

# memorandum

DATE: June 19, 2013

REPLY TO:  
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Emanuel Jaramillo  
Project Manager – TEP-TPP-1

**Proposed Action:** Vista View Fields Land Acquisition

**Project Work Order No.:** Work Order #327332

**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

**Location:** Township 1 North, Range 5 East, Section 19; Tax Lot 600, Skamania County, Washington

**Proposed by:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to fund the acquisition of a 15.72-acre parcel in Skamania County, Washington. The funding would be provided to the Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust (Gorge Land Trust) to acquire the parcel, which is known as Vista View Fields. This parcel is a developable lot located within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (National Scenic Area), which was established in 1986 by the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act (16 U.S.C. 544-544p). The property is located approximately 3.5 miles east of the city of Washougal, immediately north of State Route 14 (SR14) and along Marble Road.

The property is zoned as large-scale agriculture and most of the property is currently managed as farmland for the production of hay. A small strip of the property is in forest along SR 14. Both the farmland and the forested areas function as wildlife habitat. The forested area includes the headwaters of a small stream that flows directly into the Columbia River.

The property is visible from the Historic Columbia River Highway, which is designated as a key viewing area under the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Management Plan (Management Plan). The property is also clearly visible from Vista House in Oregon, a popular Columbia Gorge viewpoint. Visitors have a direct view across the Columbia River of the pastoral landscape of Vista View Fields.

The Gorge Land Trust's purpose in acquiring the Vista View Fields property is to manage it for scenic resource preservation and habitat protection and provide long-term stewardship, consistent with the Management Plan. The farmed portion of the property would continue to be farmed under current farming practices, and the forested area on the property would be preserved. BPA would fund the repair or replacement of horizontal fence components to

prevent unauthorized access to the property. No ground disturbing activities are proposed. Accordingly, the uses of this property would not change and it would continue to function as farmland and wildlife habitat.

**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, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011). 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, has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion, 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, (iv) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, or (v) 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.

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/ Kimberly R. St.Hilaire*  
Kimberly R. St.Hilaire  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

*/s/ Katherine S. Pierce*  
Katherine S. Pierce  
NEPA Compliance Officer

*Date: June 19, 2013*

Attachment(s):  
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions  
Project Vicinity Map

# Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Vista View Fields Land Acquisition

Work Order #: Work Order #327332

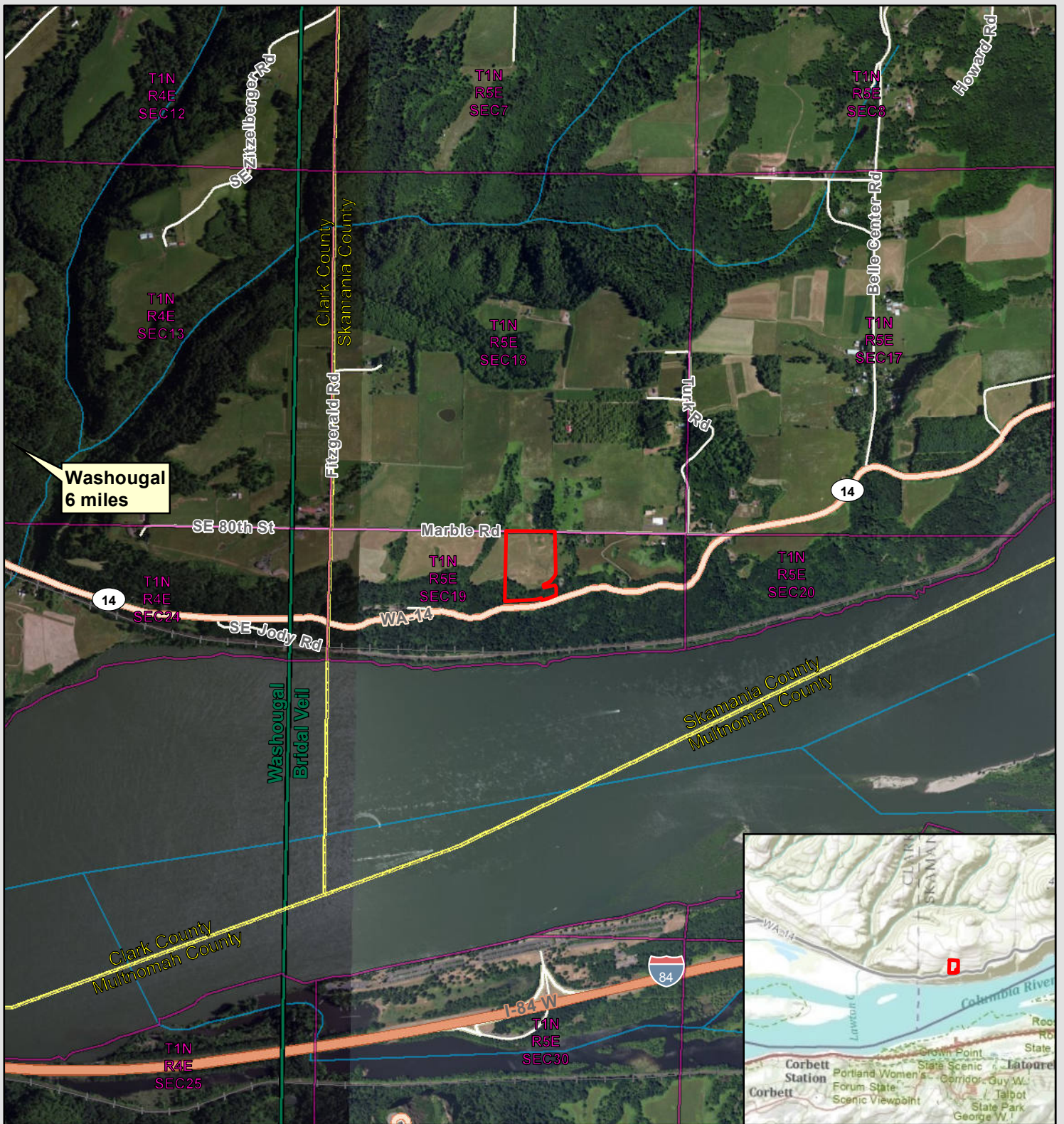
**This project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts on the following environmentally sensitive resources. See 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B for complete descriptions of the resources. This checklist is to be used as a summary – further discussion may be included in the Categorical Exclusion Memorandum.**

Environmental Resources	No Potential for Significance	No Potential, with Conditions (describe)
1. Historic Properties and Cultural Resources Because there will be no ground disturbance, change of use, and there are no existing structures, there is no potential to affect cultural resources.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands Based on review of existing resources and a field visit on April 4, 2013, the property is upland with no existing wetlands. The property does not include mapped 100-year floodplains.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation The U.S. Forest Service does not require consistency review with the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Management Plan where the proposal only involves acquisition of land with no development proposal (pers. Comm. Lynn Oliver, US Forest Service, March 25, 2013).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was conducted for the Vista View Fields property; it did not reveal evidence of Recognized Environmental Conditions in connection with the property.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime or unique farmlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Other (describe)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>




Supporting documentation in the official project file:  
 Project Vicinity Map  
 Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, HAI Hahn and Associates, Inc., June 3, 2013

Signed: /s/ Kimberly St.Hilaire

Date: June 19, 2013



**Vista View Fields Land Acquisition**  
 Bridal Veil Quadrangle  
 Skamania County, WA  
 (15.72 Acres)

-  Subject Property
-  Township, Range and Section Boundary
-  USGS 7-5minute Quad Perimeter



0 0.5 1 Mile 5/29/2013

