

Project title:	Osprey Nest Platform Installation, New Melones, CA		
Requested By:	Michael Prowatzke	Mail Code :	N0220 Phone: 916-353-4081
Date Submitted:	11-02-2018	Date Required:	11-13-2018

Description of the Project:

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, New Melones Lake unit (BOR) is proposing a new wooden pole and osprey nesting platform be installed to replace a platform previously removed by BOR. The old osprey nest platform was located on a wooden pole near water tanks at the Acorn Campground at the Tuttle town Recreation Area (Attachment 1, Figure 1). BOR has recommended that the new platform be installed approximately 230 feet from the previous platform site (Attachment 1, Figure 2). WAPA's action is limited to the construction and installation of the new pole and platform, and this site is outside of WAPA's existing ROW. According to BOR, work will occur in an area that has been previously disturbed by construction of Tuttle town Recreation facilities.

BOR has provided the following scope of work for WAPA's portion of the project:

- New pole will be 40-55 feet tall with existing nest mounted on top.
- Depth of new pole will be 6 1/2-7 feet and 24-28 inches in width.
- Dirt will be used for fill.
- Nest platform will be installed on new pole.
- A line truck with auger and bucket will be needed to install new pole, new nest platform, transfer nesting material from the old platform, and install a bird deterrent on old pole if necessary.

Location of the Project:

Near Acorn Campground, Tuttle town Recreation Area, Tuolumne County 37.986° N, 120.534° W (NAD83)

Attachments:

Work Order Number:

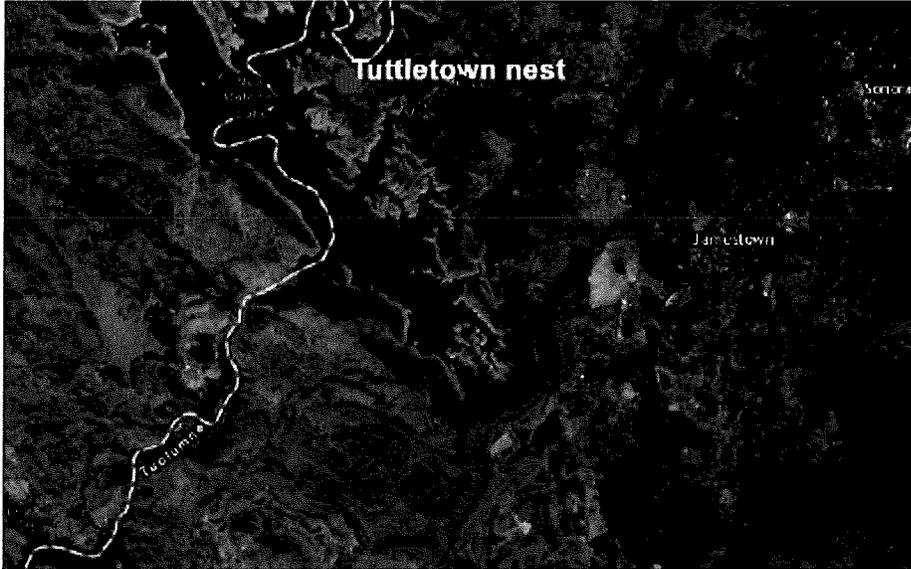


Figure 1: Osprey nest location

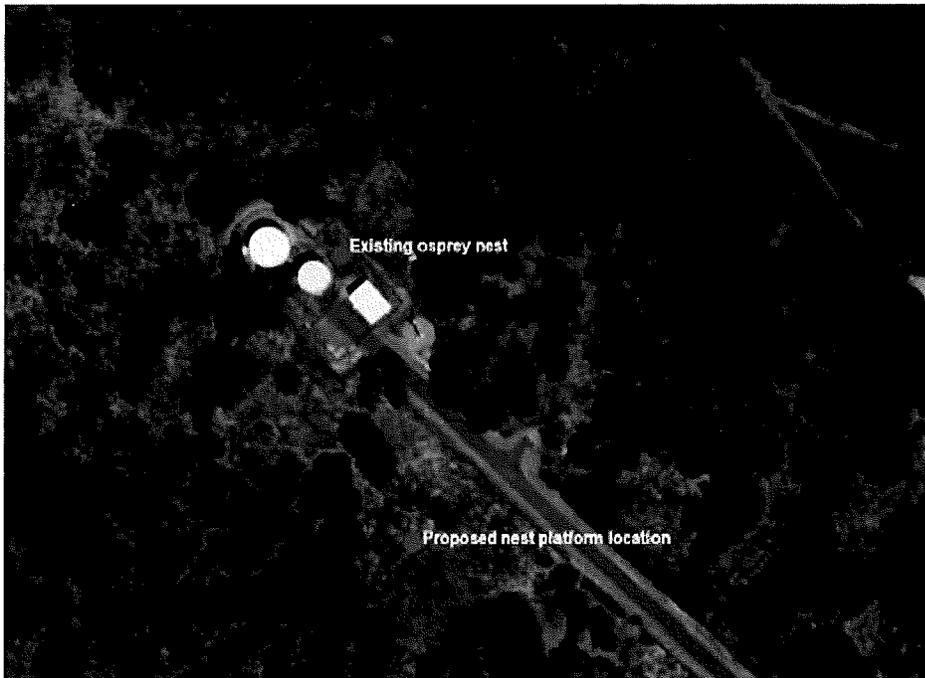


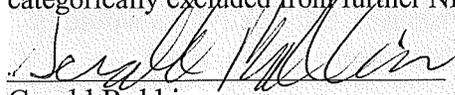
Figure 2: Tuttle town water tanks, former nest platform site, and proposed nest platform location

Action taken

Note: All Documentation is Attached

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Categorical Exclusion (CX) | <input type="checkbox"/> Minimization |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Integral Elements | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NEPA Attachment Sheet | |

Determination: Based on my review of information provided to me concerning the proposed action as NEPA Compliance Officer, I have determined that the proposed action meets the requirements for the categorical exclusion listed above. Therefore, I have determined that the proposed action may be categorically excluded from further NEPA review and documentation.



Gerald Robbins
Environment Supervisor

11/13/2018

Date

Approved

CC: Requestor:	File Code:	Assigned to:	Project #:	Environmental Specialist: Michael Prowatzke Date:
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Western Area Power Administration Sierra Nevada Region	CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION (CX) DETERMINATION	Project Number:
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Integral Elements

Project Title: Osprey Nest Platform Installation, New Melones, CA

Category of Action:

B1.20: Protection of cultural resources, fish and wildlife habitat

Small-scale activities undertaken to protect cultural resources (such as fencing, labeling, and flagging) or to protect, restore, or improve fish and wildlife habitat, fish passage facilities (such as fish ladders and minor diversion channels), or fisheries. Such activities would be conducted in accordance with an existing natural or cultural resource plan, if any.

Regulatory Requirements for a Categorical Exclusion Determination: The Department of Energy (DOE), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Procedures, 10 CFR 1021.410(b) require the following determinations be made in order for a proposed action to be categorically excluded (see full text in regulation).

1. The proposed action fits within a class of action listed in Appendixes A and B to Subpart D. For classes of actions listed in Appendix B, the following conditions are integral elements; i.e., to fit within a class, the proposal must not:
 - a. Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, including requirements of DOE and/or Executive Orders.
 - b. Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities, but may include categorically excluded facilities.
 - c. Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products preexisting in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or un-permitted releases; or
 - d. Adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources (including but not limited to those listed in paragraph B (4)).
2. There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal which may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal;
3. The proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(2)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211.

Results of Review: In accordance with DOE environmental regulations (10 CFR 1021), The Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) has reviewed the proposed action in terms of the level of NEPA review needed. Based on this review, WAPA has determined the proposal is encompassed within a class of action listed in Appendix B to Subpart D (10 CFR 1021.410) which do not require preparation of either an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment (EA).

The proposed action meets the above regulatory criteria and there are no significant adverse environmental effects associated with this action.



**Western Area Power Administration,
SIERRA NEVADA REGION
NEPA Attachment Sheet**

**Project
Number:**

PROJECT TITLE:

Osprey Nest Platform Installation, New Melones, CA

REVIEW ACTION AND RESULTS

WAPA proposes to assist BOR by constructing an osprey nest platform, attaching to a pole, and placing this pole in the ground. BOR has chosen the site to provide benefit to osprey and minimize effects on other known resources.

The nearby New Melones-Tuttletown lines and access roads have been surveyed for sensitive cultural and/or biological resources. Habitat was reviewed for potential to harbor special-status species. WAPA determined that no other sensitive species are anticipated in the areas. Cultural resources may be present in the general vicinity but are not likely to be disturbed by work.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The new pole and nest platform will be placed in a non-native grassland lying within a blue oak/mixed chaparral matrix.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The affected environment is not expected to hold special-status species other than the osprey which this project is expected to benefit.

AVOIDANCE MEASURES:

No avoidance measures are prescribed for this project.

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESULTS

Reclamation is proposing to install a bird nesting pole and platform near Acorn Campground. WAPA will be assisting Reclamation with their undertaking by installing the pole and platform at the location designated by Reclamation. The new pole is proposed to be the same height or higher than the power pole where the bird is now nesting. Work will occur in an area that has been previously disturbed by construction of Tuttletown Recreational Facilities.

This is an undertaking by Reclamation. WAPA is assisting at Reclamation's request. Reclamation is the lead agency for the purposes of complying with Section 106 of NHPA. Reclamation determined that this undertaking would not adversely affect historic properties. SHPO concurred with Reclamation's determination. Reclamation consulted with appropriate tribes who did not show an interest in the project.

WAPA agrees with Reclamation's determination of no adverse effect for this undertaking. Documentation on file.

This action is covered by WAPA's Programmatic Agreement, "Programmatic Agreement among the Western Area Power Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the California State Historic Preservation Officer Concerning Emergency and Routine Maintenance Activities at Western Facilities in California," revised 3/1/ 2010.

Include in Western's annual report

Minimization Measures Required

AIR QUALITY

The project to construct a nesting platform is located in Tuolumne County. Tuolumne County is out of attainment with the state ozone standard, and though it is in attainment with the current (0.075 ppm) federal ozone standard, this was lowered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2015 (to 0.070 ppm) and the California Air Resources Board has proposed to re-designate Tuolumne County as out of attainment with this new federal standard. Final designations for the new standard are required to be issued from EPA by the end of April 2018 by court order.

According to the Tuolumne County website, a project would have a significant impact on air quality if, pursuant to Tuolumne County Air Pollution Control District regulations, it would result in project-generated emissions in excess of the following thresholds:

Reactive Organic Gases (ROG) – 1,000 lbs/day or 100 tons per year.

Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_x) – 1,000 lbs/day or 100 tons per year.

Particulate Matter (PM₁₀) – 1,000 lbs/day or 100 tons per year.

Carbon Monoxide (CO) – 1,000 lbs/day or 100 tons per year.

This is a small project which will only utilize two items of heavy construction equipment, and is anticipated to be complete in one day. Air quality modeling has been performed for maintenance projects requiring more equipment and a much bigger footprint, and these have remained well under significance thresholds for air districts which are nearby and also out of attainment (Final Supplemental Analysis for WAPA Right of Way Maintenance in the San Joaquin Valley, 2018, Burleson Consulting). Therefore, it is not anticipated that this project will significantly impact air quality for Tuolumne County.

The Tuolumne County General Plan does call for mitigation measures on construction sites. This list of measures has been edited to reflect the particular requirements for the nesting structure placement project, and to incorporate Sierra Nevada Region's standard idling procedure:

On-site vehicle speed shall be limited to 15 miles per hour on unpaved surfaces.

Construction equipment shall be maintained and tuned at the interval recommended by the manufacturers to minimize exhaust emissions.

Equipment idling shall be kept to a minimum when equipment is not in use per the SNR idling policy.

Construction equipment shall be in compliance with the California Air Resources Board off-road and portable equipment diesel particulate matter regulations.