

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Snake River Chinook and Steelhead PBT Project

Project No.: 2010-031-00

Project Manager: Brady Allen

Location: Multiple counties, Idaho

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B3.3 Research related to conservation of fish, wildlife and cultural resources.

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to fund the Idaho Department of Fish and Game's ongoing evaluation of genetic technology for mass marking hatchery steelhead and Chinook salmon in the Snake River basin. Parental Based Tagging (PBT) is a better tool to meet Fish & Wildlife Program objectives associated with marking hatchery stocks, conducting hatchery evaluations and reform, and enforcing salmonid fishery management measures.

This project would genotype approximately 16,500 samples annually to create the first PBT baselines for hatchery steelhead and Chinook salmon in the Snake River basin. PBT samples would be collected from scales of carcasses in Snake River basin waterbodies or collected from hatchery program broodstock. Samples are provided by hatchery programs and personnel would assist other agencies in collection of carcass samples.

This project would work closely with an existing BPA-funded project (2008-907-00) to ensure that future genetic marker sets used in the Columbia River basin are standardized, providing genetic tools for managing wild and hatchery stocks in the basin with Genetic Stock Identification techniques segregating adult wild runs by stock of origin, and PBT technologies identifying the stock and age of sampled hatchery fish.

The actions would specifically satisfy some of BPA's Columbia River hatchery mitigation commitments begun under the 2008 NMFS' Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion (as supplemented in 2010 and 2014) (2008 BiOp) and ongoing commitments under the 2019 NMFS' Columbia River System BiOp (2019 CRS BiOp).

Findings: In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) 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), BPA has determined that the proposed action:

- (1) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D (see attached Environmental Checklist);
- (2) does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- (3) has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

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

/s/ Israel Duran

Israel Duran
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Salient/CRGT

Reviewed by:

/s/ Chad Hamel

Chad Hamel
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katey Grange

Katey Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: May 5, 2020

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

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.

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Project Site Description

Broodstock sampling would occur within existing support infrastructure throughout Idaho, and carcass collection would occur within the Salmon River basin.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. Historic and Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The proposed activities would occur within the confines of the existing structures, and would not require any ground-disturbing activities for the completion of this work. Carcass collection is led by other agencies and is not expected to disturb historic or cultural resources.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There are no ground disturbing activities required for the completion of this work and there would be no impact to geology or soils.		
3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No habitat present at the existing facilities. Carcass collection is led by other agencies and is not expected to impact vegetative resources. There are no anticipated impacts to any sensitive plant species, and none exist within the immediate area of impact.		
4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No habitat present at the existing facilities. Carcass collection is led by other agencies and is not expected to impact wildlife with the exception of some minor disturbance due to temporary human presence. There are no anticipated impacts to any sensitive wildlife species.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> There are no live fish handled by the project. Carcass collection is led by other agencies and is not expected to disturb aquatic resources. There are no anticipated impacts to water bodies, floodplains or fish.		
6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground excavation is planned and the activities would not impact wetlands.		
7. Groundwater and Aquifers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground excavation is planned and the activities would not impact groundwater or aquifers.		

8. **Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas**



Explanation: The work would not impact or change land use.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The work would not impact visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: The work would not impact air quality.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: The work would not raise noise levels above background.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: Safety regulations would be followed as necessary.

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, if necessary:

- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation, if necessary:

- 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, if necessary:

- 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, if necessary:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: This work would be implemented on federal, state and tribal property.

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

Signed: /s/ Israel Duran Date: May 5, 2020
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Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Salient/CRGT