

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Continued Funding for the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission's Coded Wire Tag Recovery Program

Project No.: 1982-013-01

Project Manager: Eric R. McOmie – EWU-4

Location: Clackamas County, Oregon

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B3.6. Small-scale research and development, laboratory operations, and pilot projects

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to continue funding the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) for ongoing work on the Coded Wire Tag (CWT) Recovery Program. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) carry out a coordinated sampling effort to collect CWTs from mature salmon and steelhead, which return through commercial and sport fisheries and to escapement areas throughout the Columbia River Basin. ODFW also samples ocean commercial and sport fisheries along the entire Oregon coast to recover CWTs from Chinook and coho salmon.

Recovered CWT samples would be processed at ODFW's Tag Recovery Lab in Clackamas, Oregon. Sampled fish snouts would be periodically delivered in frozen batches. Samples would be stored in chest freezers or in large commercial grade walk-in freezers. Following partial thawing, binary and decimal CWTs would be extracted from fish snouts using a pneumatic press to first core the snouts, and then a scalpel and electronic "V Box" would be used to isolate and retrieve the tags. Decoding would be accomplished by cleaning the wire tag in an ultrasonic bath and then reading and verifying the tag code using a 10X microscope equipped with an eight-inch zoom monitor system.

The CWT recovery data would be entered into ODFW's Coded Wire Tag Fish database, error checked and verified, and then forwarded to PSMFC's Regional Mark Processing Center where it would be validated and made available to users via the online Regional Mark Information System (RMIS). All tags released by Oregon hatcheries and other wild stock tagging programs would be maintained in an archival tag recovery collection. Fish managers, researchers, mitigation agencies, and others use the CWT release and recovery data to evaluate a number of administrative, management, and environmental effects on salmon and steelhead.

All work would be completed indoors and would not involve any ground disturbance or vegetation removal.

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/ W. Walker Stinnette

W. Walker Stinnette
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Salient CRGT

Reviewed by:

/s/ Chad J. Hamel

Chad J. Hamel
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: January 28, 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

All activities would occur indoors at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW's) existing Clackamas Tag Recovery Lab in Clackamas, Clackamas County, Oregon.

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> The proposed project would have No Potential to Effect historic properties or cultural resources.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There would be no impact to geology and soils.		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There would be no impact to plant species or their habitat.		
4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There would be no impact to wildlife species or their habitat.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> This CWT recovery program is consistent with the BPA fish and Wildlife Program goals for monitoring and evaluation. In addition to monitoring the status of both threatened and endangered fish stocks, CWT recovery data are used to assess a wide variety of studies designed to improve survival of hatchery-produced salmonids. CWT recovery data also provide critical information for evaluating stock rebuilding programs. CWT samples are recovered from commercial and sport fisheries, and no additional take of ESA-listed fish is proposed. There would be no impact to waterbodies or floodplains.		
6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There would be no impact to wetlands.		
7. Groundwater and Aquifers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There would be no impact to groundwater and aquifers.		

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



Explanation: There would be no change in land use. No specially-designated areas are in the project vicinity.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: There would be no change in visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: There would be no change in air quality.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: There would be no change in ambient noise.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: Recovering CWTs from fish snouts would require the use of knives, scalpels, or other sharp tools. Individuals carrying out CWT recovery activities would be trained in proper techniques. The project would not generate or use hazardous materials and would not create conditions that would increase risk to human health and safety. No impacts to human health and safety are expected as a result of project activities.

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: No landowner notification, involvement, or coordination would be required as all proposed work would occur at an existing laboratory facility.

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

Signed: /s/ W. Walker Stinnette
W. Walker Stinnette – EC-4
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Salient CRGT

Date: January 28, 2020