

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: July 12, 2010

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Sandra Fife
Project Manager – KEWU-4

Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) would provide funds to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) for the purchase of a conservation easement on 432.3 acres of the Hundley property for fish habitat mitigation in Kittitas County, Washington. BPA would hold a conservation easement on the property and the easement would be protected and co-managed by WDFW, the Yakama Nation's Yakima/Klickitat Fisheries Project (YKFP) and the Kittitas Conservation Trust (KCT).

Budget Information: Work Order #00191727

Fish and Wildlife Project No.: 1997-051-00, BPA-004607

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 would 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 20 North, Range 14 East, Sections 25 and 26, in Kittitas County, Washington, six miles west of Cle Elum, Washington.

Proposed by: BPA, WDFW, YKFP, KCT

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund WDFW's acquisition of a conservation easement on 5 parcels of the Hundley property totaling 432.3 acres near Cle Elum, Washington. The property has outstanding riparian and floodplain natural resource values, which provide an opportunity to enhance, restore, and manage high quality spawning and rearing habitat for Endangered Species Act-listed Mid-Columbia River steelhead (threatened) and Columbia River bull trout (threatened), as well as summer/fall-run Chinook salmon and other native fish species.

BPA is proposing to fund WDFW's acquisition of the conservation easement as partial mitigation for fish habitat losses due to the construction and operation of federal hydroelectric facilities on the Columbia River. Closure of the purchase is expected in 2010. The purpose of the easement is to ensure that the property will be retained in perpetuity in its natural open space condition, to protect riparian and fish habitat, and to prevent any use of the property that will significantly impair or interfere with the property's conservation value. The property is a large recreational and residential estate with substantial frontage on the Yakima River, and contains a

house, garage, barn and other related small outbuildings. The easement does not grant any water rights. Access to the subject property is provided by one paved road and two gravel roads (one of which is protected by a manned security gate at the entrance to the Tumble Creek neighborhood prior to entering the subject property).

Once the easement has been acquired, the YKFP would lead the development of a management plan to guide the protection and enhancement of resources on the property, including revegetation, removal of concrete along the shoreline, and improving the connection of the floodplain ponds with the Yakima River. The public would be given the opportunity to review and provide comments on any proposed actions and the management plan prior to implementation of these actions and plans.

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 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, or (iv) adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources.

Based on the provision that a cultural resource survey will be conducted prior to any ground disturbing activities, 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/ Lisa S. Wright

Lisa S. Wright

Environmental Protection Specialist – KEC-4

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: July 12, 2010

Attachments:

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Map

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Kittitas County Conservation Easement Acquisition

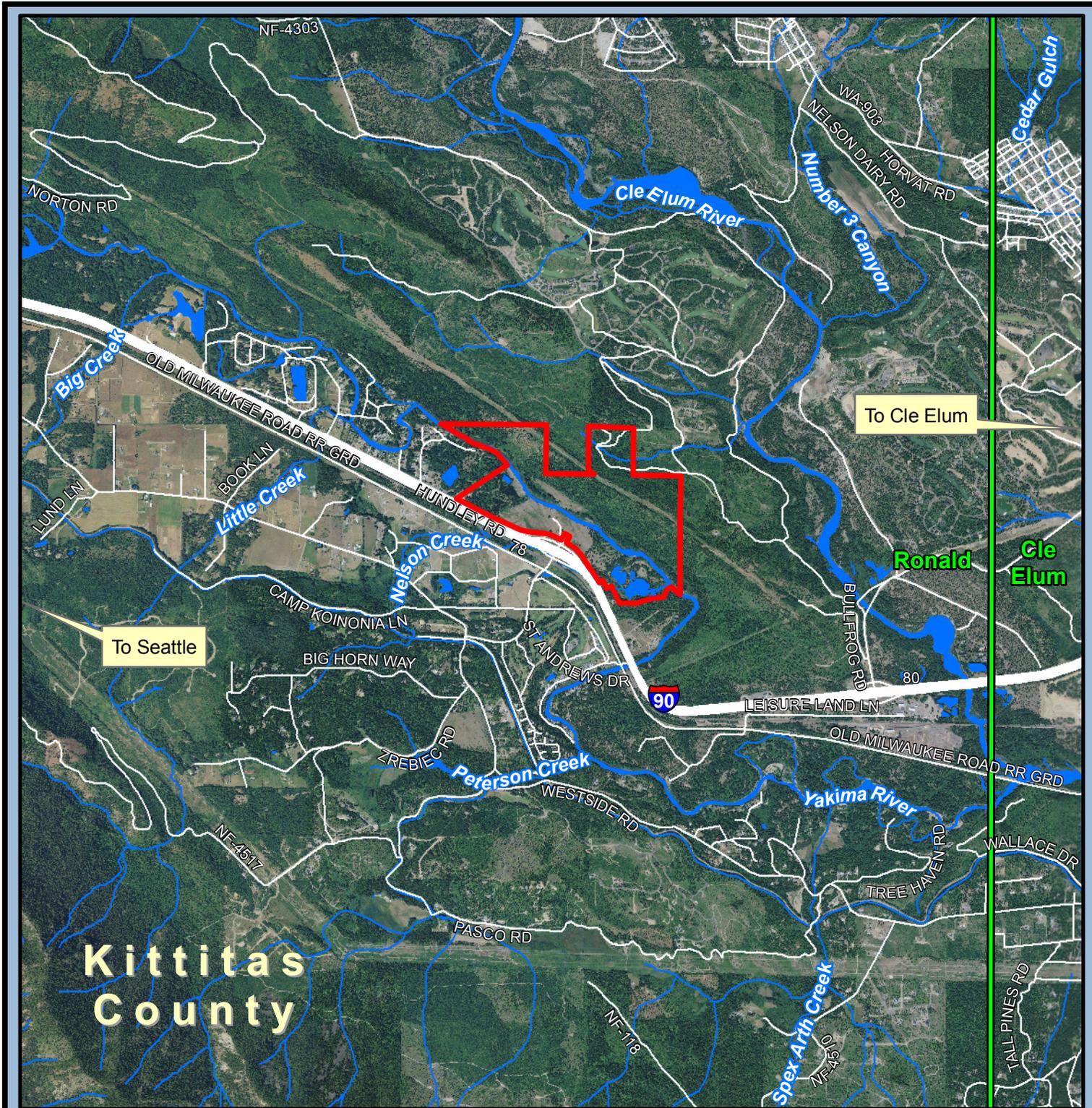
Project #: 1997-051-00 BPA-004607

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 effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime agricultural lands No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Consistency with state and local laws and regulations No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Pollution control at Federal facilities No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Other No effect as this is strictly a land acquisition.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed: /s/ Lisa S. Wright

Date: July 12, 2010



Kittitas County Conservation Easement Acquisition
Updated August 2010
Ronald Quadrangle
(432.3 Acres)

-  Subject Property
-  Quad Name and Boundary

