

United States Government

Department of Energy  
Bonneville Power Administration

# memorandum

DATE: December 01, 2011

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Virgil Lee Watts  
Project Manager – KEWM-4

**Proposed Action:** Provision of funds to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) to purchase the Rapid Lightening Creek conservation easement.

**Fish and Wildlife Project No.:** 1992-061-00

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):**

**B 1.25 Real property transfers for cultural resources protection, habitat preservation, and wildlife management.** Transfer, lease, disposition, or acquisition of interests in land and associated buildings for cultural resources protection, habitat preservation, or fish and wildlife management, provided that there would be no potential for release of substances at a level, or in a form, that could pose a threat to public health or the environment.

**Location:** Boundary County, Idaho

**Proposed by:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the IDFG

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to provide funds to IDFG for the purchase of approximately 27 acres of land adjacent to the Rapid Lightning and Trout Creek Habitat Segments of the Pend Oreille River Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The subject property is located in Bonner County, Idaho, approximately 0.25 mile east of the Pack River. Acquisition of this property would add to the land base of the Pend Oreille River WMA and would protect a wetland area, and associated waterfowl habitat, on the southern portion of the property. Several non-game wildlife species would also benefit from the protection of this property.

BPA would be granted a perpetual conservation easement over the 27 acres. Funding the property purchase and associated conservation easement would provide BPA with partial mitigation credits for the construction and operation of the Albeni Falls Dam.

After purchase of the property and the conservation easement is complete, IDFG would manage the property to maintain habitat for fish and wildlife. Prior to any management activities, BPA would conduct further environmental review.

**Findings:** BPA has determined that the proposed action complies with Section 1021.410 and Appendix B of Subpart D 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, July 9, 1996; 61 FR 64608, Dec. 6, 1996, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011). The proposed action

does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal. The proposal is not connected [40 C.F.R. 1508.25(a)(1)] to other actions with potentially significant impacts, has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion, is not related to other proposed actions with cumulatively significant impacts [40 C.F.R. 1508.25(a)(2)], and is not precluded by 40 C.F.R. 1506.1 or 10 C.F.R. 1021.211. Moreover, the proposed action would not (i) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, (ii) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities, (iii) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that pre-exist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases, (iv) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, or (v) 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.

This proposed action meets the requirements for the Categorical Exclusion referenced above. We therefore determine that the proposed action may be categorically excluded from further NEPA review and documentation.

/s/ Katey Grange  
Katey Grange  
Environmental Project Manager

Concur:

/s/ Richard Yarde  
Richard Yarde  
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: December 1, 2011

Attachment:  
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

## Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Rapid Lightening Creek Conservation Easement

Work Order #: BPA- 006471

**This project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts on the following environmentally sensitive resources. See 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B for complete descriptions of the resources. This checklist is to be used as a summary – further discussion may be included in the Categorical Exclusion Memorandum.**

<u>Environmental Resources</u>	<u>No Potential for Significance</u>	<u>No Potential, with Conditions (describe)</u>
1. Historic Properties and Cultural Resources No potential to cause adverse effect	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime or unique farmlands No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List supporting documentation attached (if needed):

Signed: /s/ Kathey C. Grange

Date: December 1, 2011