

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: August 16, 2011

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Cecilia Brown
Project Manager - KEWM-4

Proposed Action: Provision of funds to Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks to purchase the Diamond B conservation easement.

Fish and Wildlife Project No.: 2008-800-00

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):

B1.25 Transfer, lease, disposition or acquisition of interests in uncontaminated land for habitat preservation or wildlife management, and only associated buildings that support these purposes. Uncontaminated means that there will be no potential for release of substances at a level, or in a form, that would pose a threat to public health or the environment.

Location: Township 28N, Range 20W, Sections 28 and 33 in Flathead County, MT

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to acquire a conservation easement of 192-acres along the mainstem Flathead River. The Diamond B property conservation easement will help protect one mile of important migratory habitat for bull trout, which are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, as well as resident westslope cutthroat trout, which are considered a species of concern by MFWP. BPA will be granted a perpetual conservation easement over the 192-acres. Funding this conservation easement will provide BPA with credits for partial mitigation for the construction and operation of the Hungry Horse Dam on the South Fork of the Flathead River.

After purchase of the conservation easement is complete, MFWP will manage the property to maintain habitat for fish. Prior to any management activities, BPA will conduct further environmental review.

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). 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, 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 will 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, or (iv) adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources.

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/ Hannah Dondy-Kaplan

Hannah Dondy-Kaplan

Environmental Protection Specialist – KEC-4

Concur:

/s/ Lydia T. Grimm, for:

Date: August 16, 2011

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer – KEC-4

Attachment:

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Diamond B Easement

Work Order #: #BPA- 233877

This project has been found to not adversely affect the following environmentally sensitive resources, laws, and regulations:

Environmental Resources	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect With Conditions
1. Cultural Resources No adverse effect	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) No effect as this is strictly a conservation easement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands No effect as this is strictly a conservation easement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation No effect as this is strictly a conservation easement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety No effect as this is strictly a conservation easement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime agricultural lands No effect as this is strictly a conservation easement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water No effect as this is strictly a conservation easement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Consistency with state and local laws and regulations No effect as this is strictly a conservation easement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Pollution control at Federal facilities No effect as this is strictly a conservation easement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Other Only BPA approved herbicides will be applied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List supporting documentation attached (if needed):

Signed: /s/ Hannah Dondy-Kaplan

Date: August 16, 2011