

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** New Marking & Monitoring Technologies Project

**Project No.:** 1983-319-00

**Project Manager:** Christine Petersen

**Location:** Multiple locations in Oregon and Washington

**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 proposes to fund the development and evaluation of antennas and adapted power systems to enable Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tag systems to work in many environments, from remote locations to mainstem dams. In addition to antenna development, NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) has been crucial in designing and implementing subsystems for improving PIT monitoring installations. NOAA continues to test, evaluate, and collect users' input for improvements which can be implemented in the infrastructure and readers. These PIT tag detection systems that collect data on migrating juvenile and adult salmonids through mainstem dams, including surface bypass systems, and all life-stages transiting small streams are utilized by the Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation program to assess effectiveness of management actions for recovery of ESA-listed salmonids.

The actions covered under this CX include:

- 1) Continued performance evaluation of ogee-based antennas;
- 2) Collaborate with Pacific State Marine Fisheries Commission and Biomark to fine tune antenna tuning post-installation;
- 3) Basin PIT tag support (Provide on-call technical assistance to users throughout the basin, including but not limited to WDFW, ODFW, IDFG, USFW, USGS, and several other NGOs;)
- 4) Continued PIT tag detection barge development to boost detection in the tailrace of Bonneville Dam or other sites of interest
- 5) Detection system development where regional management deems necessary (i.e. Drano Lake, mouth of Deschutes)
- 6) Continued development of technologies for in-stream applications

Actions proposed would be reviewed by the BPA environmental compliance lead to ensure that the activities fall within the range of those described in this Categorical Exclusion prior to initiating 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/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: March 17, 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.

**Proposed Action:** New Marking & Monitoring Technologies Project

## Project Site Description

Development and evaluation of PIT -tag detection systems 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. This project does not install new systems.		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Any ground-disturbing activities required for the completion of this work would be within the confines of the existing facilities. 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 is 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 is implemented within existing facilities; no habitat present. No sensitive (including Endangered Species Act-listed) wildlife species are impacted during data collection at the facilities 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> Work 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.		
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: Data collection and evaluation of PIT-tag systems would not impact air quality.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: All work would occur in existing structures, and operation of the system would not raise noise levels above background.

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 is in conjunction with facility operators.

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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: March 17, 2020

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