

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Pendleton Acclimation Facility Storage Building

Project No.: 2023-003-00

Project Manager: Andrew Traylor, EWU-4

Location: Umatilla County, Oregon

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.15 Support buildings

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to fund the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) to construct an about 60-foot-long by 21-foot-wide by 14-foot-tall storage building with metal roof and sides at the Pendleton acclimation facility in Pendleton, Oregon. The building would be used for storage of equipment and materials that support juvenile hatchery acclimation prior to release from the facility.

The building would have circular concrete footings poured approximately 5 feet into the ground over compacted soil. Footings would be spaced approximately 5 feet apart across the width and length of the building (four rows of six footings, totaling 24 footings). A wood frame, including forms at ground level for a concrete floor, would be constructed and metal siding and roof would form the exterior of the building. The building would be wired for electrical and connected to existing power at the site. After the building has been constructed, a concrete floor would be poured inside the building, as well as an 18-foot-wide apron along the length of the building (60 feet). Concrete would be poured on top of the existing gravel. All building materials and methods would comply with State of Oregon code requirements and plans would be stamped by a licensed engineer. Equipment and vehicles would use existing access roads and existing developed space at the facility between the ponds to stage materials and equipment. The project would use light construction equipment, such as a mini-excavator, telehandler, cement truck, and a dump truck.

The proposed action would occur at an existing facility that receives BPA funding for ongoing and routine operations and maintenance. The project area has had previous ground disturbance during original construction, including excavation and grading. The proposed action would not extend the original intended life of the facility, there would be no increase in the water supply used, and there would be no change in the number of fish acclimated and released at the facility that has been previously authorized.

These actions would support ongoing efforts to mitigate for effects of the Federal Columbia River Power System 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 1021.102 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 the current *DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Procedures*, 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.

Jacquelyn Schei
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Katey C. Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment(s): Environmental Evaluation

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Evaluation

This evaluation 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.

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Project Site Description

The project would occur at a developed fish acclimation facility on graveled and cleared land managed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) in Umatilla County, Oregon. The land is within the bounds of the reservation. CTUIR operates the existing facility to support acclimation and release of juvenile hatchery salmon. The storage building site would be located about 300 feet from the Umatilla River.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA made a determination of no historic properties affected on March 6, 2026 (BPA Cultural Resources Project No.: OR 2026 001). Consulting parties included the CTUIR and the CTUIR Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO). BPA received concurrence on the determination from THPO on April 16, 2026. No other responses were received.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Minor and temporary ground disturbances would occur. Excavation equipment would be appropriately sized for the project to minimize the amount of ground disturbance. The site has been previously disturbed during original construction, and the proposed action would not dig beyond the original disturbance. Erosion and sediment control best management practices would be implemented prior to implementation to minimize erosion and runoff during construction. The site is regularly accessed by large trucks with trailers transporting fish in water. Construction vehicles would be of similar or less weight and would not cause any more impacts to soils than those vehicles.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would occur within an existing developed area that does not have any vegetation. No Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed or state-sensitive plant species would be present within the project sites.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Work would occur in an existing, developed facility with perimeter fencing that is located just outside Pendleton city limits. The proposed action would not introduce noticeable human activity and noise compared to existing human activity and noise at the facility, nearby offices, and roadways. Therefore, there would be no effect to wildlife, including ESA-listed or sensitive wildlife.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No in-water work would occur associated with the proposed action. Construction would occur when hatchery fish are not occupying the holding ponds at the facility. Based on the distance to the nearest waterbody and the implementation of appropriate sediment and erosion control best management practices, there would be no impact on water bodies, floodplains, and fish.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Work would occur within an existing developed facility that would be accessed on existing roadways. There would be no impact to wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No new wells or use of groundwater are proposed. The proposed project would have no impact to groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The underlying land use (aquaculture) would not change or be disrupted and no impact to specially-designated areas would occur as a result of this project.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Temporary and permanent visual changes would occur during and after the proposed action. Short-term impacts during construction would include work zone conditions, vehicles, and equipment. These would not be different than typical visual impacts during fish transport operations. Long-term visual impacts would be a new storage building at the site. There are currently four other buildings at the site and the proposed building would be constructed next to a building of similar size. Long-term visual impacts would be minor and visually consistent with the existing facility.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There may be minor and temporary amounts of exhaust produced by construction equipment. The emissions would be of short duration and consistent in amount and duration with routine vehicle use currently at the facility. There would be no long-term effects to air quality.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Noise is anticipated during construction activities. The noise would be of short duration and consistent in volume or duration with operational activities at the facility. This noise would be temporary and cause no long-term impacts.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All personnel would use best management practices to protect worker health and safety during proposed construction activities. No impacts to public human health and safety are expected as a result of project activities.

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: CTUIR and ODFW have determined that the work falls within the existing agreements pertaining to the facility and its operations. CTUIR would send ODFW construction plans and coordinate on timing of the work.

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

Signed:

Jacquelyn Schei
Environmental Protection Specialist