

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Deferred Screen Maintenance at Maxwell and Stanfield Fish Screen Facilities

Project No.: 2023-003-01

Project Manager: Jennifer Lord, EWU-4

Location: Umatilla County, Oregon

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.3 Routine maintenance; B1.20 Protection of cultural resources, fish and wildlife habitat

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to fund the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) to address non-recurring maintenance needs to maintain fish screen facilities along the Umatilla River. The proposed actions would support continued fish passage, including for Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) at screen facilities associated with irrigation diversions; protect fish from entrapment in irrigation ditches and fields; and ensure proper functionality of fish screens for future years.

Proposed activities would include construction of a concrete pad and installation of a generator at the Stanfield fish screen facility and fence replacement at the Maxwell fish screen facility. Both facilities are operated by the Westland Irrigation District (WID), have been in operation for over 30 years, and receive funding from BPA for ongoing operations and maintenance (O&M). Proposed activities would support ongoing O&M and would not extend the intended useful life of the facilities.

At Stanfield, a wood form (about 15 feet long by 20 feet wide) would be constructed by hand and a concrete pad would be poured on top of the existing facility gravel lot. A generator would be placed on the pad and wired into the electrical system of a nearby building. An about 22-foot-long by 1-foot-wide by 1-foot-deep trench would be excavated from the pad to the building to lay electrical wiring and conduit. Trench excavation would be completed by a walk-behind mini trencher or by hand with a shovel. Vehicles, including a concrete truck, would access the site on existing roadways and access points into the facility.

At Maxwell, a flood in 2020 eroded a portion of the south side of the lot under the security fence line. Work would include adding, compacting, and grading fill (about 50 cubic yards of fill from an onsite stockpile created when the ditch was excavated) to match the existing grade. Fill material would support installation of new fence posts. The project would also reset or replace about eight fence posts in the existing fence line. Any new holes needed for fence posts would be drilled down to an about 36-inch-depth using an auger. Concrete would be poured into holes to secure posts. Where needed, new fencing material (chain link) will be installed between posts. Vehicles would access the site on existing roadways and access points into the facility. Work would be conducted from inside the facility perimeter.

These actions would contribute to 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 1021.102 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
Jacquelyn Schei
Environmental Protection Specialist

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JACQUELYN SCHEI
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Concur:

KATEY GRANGE
Katey C. Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

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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.

Proposed Action: Deferred Screen Maintenance at Maxwell and Stanfield Fish Screen Facilities

Project Site Description

The Maxwell and Stanfield sites are existing developed fish screen facilities at irrigation diversions along the Umatilla River, near Hermiston in Umatilla County, Oregon. Both are on private property, and the facilities include the irrigation canals, headgates, fish screens, fish bypasses, and associated equipment to operate and maintain the components. The facilities sit on lots that have been previously excavated, graded, graveled, and fenced during the original installation in the early 1990s.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: On August 3, 2026, BPA sent letters to consulting parties, CTUIR and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), about the fence project at the Maxwell fish screen facility and BPA's finding of No Historic Properties Affected (BPA Cultural Resources No. OR 2025 124). No comments were received by the end of the 30-day comment period.

On August 6, 2026, BPA sent letters to consulting parties, CTUIR and SHPO, about the generator project at the Stanfield fish screen facility and BPA's finding of No Historic Properties Affected (BPA Cultural Resources No. OR 2025 123). No comments were received by the end of the 30-day comment period.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Minor and temporary ground disturbance would occur at both project sites. A walk-behind trencher or shovel would be used to dig the trench for the generator at Stanfield. An excavator would be used to add and grade fill at Maxwell and an auger would be used to drill holes for fence posts. The sites have all been previously disturbed during original construction and the proposed actions would not extend beyond the original disturbance depth.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The activities would occur within existing developed areas that are not vegetated. No 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 existing, developed facilities. There would be no effect to wildlife as the proposed activities would not introduce noticeable human activity and noise compared to human activity and noise associated with existing facility operations.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No work in or near water would occur as part of these maintenance actions. There would be no impact on water bodies or floodplains. Overall, there would be beneficial effects for fish by maintaining the fish screen facilities so they continue to function properly to prevent fish from entering irrigation ditches and becoming stranded.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Work would occur within existing developed facilities. 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 activities would have no impact to groundwater or aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The underlying land use (agricultural diversions) would not change and water diversions would not be interrupted. No impact to specially-designated areas would occur as a result of this project. There is no public access to the facilities and no recreational opportunities onsite.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be a minor change in the visual character of the Stanfield facility with the addition of the concrete pad and generator. At Maxwell, new soil and fencing would be a new addition to the visual landscape in recent years but would look like the facility had prior to 2020. Visual changes would be in line with the design and layout of the existing facilities. Changes would be minor and given the remoteness of both facilities, unlikely to be seen by many people beyond the irrigators and property owners.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There may be minor and temporary amounts of exhaust produced by vehicles accessing and working at the sites. The emissions would be of short duration and consistent in amount and duration with routine vehicle use currently at the facilities. 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: The proposed work is not considered hazardous, nor does it result in any health or safety risks to the public. There would be no soil contamination or hazardous conditions. All personnel would use best management practices to protect worker health and safety during implementation of proposed activities. No impacts to 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: Project activities would be coordinated by CTUIR and implemented by WID. Land use or other special use agreements exist for the regular O&M work at the facilities and this work would fall under and be coordinated with private landowners in the manner laid out in those agreements.

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

Signed: **JACQUELYN SCHEI**
Jacquelyn Schei
Environmental Protection Specialist

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JACQUELYN SCHEI
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