

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: YTAHP Coleman Creek 2.5 Valley Land Company Fish Passage Project

Project No.: 2007-398-00

Project Manager: Michelle O'Malley, EWU-4

Location: Kittitas County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.20 Protection of Cultural Resources, Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to fund the Kittitas County Conservation District (KCCD), a member of the Yakima Tributary Access and Habitat Program (YTAHP) work group, to implement the Coleman Creek 2.5 Valley Land Company Fish Passage Project on private land near Ellensburg, Washington.

The KCCD would remove a channel-spanning concrete irrigation dam to restore fish passage in Coleman Creek at stream mile 2.0 for all fish including Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed Mid-Columbia River steelhead, Chinook and coho salmon, ESA-listed bull trout and other native fishes. The irrigation dam is the most downstream fish passage barrier on Coleman Creek and its removal complements the suite of fish passage, fish screening and habitat enhancement investments in Coleman Creek by the YTAHP.

YTAHP would excavate the channel-spanning concrete dam from the stream and decommission the irrigation intake by capping the existing pipe. The diversion, which is located upstream of the field to which it was delivering water, is now obsolete as the owner of the diversion is converting the irrigated field to solar production. An about 60-foot-long roughened channel fishway would be constructed to restore the streambed slope and provide fish passage for all life stages of salmonids under all expected flow conditions. The instream work area would be isolated from flow in the channel by use of sand bags, water bladder, and floating silt curtain and the stream flow would be directed into a bypass pipe. Areas disturbed during construction would be planted with native shrubs and species compatible with the adjoining land owner's on-going commercial agricultural activity. All access and staging would occur via existing roads and previously disturbed areas. KCCD would implement the project during the fall and winter of 2021.

These actions would support conservation of ESA-listed species considered in the 2020 ESA consultations with National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the operations and maintenance of the Columbia River System, 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/ Brenda Aguirre

Brenda Aguirre
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey C. Grange August 6, 2021

Katey C. Grange Date
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: YTAHP Coleman Creek 2.5 Valley Land Company Fish Passage Project

Project Site Description

The project site is located on Coleman Creek at River Mile (RM) 2.5 approximately 4 miles southeast of Ellensburg, Washington. Coleman Creek is a tributary to Naneum Creek, which flows into Wilson Creek that is a tributary to the Yakima River at RM 147. This area is located within the Coleman Creek Subwatershed of the Upper Yakima River Subbasin. The legal description is T17N, R19E, Sec 16. The project site and surrounding area are used for agricultural crop production and grazing.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA determined that the implementation of the proposed project would result in no historic properties affected and consulted on the determination under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act on January 30, 2020. Consulting parties included the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, and Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. No responses were received within the 30-day consultation comment period.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary impacts to soil from increased erosion potential during site isolation and rewatering, dam removal and construction of the roughened channel fishway activities. Sediment control best management practices would be installed prior to project implementation to minimize potential for in-stream turbidity or excessive runoff during construction. Post construction planting with native shrubs and species compatible with the on-going commercial agricultural activity would minimize long-term erosion potential.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No special-status, including ESA-listed, plant species are known to be present. Temporary impacts to existing vegetation from equipment crushing some plants while accessing work areas. Post construction planting would re-establish areas of disturbed vegetation.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No special-status, including ESA-listed, wildlife species or habitats are known to be present. Temporary impacts to area wildlife would occur from increased noise and vehicle traffic during construction. Wildlife would likely avoid the area during this time and return once the project work is completed.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary sedimentation would be generated with instream work. KCCD obtained Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 authorization under NWP 27 from the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) on November 28, 2018 (NWP-2018-1009) to excavate and place material in Coleman Creek, and would implement all terms and conditions of NWP 27. The Washington Department of Ecology determined the project meets the requirements for Washington State 401 Water Quality Certification and issued a Letter of Verification on December 13, 2018. There would be no net rise in floodplain elevations from implementation of the project activities. The project would have an effect on fish and their habitats during in-water work. ESA-listed Middle Columbia River steelhead and their designated critical habitat area present in the project area. Project activities are covered under BPA's HIP BiOp, Project Notification Number 2021094. KCCD would follow HIP general and project-specific conservation measures to avoid and minimize impacts to fish throughout project implementation.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: None present in the project area.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project activities do not propose new wells or use of groundwater; spill prevention measures would be present on site during use of heavy equipment.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project activities do not propose changes to land use; designated farmlands would not be taken out of production.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Minor change to visual quality from dam removal, construction of the roughened channel fishway, and plantings. The new conditions would be visually consistent with the topography of the existing channel and surrounding area and adjacent vegetation. Construction equipment would be visually consistent with area agricultural equipment. The project is not within a visually sensitive area.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project would generate small amounts of dust and vehicle emissions due to construction.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be short-term construction noise during daylight hours. Construction noise would not be noticeably different than the agricultural production noise.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The project sponsor is required to use best management practices to protect worker health and safety. Any activities involving hazardous materials would be disposed of at a designated hazardous waste facility.

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: Implementation of project activities would not cause impacts to surrounding landowners. The project sponsor, KCCD, has coordinated with the underlying landowner and irrigation water users and has permission to conduct project activities.

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

Signed: /s/ Brenda Aguirre August 6, 2021
Brenda Aguirre, ECF-4 Date
Environmental Protection Specialist