

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: November 3, 2011

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Dorie Welch
Project Manager – KEWM-4

Proposed Action: Provision of funds to acquire a conservation easement on the 193.7-acre Meisen property.

Fish and Wildlife Project No.: 2011-003-00, Contract # BPA-005974

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

B1.25 Transfer, lease, disposition or acquisition of interests in uncontaminated land for habitat preservation or wildlife management, and only associated buildings that support these purposes. Uncontaminated means that there would be no potential for release of substances at a level, or in a form, that would pose a threat to public health or the environment.

Location: Township 18 South, Range 4 West, Sections 13 and 24 of the Eugene West, Eugene East, Fox Hollow and Creswell Quadrangles, in Lane County, Oregon (near Eugene, Oregon).

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to join the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) in funding the fee simple acquisition of the 193.7-acre Meisen property by the City of Eugene, Oregon. The acquisition would be facilitated by The Nature Conservancy. The City of Eugene would own and manage the property. BPA and OWEB would be granted a joint conservation agreement. Under the “Willamette River Basin Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Wildlife Habitat Protection and Enhancement Between the State of Oregon and BPA” (October 22, 2010), BPA would receive credits for partial mitigation of wildlife impacts associated with power generation at certain Willamette Basin dams.

The Meisen property is primarily intact oak savanna and mixed oak woodland upland habitat. The property will provide long-lasting benefits as part of a growing network of conservation lands in the Willamette Valley that support watershed and wildlife habitat protection. Numerous wildlife species use this habitat and the acquisition will prevent habitat conversion and secure rights to restore and maintain habitat that benefits 25 focal species. Species likely to use the property include white-breasted nuthatch, chipping sparrow, Oregon vesper sparrow, western meadowlark, acorn woodpecker, American kestrel, purple martin, yellow warbler, western gray squirrel, and red-legged frog. White-topped aster and Willamette daisy are found on the property. The acquisition will also conserve rare native plant communities, including Kincaid’s lupine, a species listed under the Endangered Species Act. The parcel may be suitable for future Kincaid’s lupine habitat restoration for Fender’s blue butterfly.

The City of Eugene would restore and enhance wildlife habitat and provide long-term stewardship of the land. The City of Eugene, in coordination with BPA and OWEB, would develop a management plan. BPA, OWEB, and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife must approve the plan prior to implementation. Prior to funding 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). 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, 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, or (iv) adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources.

Based on the provision that a cultural resource survey will be conducted prior to any ground disturbing activities, 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/ Israel Duran

Israel Duran

Environmental Protection Specialist – KEC-4

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Date: November 3, 2011

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer – KEC-4

Attachment:

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Willamette Wildlife MOA Acquisitions- SEM (Meisen)

Project #: 2011-001-00 Cont# BPA-005974

This project has been found to not adversely affect the following environmentally sensitive resources, laws, and regulations:

Environmental Resources	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect With Conditions
1. Cultural Resources Funding land acquisition only.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) Funding land acquisition only.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands Funding land acquisition only.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation Funding land acquisition only.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety Funding land acquisition only.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime agricultural lands Funding land acquisition only.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water Funding land acquisition only.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Consistency with state and local laws and regulations Funding land acquisition only.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Pollution control at Federal facilities Funding land acquisition only.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Other Funding land acquisition only.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List supporting documentation attached (if needed):

Signed: /s/ Israel Duran

Date: November 3, 2011