

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Chief Joseph Kokanee Enhancement Project

**Project No.:** 1995-011-00

**Project Manager:** Jamie Cleveland EWU-4

**Location:** Okanogan County, WA

**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:**

BPA proposes to fund the Chief Joseph Kokanee Enhancement Project that conducts research, monitoring, and evaluation (RM&E) actions that would evaluate the naturally producing kokanee population in Lake Roosevelt, the reservoir behind Grand Coulee Dam, and nearby tributaries. The data collected through these activities would be used to help manage and support the tribal subsistence and non-tribal recreational sport fisheries. In addition, non-native fishes would be removed in order to improve the survival of native kokanee and other native fishes. BPA funding would be provided to the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Indian Reservation (CCT), who work cooperatively with the co-managers of Lake Roosevelt to enhance native fish populations and provide fishing opportunities.

Potential limiting factors for the natural kokanee population would be evaluated by using a water quality sonde (an instrument probe that automatically transmits information about its surroundings) and temperature loggers in key kokanee tributaries.

The naturally producing kokanee RME would occur in the Sanpoil River using a weir trap that would be operational from July to November or to when the spawning run ends. Fish captured in the weir trap would be measured, weighed, checked for fin clips, sexed, and checked for maturation levels before being released. Up to 50 tissue samples would also be collected from wild kokanee for DNA analysis.

Control of non-native fishes would be conducted using techniques including, but not limited to, boat electrofishing, gill nets, seines, or angling. These efforts would be focused in the Sanpoil Arm of Lake Roosevelt and the Kettle River from March through November.

**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/ Ted Gresh

Ted Gresh

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange

Katey Grange

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: November 19, 2019

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:** Chief Joseph Kokanee Enhancement Project

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## 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.

The Sanpoil River is a major tributary to Lake Roosevelt in Northeast Washington State, originating north of Republic, Washington. The river flows for 27 miles through parts of the Colville and Okanogan National Forests along a mountainous valley approximately 1 mile wide and then enters the Confederated Colville Tribe (CCT) Reservation north of the 13 Mile Creek mouth. The Sanpoil River then flows south for about 37 miles through the CCT Reservation and ends at Lake Roosevelt.

The Kettle River is a 175 mile tributary of the Columbia River, originating in southeastern British Columbia in Canada and flows into northeastern Washington before joining the Columbia River at Lake Roosevelt near Kettle Falls, Washington.

The Lake Roosevelt kokanee population is comprised of multiple wild and hatchery kokanee stocks. The wild kokanee stocks are a mix of wild Lake Roosevelt kokanee, native stocks that emigrated from Canada (Arrow and Kootenay lakes), and non-native kokanee stocks that emigrated from Pend Oreille and Coeur d' Alene lakes in Idaho. The majority of kokanee stocks have been genetically cataloged, enabling the genetic identification of kokanee collected by research groups or harvested by anglers in Lake Roosevelt.

## 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> This project does not involve ground disturbance of any kind.		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There is no ground disturbance associated with these actions. Therefore, there is no potential to affect geology and soils.		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project does not include any vegetation management, ground disturbance, or actions that would disturb vegetation. Therefore, there is no potential to affect plant communities.		
4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project would take place on Lake Roosevelt, Sanpoil River, and Kettle River. 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)



Explanation: Kokanee would be captured using a weir trap on the Sanpoil River. Some minor sedimentation may occur during the installation of the weir/trap each year. The trap would be operational during the kokanee spawning period, July to November and would be checked daily. Other native fish encountered during trapping would likely be red band trout, suckers, mountain whitefish, and burbot. The area where the weir and trap are operated is not suitable for bull trout and they have not been captured in the past. No other ESA-listed fishes are present in project area.

Non-native fish removal would be conducted to eliminate predators that negatively affect native fish populations. While some native fish would be encountered, overall these efforts would have a beneficial effect on native populations. The area where non-native fish removal would occur is not suitable for bull trout and they have not been captured in the past. No other ESA-listed fishes are present in project area.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: The project would not take place within or around wetlands and so would not have any effects to their quality, condition, or size. Therefore, there is no potential to affect wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



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**



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

9. **Visual Quality**



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**



Explanation: The project does not involve actions that have emissions so there is no potential to impact air quality.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: The project activities do not involve any new construction or new use of heavy equipment. A negligible amount of noise would be generated by boats and other vehicles used for transportation.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: All proposed actions involve working in and around water, which poses some risk to human health and safety. All actions are standard and customary research, monitoring, and evaluation activities that follow specific guidance to ensure safe working conditions that would minimize for that risk.

### **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: Project activities would mostly occur on open water and no special permissions are required. If private lands are to be accessed, work would occur only after obtaining landowner approval.

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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/ Ted Gresh  
Ted Gresh ECF-4  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Date: November 19, 2019