

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Prosser Hatchery Acclimation Upgrades

**Project No.:** 2008-527-00

**Project Manager:** Andrew Traylor, EWU-4

**Location:** Benton County, Washington

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B1.3 Routine Maintenance

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to fund Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission to upgrade acclimation infrastructure at the Prosser Fish Hatchery on the Chandler Canal of the Yakima River. The hatchery facility is located on federally owned lands managed by the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) in Prosser, Washington and the hatchery is operated under license by the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation.

BPA would provide funding for updates to the acclimation infrastructure that would allow for improved rearing conditions for yearling and sub-yearling fall Chinook. The project would require the demolition and removal of four metal raceways at the western end of the existing group of raceways. The raceways would be replaced with a new 105-foot by 110-foot pre-engineered metal acclimation building with a concrete foundation that would house twelve 20-foot-diameter circular tanks and equipment to support a water reuse system (drum filter, pump sump and control panel) to partially recirculate water in tanks and reduce groundwater demand.

Existing water supply and drainage infrastructure would be updated to connect and service the new acclimation infrastructure. The project would also include addition of crushed rock/gravel surfacing material to grade the area prior to circular tank installation and resurface the existing facilities roads around the improvements. Materials and construction vehicles would be staged on existing graveled surfaces within the hatchery facility. There would be no increase in the water supply used or changes to production numbers or life stages of fish reared than has been previously authorized.

This action would support BPA's commitments to the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission in the Columbia River Fish Accord, as amended, 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/ Carolyn Sharp

Carolyn Sharp  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

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Katey C. Grange  
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:** Prosser Hatchery Acclimation Upgrades

## **Project Site Description**

The existing site is characterized by brush and grassland and is occupied by Prosser Hatchery along the north side of the Yakima River. The project site is bounded by the Yakima River to the south and west, Chandler Canal to the north, and agricultural land to the east. The existing hatchery facilities utilize a combination of surface water and ground water to accomplish juvenile salmonid rearing. The project site is generally flat, with slightly uneven topography in the undeveloped portions of the site, and a gradual slope (5% or less) south towards Yakima River. An existing compacted gravel roadway encircles the hatchery facilities.

## **Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources**

### **1. Historic and Cultural Resources**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA submitted a determination of No Adverse Effect to Historic Properties under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (BPA Cultural Resources Project Number ID WA 2022 070) on May 22, 2023. Consulting parties included the Washington Department of Historic Preservation (DAHP), US Bureau of Reclamation, the Yakama Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Nez Perce Tribe. BPA received concurrence from the DAHP on May 22, 2023. No response was received from the remaining consulting parties.

### **2. Geology and Soils**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: A minimal amount of soil disturbance would occur associated with demolition of existing raceways and site grading for construction of the new acclimation building. This disturbance would be within the footprint of the existing hatchery development. Standard construction best management practices (BMPs) would minimize erosion, sedimentation, and fugitive dust.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no ESA-listed or state-sensitive plant species present at the project site. As a result, there would be no effect on listed plant species. All construction activities would take place in existing developed areas that are not vegetated and existing trees and shrubs would be protected with barricades or fencing during construction. There would be no effects to plants.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no Federal or state special-status wildlife species known to occur within the project area. There would be no effect to wildlife as the proposed activity would not introduce noticeable human activity and noise compared to existing human activity and noise associated with urban areas and agricultural development.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Although work sites are within approximately 430 to 440 feet of the Yakima River, all activities would occur on land within previously developed areas. A no-rise hydraulic analysis was completed to confirm that there would be no impact on the 100-year flood elevations. No riparian vegetation would be removed and river/channel banks would not be altered. No in-river/channel work would occur and BMPs would be used to prevent sediment from running off site. There would be no impact on water bodies, floodplains and fish. No new water supplies or water rights would be needed for this upgrade.

The construction contractor would be responsible for developing a Construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (CSWPPP). Stormwater runoff would be directed to a biofiltration swale designed to Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington standards and total suspended solids will be removed prior to discharge to the Yakima River.

## **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project areas are previously disturbed and developed areas and no wetlands are present. There would be no impact to wetlands.

## **7. Groundwater and Aquifers**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The new circular tanks would be designed to use both existing surface and ground water sources and would include water reuse technology to reduce overall groundwater demand. No new water supplies or water rights would be needed for this upgrade. Ground disturbance for the project would be limited to removal of existing raceways and site preparation for the proposed building, with minimal excavations approximately 2 feet below existing grade associated with replacement of existing piping. Spill prevention measures would be present on site. Therefore, no impacts to aquifers and groundwater would occur as a result of this project.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Existing land uses (aquaculture) would remain the same. There would be no impact to specially-designated areas.

## **9. Visual Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The new building housing circular tanks would be located in the same location as existing hatchery infrastructure. The visual quality of the site would remain similar to existing conditions.

## 10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There may be minor and temporary amounts of exhaust produced by construction equipment. The emissions would be of short duration and consistent in amount and duration with routine vehicle use currently at the hatcheries and surrounding agricultural operations. There would be no long-term effects to air quality.

## 11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Noise is anticipated during construction activities. The noise would be of short duration, generally limited to between the hours of 7 am and 7 pm, and consistent in volume or duration with operational activities at the hatchery and surrounding agricultural operations. This noise would be temporary and cause no long-term impacts.

## 12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All personnel would use best management practices to protect worker health and safety.

### **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: BPA has coordinated with the US Bureau of Reclamation to ensure that project activities are consistent with a Memorandum of Agreement documenting use of the facility between Yakama Nation and Reclamation. Access to the facility would occur along public roadways.

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

Signed: <u>/s/ Carolyn Sharp</u>	<u>July 6, 2023</u>
Carolyn Sharp	Date
Environmental Protection Specialist	