

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** North Coast Watershed Association Fish Passage Installation on the North North Fork Klaskanine River

**Project No.:** 2017-005-00 (Contract Number 90415)

**Project Manager:** Siena M. Lopez-Johnston, EWM-4

**Location:** Clatsop County, Oregon

**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 North Coast Watershed Association (NCWA) in partnership with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to improve fish passage at a diversion dam on the North North Fork Klaskanine River near Astoria, Clatsop County, Oregon (Township 7 North, Range 8 West, Section 18). The dam, which is used to divert water to the rearing facility at ODFW's Klaskanine Hatchery, impedes access to 4.7 miles of fish habitat. The work would be funded as part of the larger Pacific Lamprey Conservation Initiative (PLCI), a cooperative effort among agencies and tribes to achieve long-term persistence of Pacific lamprey (*Entosphenus tridentatus*) and support traditional tribal cultural use throughout the Columbia River Basin. Funding supports ongoing efforts to mitigate for effects of the Federal Columbia River Power System on fish and wildlife in the main stem 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.).

The proposed action would include:

- Modifying, burying, or removing elements of the diversion dam, including partially burying the concrete dam base, removing wooden flashboards at the dam crest, and modifying pipes and other associated infrastructure.
- Removing riparian trees and vegetation to provide access during construction. Following construction, the stream banks would be revegetated with native species from locally derived stock.
- Installing an approximately 260-foot-long and 35-foot-wide rock riffle channel downstream of the diversion dam that would consist of boulder and gravel matrix to simulate a streambed.
- Reconfiguring the existing fish screen and associated fish bypass and sediment sluice pipes.

- Placing approximately 50 feet of rock and large woody material on both stream banks to restore bank conditions and provide scour protection at the Highway 202 bridge footers.

The constructed rock riffle channel would provide full fish passage over the dam, while maintaining the water diversion capability for the hatchery as well as the regulatory fish screen present at the site. Restoration of stream connectivity is expected to benefit Pacific lamprey, western brook lamprey, coastal cutthroat trout, coho salmon, Chinook salmon, and steelhead trout.

**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  
CorSource Technology Group, Inc.

Reviewed by:

/s/ Chad J. Hamel

Chad J. Hamel

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel for

July 11, 2022

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:** North Coast Watershed Association Fish Passage Installation on the North North Fork Klaskanine River

## **Project Site Description**

The project site is located at the ODFW-owned and operated Klaskanine Fish Hatchery near Astoria, Clatsop County, Oregon (Township 7 North, Range 8 West, Section 18). The project site includes an area from Highway 202 approximately 80 feet upstream of the existing diversion dam on the North North Fork Klaskanine River to approximately 300 feet downstream of the dam. Construction activities would occur within the stream bed, where the rock riffle channel would be installed, and along both banks, which would be cleared of existing riparian trees and vegetation and revegetated and stabilized with rock and large woody material. Outside of the hatchery facility, the surrounding area is primarily privately owned forested land with some rural residences located over 500 feet from the site.

## **Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources**

### **1. Historic and Cultural Resources**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The lead federal agency for Section 106 compliance is USFWS. On August 4, 2021, USFWS initiated Section 106 consultation with the following parties:

- Chinook Nation
- Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde
- Confederated Tribes of Siletz
- Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation
- Cowlitz Indian Tribe
- Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
- Shoalwater Bay Tribe

On September 14, 2021, USFWS determined that the proposed undertaking would result in no historic properties affected (BPA CR No.: OR 2022 105; SHPO Case No.: 21-1143). Concurrence was received from the Oregon SHPO on October 12, 2021. No other comments were received.

BPA agrees with the determination made by USFWS.

### **2. Geology and Soils**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would result in minor and temporary soil impacts from vegetation clearing, excavation, grading, and general construction activities, which would increase erosion potential during construction. NCWA and its partners would be responsible for implementing best management practices to minimize in-stream turbidity or excessive erosion during construction. Following construction, the stream banks would be revegetated and stabilized with rock and large woody material.

See **Section 5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish** for Clean Water Act Compliance.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would require clearing riparian trees and vegetation for access during construction. Additional activities could inadvertently crush or strip low-growing vegetation in some areas. The proposed action would have no permanent vegetation impacts as all disturbed areas along the stream banks would be revegetated with native species, including cedar, hemlock, spirea, ninebark, and salmonberry, derived from local stock. No special-status plant species have been documented in the vicinity of the project site. USFWS determined that the proposed action would have no effect on plant species or habitats protected under the Endangered Species Act.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action includes clearing riparian trees and vegetation, which would temporarily reduce available wildlife habitat. Following construction, the stream banks would be revegetated with native species derived from local stock, resulting in no net loss of wildlife habitat. Minor and temporary disturbance of wildlife behavior could occur from elevated noise and human presence during construction. No special-status wildlife species have been documented in the vicinity of the project site, and no suitable special-status wildlife habitat is present. USFWS determined that the proposed action would have no effect on wildlife species or habitats protected under the Endangered Species Act.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The North North Fork Klaskanine River supports two fish species protected under the Federal ESA: coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) and steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*). The river is also designated critical habitat for coho salmon. The proposed action would result in a minor and temporary increase in turbidity during the in-water work period (July 1 to September 15), when special-status fish species are not present.

The lead federal agency for Endangered Species Act compliance is USFWS. Endangered Species Act consultation was also completed under National Marine Fisheries Service biological opinion NWR-2013-10221 (December 3, 2013). On December 1, 2021, USFWS received approval from ODFW per State authority for fish passage (ORS 509.585(4) and OAR 635-412-0020(3)(a)).

The lead federal agency for Clean Water Act compliance is USFWS. On January 5, 2022, USFWS received concurrence from the United States Army Corps of Engineers that the proposed action would be in compliance with the requirements of the Clean Water Act through the Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide 27 process. On March 29, 2022, USFWS received approval for a Removal-Fill Permit from Oregon's Division of State Lands. NCWA and its partners would be responsible for complying with all terms and conditions outlined in the permits.

NCWA and its partners would be responsible complying with all terms and conditions outlined in the permits and consultations. The proposed action is expected to result in long-term net benefits to fish species from increased fish access to spawning and rearing habitat.

BPA agrees with the determinations made by USFWS.

## **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No wetlands were identified within or near the project site. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact wetlands.

## **7. Groundwater and Aquifers**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No new wells or other groundwater withdrawal are proposed. The proposed action would not substantially alter hydrology in such a way that would alter the local water table or aquifer recharge rates. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact groundwater and aquifers.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would maintain the water diversion capability for the hatchery. Therefore, the proposed action would not impact land use or any specially-designated areas.

## **9. Visual Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would cause a minor but perceptible change in the appearance of the project site. During construction, the presence of construction equipment and general construction activities, including vegetation disturbance, would cause temporary visual impacts. Modifying the diversion dam and installing the rock riffle channel would cause new permanent visual changes. These permanent changes would be consistent with the existing visual quality of the area, and the project site is not located in a visually-sensitive area.

## **10. Air Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would cause a minor and temporary increase in dust and vehicle emissions in the local area from general construction activities. There would be no long-term change in air quality following completion of the proposed action.

## 11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: During construction, use of vehicles and equipment and general construction activities would temporarily and intermittently produce noise at levels higher than current ambient conditions. No noise-sensitive land uses are present near the project site. There would be no long-term change in ambient noise following completion of the project.

## 12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would not generate or use hazardous materials and would not create conditions that would increase risk to human health and safety. Standard construction best management practices would minimize the risk to human health and safety during construction. No impacts to human health and safety are expected as a result of the proposed actions.

### **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: The project site is located at the Klaskanine Fish Hatchery, which is owned and operated by ODFW. The project sponsor has been coordinating with ODFW. No additional landowner notification, involvement, or coordination would be required.

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 July 11, 2022  
W. Walker Stinnette Date  
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist  
CorSource Technology Group, Inc.