

memorandum

DATE: January 4, 2012

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Dave Roberts
Project Manager – KEWU-4

Proposed Action: Provision of funds to the Colville Confederated Tribes for the purchase of two parcels of land along the Okanogan River.

Fish and Wildlife Project No.: 2007-224-00

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.25 Transfer of land/habitat preservation, wildlife management.

Location: The Okanogan River properties are located south of the town of Omak, in Okanogan County, Washington.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT).

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund the acquisition of two properties in the Okanogan River watershed by the CCT. BPA will be granted a perpetual conservation easement over the entire property as a condition of funding the acquisition. The properties are being acquired because of their outstanding riparian habitat resource value. The acquisition will provide an opportunity to enhance, restore, and manage high quality habitat for populations of summer/fall Chinook salmon, sockeye salmon, and Upper Columbia River steelhead, which are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. This watershed was selected for restoration and preservation efforts because natural habitat is shrinking in the area, and development poses increasing risk that more habitats will be lost in the future.

The CCT agree that this acquisition and the permanent protection of the property that will result is ultimately being undertaken for the benefit of the public. Ownership by the CCT and the perpetual conservation easement to be held by BPA will ensure that the critical fish and wildlife habitat values present on the property will be protected forever.

BPA is funding the CCT acquisition of the property and is receiving a conservation easement. 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, 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/ Jenna Peterson

Jenna Peterson
Environmental Protection Specialist – KEC-4

Concur:

/s/ Richard Yarde

Richard Yarde
Acting NEPA Compliance Officer – KEC-4

Date: January 4, 2012

Attachment:

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusion

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Okanogan River Land Acquisition

Project #/Contract # 2007-224-00/ BPA-006194

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.

<u>Environmental Resources</u>	<u>No Potential for Significance</u>	<u>No Potential, with Conditions (describe)</u>
1. Historic Properties and Cultural Resources No effect as this is strictly funding a title of transfer for a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) No effect as this is strictly funding a title of transfer for a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands No effect as this is strictly funding a title of transfer for a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation No effect as this is strictly funding a title of transfer for a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety No effect as this is strictly funding a title of transfer for a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime or unique farmlands No effect as this is strictly funding a title of transfer for a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water No effect as this is strictly funding a title of transfer for a land acquisition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List supporting documentation attached (if needed):

Signed: Jenna Peterson

Date: January 4, 2012