

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Spring Chinook Growth Rate Research

**Project No.:** 2002-031-00

**Project Manager:** Brady Allen

**Location:** Multiple locations in Oregon, Washington, and 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 ongoing research to assess the proportion of precociously maturing males and smolt and associated physiological development of salmonids produced in supplementation and conservation hatcheries in the Columbia and Snake River Basins. Research would be used to help revise and develop rearing protocols to reduce unnaturally high rates of precocious male maturation and produce fish with similar physiological, morphological, and life-history attributes as wild fish to maximize survival and recovery. The research would be conducted within hatchery settings and may include, but is not limited to, investigating changes in feeding methods and feed composition, release timing, density, and water temperature.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and University of Washington would, within controlled laboratory settings, raise hatchery salmonids to test conditions for reducing undesirable phenotypes from hatchery populations. The eggs would be collected and obtained from existing hatchery programs in the Columbia and Snake River Basins. No additional hatchery broodstock would be collected to support this work.

**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  
Salient/CRGT

Reviewed by:

/s/ Chad Hamel

Chad Hamel  
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange

Date: June 4, 2020

Katey 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:** Spring Chinook Growth Rate Research

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## Project Site Description

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

## 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> 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. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Ground disturbance or activities external to the existing structure are not planned.		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> All work would be within existing facilities; no habitat present. There are no anticipated impacts to any sensitive plant species, and none exist within the immediate area of impact.		
4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> All work would be implemented within existing facilities; no habitat present. No sensitive (including Endangered Species Act-listed) wildlife species are located near the hatchery facility and there would be no effect.		
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> 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 and no additional hatchery broodstock would be collected to support this work.		
6. <b>Wetlands</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> All work would occur in the existing structures and wetlands would not be impacted.		
7. <b>Groundwater and Aquifers</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> All work would occur in the footprint of existing facilities, and no ground excavation is planned.		

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



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

9. **Visual Quality**



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

10. **Air Quality**



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

11. **Noise**



Explanation: All work would occur in existing structures.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



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, 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: This work would be implemented on property owned and operated by various Federal, state and tribal agencies.

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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/ Israel Duran

Date: June 4, 2020

Israel Duran ECF-4  
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