

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Kanawi Property Acquisition and Stewardship Funding

Project No.: 2008-207-00; BPA-014254

Project Manager: Matthew Schwartz – EWM-4

Location: Yamhill County, Oregon

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.25 Real property transfers for cultural resources protection, habitat preservation, and wildlife management

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to fund the Confederated Tribes of Grand Rond to purchase the Kanawi, which is an approximately 75-acre parcel of land located about six miles southwest of McMinnville in Yamhill County, Oregon. BPA would hold a conservation easement to permanently protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife and their habitat. BPA would also provide stewardship funding to the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

This land purchase would specifically satisfy some of BPA's commitments made in the 2010 "Willamette River Basin Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Wildlife Habitat Protection and Enhancement between the State of Oregon and the Bonneville Power Administration."

The property consists of oak woodland, riparian, and mixed deciduous forest habitats, including some high priority riparian habitat along Middle Fork Muddy Creek, which provides seasonal habitat for a mix of Oregon Conservation Strategy species such as coastal cutthroat trout and winter steelhead. It is also immediately adjacent to approximately 1,022 acres of land protected by other BPA-funded Willamette Wildlife Mitigation conservation easements, including Yamhill Oaks Two Addition, Muddy Valley Habitat Preserve, and Dupee Valley Reserve, and within two miles of additional properties including Seven-H Reserve, Yamhill Oaks, and South Yamhill River.

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde would develop a land management plan to guide the protection and enhancement of habitat and other resources on the property. The land management plan would be drafted within 18 months of closing. The management plan would be reviewed by BPA for consistency with the conservation easement and the purpose of the acquisition. If BPA proposes to fund any additional activities on the property, further environmental review may be conducted.

Findings: In accordance with Section 1021.102 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; 89 FR 34074, April 30, 2024; 90 FR 29676, July 3, 2025 [Interim Final Rule]) and *DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Implementing Procedures* (dated June 30, 2025), BPA has determined the following:

- 1) The proposed action fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021;
- 2) The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion; and
- 3) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal (see attached Environmental Evaluation).

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.¹

Israel Duran
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Katey C. Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

¹ BPA is aware that the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), on February 25, 2025, issued an interim final rule to remove its NEPA implementing regulations at 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500–1508. Based on CEQ guidance, and to promote completion of its NEPA review in a timely manner and without delay, in this CX BPA is voluntarily relying on the CEQ regulations, in addition to the interim final rule to revise DOE NEPA regulations implementing NEPA at 10 C.F.R. Part 1021 and NEPA Implementing Procedures (dated June 30, 2025), to meet its obligations under NEPA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 *et seq.*

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: Kanawi Property Acquisition and Stewardship Funding

Project Site Description

The 75-acre Kanawi property, located about six miles southwest of McMinnville in Yamhill County, Oregon, is privately owned and consists of oak woodland, riparian, and mixed deciduous forest habitats, including Middle Fork Muddy Creek; BPA would fund the purchase by the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde at closing. Kanawi is situated in the eastern foothills of the Coast Range Mountains, which is historically a transitional area from the open prairie habitat on the flats of Willamette Valley to the east, and closed canopy conifer forests in the Coast Range Mountains to the west, providing a localized band of open woodland habitat that is known to sustain a diverse and rare native vegetation community types.

Historically, the property was forested and recently used for residential purposes. The semi-open oak woodland habitat supports several Oregon Conservation Strategy (OCS) focal species, including western gray squirrel (*Sciurus griseus*), chipping sparrow (*Spizella passerine*) and white-breasted nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*). The riparian habitat of Middle Fork Muddy Creek provides seasonal habitat OCS species including coastal cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii*) and winter steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*). Western gray squirrel is also known to utilize the mixed deciduous forest habitat on the Protected Property

Kanawi is within the Yamhill Oaks Conservation Opportunity Area (COA), a focal area for oak woodland, wetland, and riparian restoration and protection, and immediately adjacent to an approximately 1022-acre core habitat block of conservation properties. The Protected Property protects similar priority habitat types, contributing to past habitat investments, and enhances ecological structure, function and resilience in the Yamhill Oaks COA.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no effect due to the land acquisition which includes transfer of title and the creation of a conservation easement and stewardship funding. To the extent that future activities on the property may have an effect, it is expected that the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde would comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

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: Notification letters may be sent to adjacent landowners and other interested parties at a minimum of 15 days before the closing date of the sale. Advertisements would also be posted in local newspapers, and information posted on BPA's public website prior to closing.

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

Signed:

Israel Duran, ECF-4
Environmental Protection Specialist