 1980 (Northwest Power Act) (16 U.S.C. (USC) 839 et seq.).

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/ Israel Duran

Israel Duran
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
CorSource

Reviewed by:

/s/ Chad Hamel

Chad Hamel
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel December 30, 2021

Sarah T. Biegel Date
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: Growth Modulation in Salmon Supplementation

Project Site Description

The project would occur at existing hatchery infrastructure throughout Oregon, Washington, and Idaho.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed activities would occur within the confines of the existing structures, and would not require any ground-disturbing activities for the completion of this work. Ground disturbance or activities external to the existing structure are not planned.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Ground disturbance or activities external to the existing structure are not planned.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work is within existing facilities; no habitat present. There would be no impact to plant species.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work is implemented within existing facilities; no habitat present; therefore, wildlife species would not be affected.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Facilities may be located near major bodies of water. However, all work would occur in the footprint of existing structures, and would not require any ground-disturbing activities for the completion of the work. All fish used in experiments are hatchery-origin fish in laboratory settings.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would occur in the existing structures, and wetlands would not be impacted.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would occur in the footprint of existing facilities, and no ground excavation is planned.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would occur in the existing facilities footprints, and would not impact or change land use.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would occur in existing facilities, and would not impact visual quality.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Although there would be some emissions expected if moving eggs/fish between facilities, air quality would not be affected by this work.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would occur in existing structures, and installation, operation, and maintenance of the Northwest Fisheries Science Center would not raise noise levels above background.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All work would occur in the existing facilities, and safety regulations would be followed as necessary.

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: This work would be implemented on property owned and operated by various Federal, state, and tribal agencies, as well as NMFS' Northwest Fisheries Science Center.

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

Signed: /s/ Israel Duran December 30, 2021
Israel Duran, ECF-4 Date
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
CorSource