

# memorandum

DATE: April 2, 2014

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Debbie Carlson  
Public Utilities Specialist – PGC-RICHLAND

**Proposed Action:** Cowlitz Falls Fish Facility Access Agreement Extension

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** A2 Clarifying or administrative contract actions

**Locations:** Lewis County, Washington

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

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to enter into a short-term agreement that would extend an existing access agreement with Lewis County Public Utility District (PUD) until September 30, 2014. This existing access agreement and its amendments currently provide BPA and the City of Tacoma (Tacoma) with access to the existing Cowlitz Falls Fish Facility (CFFF) at the PUD's Cowlitz Falls Project, a 70 megawatt hydroelectric dam. BPA has an existing power purchase agreement with Lewis County PUD for the output from the Cowlitz Falls Project and currently funds the operation of the CFFF to facilitate downstream fish transport. BPA, Tacoma, and the PUD are in the process of negotiating a long-term access agreement that would, among other things, release BPA's property interests in the CFFF.

Current operations would not change as a result of the extension agreement. Tacoma Power would continue smolt tagging, fish collection activities, and fish studies at CFFF and at BPA's downstream fish transfer facility until the long-term access agreement is executed. Tacoma would be responsible for complying with the Endangered Species Act and other applicable environmental laws for smolt tagging, fish collection activities, and fish studies associated with the extension agreement.

**Findings:** BPA has determined that the proposed action complies with Section 1021.410 and Appendix A of Subpart D of the Department of Energy's (DOE) 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.

We therefore determine that the proposed action may be categorically excluded from further NEPA review and documentation.

/s/ Jeffrey J. Maslow  
Jeffrey J. Maslow  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

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

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