

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Castile Falls Fish Enumeration Facility: Battery Energy Storage System Installation

Project No.: 1997-013-35

Project Manager: Victoria Bohlen – EWU-4

Location: Yakima County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.14 Construction and Operation of Electrochemical-Battery or Flywheel Energy Storage Systems

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to fund the Yakama Nation Klickitat Fisheries Project (YKFP) to purchase and install a lithium-ion battery energy storage system at the Castile Falls Fish Enumeration Facility.

Yakama Nation would install the new lithium-ion battery storage system within the existing generator building at the fish enumeration facility. The proposed battery system would be used to provide primary load power to the facility and would be recharged by power generated by the facility's existing generators. This system would reduce dependence on diesel power and limit maintenance-related staff trips to the facility during inclement weather.

All batteries, electrical equipment, components and wiring would be installed by Washington Labor and Industries licensed electricians. No ground disturbance or outdoor construction activities are proposed with this action.

In supporting operations at the Castile Falls Fish Enumeration Facility, this action would support the conservation of ESA-listed species considered in the 2020 ESA consultation with National Marine Fisheries Service on the Operations & Maintenance of the Columbia River System. This action also supports BPA's commitments to the Yakama Nation in the Columbia River Fish Accord, as amended, while also supporting ongoing efforts to mitigate for effects of the Federal Columbia River Power System on fish and wildlife in the mainstem Columbia River and its tributaries pursuant to the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act of 1980 (Northwest Power Act) (16 U.S.C. (USC) 839 et seq.).

Findings: In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) 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, Jul. 9, 1996; 61 FR 64608, Dec. 6, 1996; 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011; 89 FR 34074, April 30, 2024), BPA has determined that the proposed action:

- 1) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D (see attached Environmental Checklist);
- 2) does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- 3) has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review. ¹

John Vlastelicia
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

Katey C. Grange
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

¹ BPA is aware that the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), on February 25, 2025, issued an interim final rule to remove its NEPA implementing regulations at 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500–1508. Based on CEQ guidance, and to promote completion of its NEPA review in a timely manner and without delay, in this CX BPA is voluntarily relying on the CEQ regulations, in addition to DOE's own regulations implementing NEPA at 10 C.F.R. Part 1021, to meet its obligations under NEPA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 et seq.

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Checklist

This checklist documents environmental considerations for the proposed project and explains why the project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources and would meet other integral elements of the applied categorical exclusion.

Proposed Action: Castile Falls Fish Enumeration Facility: Battery Energy Storage System Installation

Project Site Description

The Castile Falls Fish Enumeration Facility is located along the Klickitat River (River Mile 64) in Yakima County, Washington, within Section 19 of Township 9 North, Range 13 East. The facility includes a fish counting station at the fishway exit of Castile Falls, with video monitoring, passive integrated transponder (PIT)-tag detection, and fish capture capabilities. A cast-in-place concrete generator building on the site houses diesel-powered generators that supply power to the facility. A gravel road provides access to the facility. The site is located within the closed area of Yakama Nation land, and the surrounding area is undeveloped and forested.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

1. Historic and Cultural Resources

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The proposed battery system installation would occur inside of an existing concrete generator building that was constructed in 2012. No ground disturbance is proposed. The project would therefore have no potential to cause effects on historic properties.

2. Geology and Soils

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing work is proposed as part of the battery system installation inside of a building; therefore, there would be no impacts on geology or soils.

3. Plants (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing work is proposed as part of the indoor battery system installation; therefore, there would be no effects on plants, including federal ESA-listed plant species and state special status species.

4. Wildlife (including Federal/state special-status species and habitats)

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The battery system installation would be performed inside of an existing building; therefore, there would be no effects on wildlife or wildlife habitat.

5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including Federal/state special-status species, ESUs, and habitats)

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The battery system installation would occur within a building in the developed footprint of the fish enumeration facility. There would no in-water work, no new impervious surface added, no floodplain fill, and no other ground disturbance for the project. The project would have no effect on ESA-listed, state special-status, or other aquatic species and habitat.

6. Wetlands

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: No ground-disturbing work or changes to site hydrology are proposed, and there would be no impacts on wetlands.

7. Groundwater and Aquifers

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The indoor battery system installation would not involve groundwater withdrawals or discharges to groundwater. It would also not involve excavation or other ground disturbance; would not cause changes to surface water/groundwater interactions; and would not otherwise impact groundwater and aquifers.

8. Land Use and Specially-Designated Areas

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The battery system installation would support the continued operation of the Castile Falls Fish Enumeration Facility on Yakama Nation land. No changes to land use would occur.

9. Visual Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: The indoor battery system installation would not change the visual character of the existing facilities or otherwise affect the visual quality of the area.

10. Air Quality

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Minor temporary increases in vehicle emissions at the site from battery system delivery and installation may be expected. No long-term adverse impacts to air quality would result. Once the battery system is installed and operational, minor decreases in air emissions may be expected from the facility's reduced reliance on diesel-powered generators and reduced maintenance trips.

11. Noise

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: Noise levels associated with the battery system installation would be in line with noise levels from typical operations and maintenance activities at the facility.

12. Human Health and Safety

Potential for Significance: No

Explanation: All batteries, electrical equipment, components and wiring would be installed by Washington Labor and Industries-licensed electricians. The battery system installation would occur within the Yakama Nation closed area and would not present a safety or health risk to the general public.

Evaluation of Other Integral Elements

The proposed project would also meet conditions that are integral elements of the categorical exclusion. The project would not:

Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.

Explanation: N/A

Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation: N/A

Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases.

Explanation: N/A

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, such as those of the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health.

Explanation: N/A

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: All work would take place at the Castille Falls Fish Enumeration Facility within the Yakama Nation closed area and in coordination with Yakama Nation staff.

Based on the foregoing, this proposed project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts to any environmentally sensitive resource.

Signed:

John Vlastelicia
Environmental Protection Specialist