

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Finn Rock Phase 2 Property Acquisition and Stewardship Funding

Project No.: 2011-003-00; BPA-013336

Project Manager: Matt Schwartz – EWM-4

Location: Lane County, Oregon

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: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to fund the McKenzie River Trust, in cooperation with McKenzie River Trust's additional cost share partners, to purchase the Finn Rock Reach Phase 2 property, consisting of two non-contiguous parcels of land totaling approximately 464 acres, located between Blue River and Vida in Lane County, Oregon. BPA would hold a conservation easement to permanently protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife and their habitat. BPA would also provide stewardship funds toward land management and maintenance, monitoring, and enforcement of the conservation easement.

This land purchase would specifically satisfy some of BPA's commitments made in the 2010 "Willamette River Basin Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Wildlife Habitat Protection and Enhancement between the State of Oregon and the Bonneville Power Administration."

The property consists of riparian forest, floodplain, upland forest, and wetland habitats which support a diversity of fish and wildlife species, including Endangered Species Act-listed fish species and their designated critical habitat. The property also has an important ecological context including adjacency to other protected and restored lands and waters, such as U.S. Forest Service and BLM land, and the BPA-funded Finn Rock Reach Phase 1 acquisition. The McKenzie River Trust would develop a land management plan to guide the protection and enhancement of habitat and other resources on the property. The land management plan would be drafted within 18 months of closing. The management plan would be reviewed by BPA for consistency with the conservation easement and 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.

Israel Duran
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Sarah T. Biegel
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 464-acre Finn Rock Reach Phase 2 property, located 11 miles east of Vida in Lane County, Oregon, is currently privately owned and BPA would fund the purchase by McKenzie River Trust at closing. The property consists of riparian forest, floodplain, upland forest, wetlands, and streams, including two miles of McKenzie River. Property contains 2,335 ft of Quartz Creek, which is a major tributary to the McKenzie River and the mouth of Ennis Creek. Riparian forest comprised primarily of black cottonwood (*Populus trichocarpa*), big leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), Oregon ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*), red alder (*Alnus rubra*), and Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*). Wetlands comprised of hardwood swamp and dominated by black cottonwood (*Populus trichocarpa*) and upland hillsides dominated by young Douglas-fir are within the area. This property is habitat for ESA-listed fish species steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), Chinook salmon (*O. tsawytscha*), and bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*), and Oregon Conservation Strategy species such as Pacific lamprey (*Entosphenus tridentatus*). This property also contains critical habitat as designated by the National Marine Fisheries Service for steelhead and Chinook salmon, and for bull trout as designated by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

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 the McKenzie River Trust 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: Notification letters would be sent to adjacent landowners and other interested parties at a minimum of 15 days before the closing date (proposed closing date June 28, 2024) of the sale. Advertisements would also be posted in local newspapers, and information would be posted on BPA's public website 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:

Israel Duran, ECF-4
Environmental Protection Specialist