

Categorical Exclusion Documentation

A. Background

BLM Office: Prineville Field Office

NEPA Log #: DOI - BLM - OR – P040 – 2014 – 0022 - CX

Proposed Action Title: NOAA Fish Trap Relocation

Location: Bridge Creek – 13.5 miles NW of Mitchell – T10S, R20E, Sections 2 and 3.

Description of the Proposed Action:

The proposed action is to relocate the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) fish trap on Bridge Creek approximately 2,000 feet downstream from its current location. The site of the current trap has been creating problems by catching debris and backwatering the USGS gage, located just above the trap. This is resulting in erroneous data for the gaging station. In addition, a BLM point of diversion is located near the present location of the trap which is used to irrigate the Unsworth Fields on lower Bridge Creek. This diversion point is filling in with sediment because of the backwatering associated with the trap. The trap, in its present configuration, is also ineffective during higher flows, resulting in a loss of important data.

To remedy the above mentioned problems, the BLM is proposing to relocate the trap to a more desirable location downstream. The trap would be constructed at the tail-out of a pool and would be able to tie into a rock cliff on the east side of the creek. The west side of the creek presents an ample floodplain for higher flows to circumvent the trap without laying down the weir, and thus would continue to function during higher discharges.

The fish trap consists of two traps, placed on opposite ends of the channel, comprised of one inch steel or aluminum with a one inch gap between them. Across the middle of the channel is a picket panel of one inch flex pipe (spaced with a one inch gap), designed to lay flat at high flows. Extending out from the traps are "wings" of steel pickets that extend up to the high water mark (Figure 1). The BLM estimates that at normal water levels, the upstream trap would hold ten adult steelhead safely. The downstream trap would hold five adult steelhead safely. The weir would be installed in the spring each year, usually the beginning of March, and then would be removed once in-stream temperatures exceed 18 degree Celsius. The traps would be checked twice daily, in the morning and late afternoon, seven days a week.



Figure 1: - The fish trap at its current location on Bridge Creek.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: Two Rivers Resource Management Plan Record of Decision (RMP ROD)

Date approved (ROD): June 1986; and amended by the Record of Decision John Day River Management Plan, Two Rivers, John Day, and Baker Resource Management Plan Amendments, approved February 2001 (referred to herein as the "John Day River Plan ROD").

The proposed action is in conformance with the above plan, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following land use plan objective #3 on page 10: "...Manage all streams with fisheries or fisheries potential to achieve a good to excellent aquatic habitat condition."

C. Compliance with NEPA

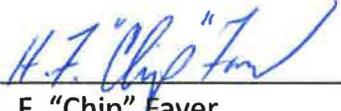
The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 2, Appendix 1 (June 21, 2005):

- 1.6_Nondestructive data collection (including field, aerial, and satellite surveying and mapping), study research, and monitoring activities.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The

proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply. See attached CX Extraordinary Circumstances Documentation checklist.

D. Signature

Authorizing official:  3/19/14
H. F. "Chip" Faver, Date
Central Oregon Resource Area Field Manager

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this review, contact: Mike McKay, Hydrologist, Prineville Field Office, 3050 NE 3rd Street, Prineville, OR 97754, telephone (541) 416-6774, mmckay@blm.gov.

CX EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION The proposed categorical exclusion action will:	YES	NO
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
Rationale: The proposed action is not predicted to have significant impacts on public health or safety.		
2.2 Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		X
<p>Rationale:</p> <p>The proposed project is not located in park or refuge lands; therefor the proposed action would not have a significant effect on any such lands. The action also does not fall in any Wilderness Study Areas, Wilderness, and there are no lands with wilderness characteristics present to be affected.</p> <p>The project proposal is not located in any national natural landmarks, national monuments, sole or principal drinking water aquifers, or prime farmlands and thus would have no significant effect on any such ecologically significant or critical areas. The project would be located within the channel of Bridge Creek and on its adjacent floodplain, however, any effects associated with the project would not be significant because the fish trap is currently located in the same channel and there is nothing about the new location that would cause the effects to the adjacent floodplain to be any different. The fish trap has been in place at its previous location for a number of years and while flooding may sometimes damage the trap itself, no adverse effects to the environment due to the presence of the trap have occurred.</p> <p>The proposed action would not have any significant effect on historic or cultural resources because the area is considered to have a very low potential for significant cultural resources. The area has very low potential for significant cultural resources because the proposed location for the project is located within the floodplain of Bridge Creek and is frequently inundated during high water and its associated sediment transport and deposition. Additionally, there would not be any significant effect to cultural resources because any cultural resources found during installation and operation of the trap would necessitate a halt and an authorized officer would be contacted so that the situation can be assessed to determine if the project could continue in such a way as to prevent significant effects on the cultural resource.</p>		

2.3	Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].		X
Rationale: The proposed project does not have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts with other resources. The effects associated with the project are generally well understood and agreed upon in that this particular trap has already been functioning for a number of years and numerous other traps are used for similar purposes throughout the country.			
2.4	Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
Rationale: The proposed project would not have any highly uncertain or potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks because the new proposed location of the trap has similar features to the trap's existing location minus the presence of a USGS gauge or diversion point. Additionally the trap would be setup the same way it is currently setup, thus the effects would be predictable and non-significant.			
2.5	Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: The proposed action does not set a precedent for future actions because future actions would go through their own evaluation processes and the decision pertaining to this proposal to move the fish trap only pertains to this proposal and not any future proposals that may be made.			
2.6	Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: There are no other actions occurring in the project area that would have a significant cumulative environmental effect.			
2.7	Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		X
Rationale: There are no properties associated with the National Register of Historic Places near the project site.			
2.8	Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		X
Rationale: Even though the fish trap would be on a segment of Bridge Creek that occasionally has Mid-Columbia Steelhead, a species which is listed as threatened, effects to Mid-Columbia Steelhead, or their habitat, would not be significant because the trap is designed to minimize its effect on both Steelhead and fish habitat. The trap will be checked on a regular basis so that captured fish can be recorded and released and the weir is designed to lay down during high flows to have a minimal impact on the stream and its floodplain.			
2.9	Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
Rationale: The proposed project would conform to all federal, state, and tribal laws.			
2.10	Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X
Rationale: The proposed project would have no impact on low income or minority			

populations.		
2.11 Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).		X
Rationale: The proposed project would not limit access or effect of physical integrity of sacred Indian sites on Federal lands because there are no known sacred sites, or access points to sacred sites, in or near the project area.		
2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		X
Rationale: The fish trap has been in place on Bridge Creek for a number of years and the previous location has not contributed to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area. The installation, repair, and operation of the fish trap would be done by hand and with walk-in portable gear. This low impact installation method would minimize the likelihood of the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeks or non-native invasive species.		