

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Mayfield Property Acquisition (*Update to previous CX issued on November 16, 2023*)

**Project No.:** 1995-057-00, BPA-013409

**Project Manager:** Virginia Preiss – EWM-4

**Location:** Elmore County, Idaho

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B1.25 Real property transfers for cultural resources protection, habitat preservation, and wildlife management

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA is proposing to fund the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) to purchase the Mayfield property, a 5,534-acre parcel of land located southeast of Boise in Elmore County, Idaho. IDFG would purchase the property to permanently protect, mitigate, and enhance wildlife habitat for numerous Idaho-state wildlife species of concern. Funding for the acquisition would be provided under the terms and conditions of the 2014 Southern Idaho Wildlife Mitigation Memorandum of Agreement between the State of Idaho and BPA (SIWM MOA) to protect, preserve, and enhance the conservation values agreed to under the SIWM MOA. Funding the purchase would serve as partial mitigation for the construction and operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System and would satisfy BPA's commitments made in the SIWM MOA. This CX has been updated to remove references to additional stewardship funding, which would not be provided to IDFG by BPA for this acquisition.

The property consists of large tracts of upland shrub-steppe habitat ideal for winter range of mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) and elk (*Cervus canadensis*) and provides general habitat year round for sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*). The property currently sees heavy use by wintering deer and elk and purchase of the property would help preserve the quality of the habitat for wildlife use in perpetuity. The property abuts and would be incorporated into IDFG's Boise River Wildlife Management Area. The property would be managed under the existing Boise River Wildlife Management Area (WMA) plan to guide the protection and enhancement of habitat and other resources on the property. The management plan would be updated to reflect the Mayfield addition and reviewed by BPA for consistency with the purpose of the acquisition. If BPA proposes to fund any additional activities on the property, further environmental review may be conducted.

**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/ Thomas DeLorenzo  
Thomas DeLorenzo  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel 12/04/2023  
Sarah T. Biegel      Date  
NEPA Compliance Officer

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**

The Mayfield property consists of nearly 5,600 acres in the foothills of the Danskin Mountains located roughly 42 miles southeast of Boise in Elmore County, Idaho. The legal description is Township 1NS, Range 05E, Sections 10, 11, 14, 15, 21, 29, 30, and 31. The majority of the property is high-quality upland shrub-steppe habitat that sees heavy use by wintering mule deer and elk and provides general habitat year-round for sage-grouse. The property is bordered by IDFG's Boise River Wildlife Management Area to the north, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)-owned land to the East, and private landowners to the south and west. A narrow stretch of BLM-owned land also bisects the property centrally. The property has been historically used for livestock grazing and recreation by the landowner and a portion was heavily impacted by wildfire in 2013. Purchase of the property would increase the amount of winter range for deer and elk maintained by IDFG in the area and provide wildlife refuge and recreation opportunities for the public. Access to the property is along an existing public roadway which runs along and through the southern section of the property.

### **Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources**

#### **1. Historic and Cultural Resources**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be no effect due to the land acquisition which includes transfer of title and the creation of a conservation easement. To the extent that future activities on the property may have an effect, it is expected that IDFG would comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

#### **2. Geology and Soils**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

**6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

**7. Groundwater and Aquifers**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

**9. Visual Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

**10. Air Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

**11. Noise**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

**12. Human Health and Safety**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: See explanation for #1 above.

### **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: BPA would mail notice to nearby landowners prior to closing. BPA would also run public notice in local newspapers for at least two weeks prior to closing.

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

Signed: /s/ Thomas DeLorenzo  
Thomas DeLorenzo, ECF-4  
Environmental Protection Specialist

12/04/2023  
Date