

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Yakama Nation's Threeway Restoration Additional Fence Line Installation

**Project No.:** 1996-035-01

**Project Manager:** Chad Baumler, EWL

**Location:** Yakima County, Washington

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B1.11 Fencing; B1.20 Protection of cultural resources, fish and wildlife

**Description of the Proposed Action:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to fund the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation's (YN) fisheries program to install 0.4 miles of fence line at the Threeway Restoration Project site on YN Reservation land in Yakima County, Washington.

YN would install approximately 0.4 miles of additional fenceline at the Threeway Restoration Project site on YN Reservation land. The fence line would protect revegetated areas of the Threeway Restoration Project from wild horses and cattle. The fence would tie into existing project fence and be constructed of 5-strand barbed wire with two gates, on each corner, following the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) specifications. Installation would be completed manually using hand tools brought in by ATV. Materials would be transported on site each day and no staging area would be required.

These actions would support the conservation of ESA-listed species considered in the 2020 ESA consultation with National Marine Fisheries Service on Operations and Maintenance of the Columbia River System. These actions also support the ongoing efforts to mitigate for the effect of the Federal Columbia River Power System on fish and wildlife in the mainstem Columbia River and its tributaries pursuant to the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act of 1980 (Northwest Power Act) (16 U.S.C. (USC) 839 et seq.).

**Findings:** In accordance with Section 1021.102 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; 89 FR 34074, April 30, 2024; 90 FR 29676, July 3, 2025, Interim Final Rule) and the current *DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Implementing Procedures*, BPA has determined the following:

- 1) The proposed action fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021;
- 2) The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion; and
- 3) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal (see attached Environmental Evaluation).

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

Catherine Clark  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Katey C. Grange  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment(s): Environmental Evaluation

# Categorical Exclusion Environmental Evaluation

This evaluation 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.

**Proposed Action:** Yakama Nation's Threeway Restoration Additional Fence Line Installation

## **Project Site Description**

Fence line would be installed as in order to extend an existing fence line that was installed for the Threeway Restoration Project. Land adjacent to the project area consists mostly of rangeland habitat utilized for grazing up to the riparian zone associated with the creek.

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

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: BPA initiated consultation on August 25, 2025, with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation and the Yakama Nation Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO). Response was received from YN on August 26, 2025, requesting a cultural resource inventory of the area of potential effect (APE). On May 12, 2026, BPA received a letter from THPO indicating that a cultural resource inventory of the APE had been completed, and one site was found and would be avoided by all project activities. BPA sent a letter to consulting parties on June 3, 2026, and determined that the project would result in no historic properties affected.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed fence installation would require light excavation to install fence posts; these actions would be minor and localized at the property boundary.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed, or state special-status plant species are within the project area. Proposed activities would remove minimal plant species along the fence line. Therefore, there would be minimal effort to plant species and no effect to ESA-listed or state special-status plant species.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ESA-listed or state special-status wildlife species are known to exist within the proposed project area. There would be no negative effect on ESA-listed or state special-status wildlife species.

There would be mild negative impacts to non-listed wildlife from some of the proposed project activities. Wildlife would potentially be disturbed by human presence and noise. The effect would be minor and temporary. There would be no long term negative effect on wildlife, and long term effects of enhancing the restoration area would have long term positive impacts on local and migratory wildlife in the area.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The Toppenish Creek adjacent to the fence line contains middle Columbia River steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and their critical habitat. The proposed actions would not physically alter any aquatic habitat that listed species occupy and would not involve any in-water work. Therefore, there would be no adverse impacts to water bodies, floodplains, or fish. In the long term, the installation of the fencing would limit animal trespass and improve the riparian condition and benefit associated fish species.

## **6. Wetlands**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There are mapped wetlands located within the restoration area (USFWS National Wetlands Inventory), but there are no wetlands in the upland area where fence activities would occur, so there would be no impacts to wetlands.

## **7. Groundwater and Aquifers**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No new wells or use of groundwater are proposed. All support post holes would avoid groundwater levels. The proposed action would not have long-term impact to groundwater or aquifers.

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

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be minor changes to land use by removing access to cattle and wild horses from the restoration project area, but there would be no impact to specially-designated areas. YN manages the property where the proposed project would take place. In the long term, the installation for the fence line would support the intended use of the property.

## **9. Visual Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed activities would have little effect on visual quality. Minor changes such as fence and gate installations would occur. Overall, the project would protect the property from negative impact of cattle and wild horses in the restoration area.

## **10. Air Quality**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: There would be minor temporary effect to the air quality of the environment from exhaust due to vehicle use for project activities as a result of this project. Normal conditions would return upon project completion.

## **11. Noise**

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed action would result in minor, temporary increase in ambient noise due to human presence, and use of vehicles and equipment. Normal conditions would return upon project completion.

## 12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed work is not considered hazardous, nor does it result in any health or safety risks to the general public. There would be no soil contamination or hazardous conditions and no CERCLA sites.

### **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: Project activities proposed by YN would be implemented by employees on property owned and managed by YN. YN staff would work with appropriate personnel to get project approval.

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

Signed:

Catherine Clark  
Environmental Protection Specialist