

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Basinwide Supplementation Evaluation

Project No.: 2009-009-000

Project Manager: Amy Mai – EWU-4

Location: Idaho and Valley counties, Idaho; Hood River, Jefferson, and Union counties, Oregon; and Kittitas County, 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 Columbia River Inter-tribal Fisheries Commission (CRITFC) to use genetic analysis techniques to evaluate the relative reproductive success of tribal hatchery programs and provide personnel to assist sampling efforts. This project would not require the take of wild fish, the collection of additional broodstock, or the release of additional hatchery fish.

The proposed actions would include:

1. Genotyping tissue samples collected as part of Yakama Nation monitoring programs for supplemented spring Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) in the upper Yakima River and in Johnson Creek.
2. Genotyping tissue samples collected in Lookingglass Creek by tribal Chinook salmon reintroduction/supplementation programs and performing associated relative reproductive success analyses.
3. Providing assistance to Yakama Nation personnel in collection of tissue samples (primarily carcass sampling during spawning ground surveys) and field biodata, and performing genotyping of samples provided by tribal co-managed sockeye salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) reintroduction programs.
4. Performing genotyping of samples collected as part of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon monitoring programs for supplemented spring Chinook salmon.
5. Mini-jack studies: Rearing and sampling Cle Elum hatchery spring Chinook and performing associated laboratory analyses to assess factors affecting precocious maturation.

These actions would support conservation of ESA-listed species considered in the 2020 ESA consultation with National Marine Fisheries Service on the operations and maintenance of the Columbia River System and Bonneville's commitments to CRITFC under the 2020 Columbia River Fish Accord Extension agreement, 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/ Israel Duran

Israel Duran
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Salient/CRGT

Reviewed by:

/s/ Chad Hamel

Chad Hamel
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

<u>/s/ Sarah T. Biegel</u>	<u>November 8, 2021</u>
Sarah T. Biegel	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: Basinwide Supplementation Evaluation

Project Site Description

All work would occur within the Columbia River Basin. Genetic and data analysis and mini-jack studies would be conducted at existing facilities, such as hatcheries and the Hagerman Fish Culture Experiment Station; field work assistance would occur at locations operated by tribal hatchery programs.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: 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. Carcass collection is led by other agencies and is not expected to disturb historic or cultural resources.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no ground-disturbing activities required for the completion of this work and there would be no impact to geology or soils.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No habitat present at the existing facilities. There are no anticipated impacts to any sensitive plant species, and none exist within the immediate area of impact.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No habitat present at the existing facilities. There are no anticipated impacts to any sensitive wildlife species.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are no live fish handled by the project. There are no anticipated impacts to water bodies, floodplains, or fish.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Wetlands are not located near any project site and there is no ground disturbance planned; therefore, the activities would not impact wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground excavation is planned and the activities would not impact groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The work would not impact or change land use.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The work would not impact visual quality.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The work would not impact air quality.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The work would not raise noise over ambient levels.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: 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: 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: This work would be implemented on lands or property managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Yakama Nation, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, and Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission.

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

Israel Duran, ECF-4
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Salient/CRGT

November 8, 2021

Date