

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*

## **Finding of No Significant Impact**

## **Keswick, Shasta, and Whiskeytown Fault Trenching Study – Group 1**

**FONSI CGB-EA-2021-029**

Prepared by:

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## **Mission Statements**

The Department of the Interior conserves and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people, provides scientific and other information about natural resources and natural hazards to address societal challenges and create opportunities for the American people, and honors the Nation's trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities to help them prosper.

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

The mission of the Bureau of Land Management is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

The mission of the Western Area Power Administration is to safely provide reliable, cost-based hydropower and transmission to our customers and the communities we serve.

# Background

In July 2021 the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) prepared a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Keswick, Shasta, and Whiskeytown Fault Trenching Study – Group 1 and released the draft to the public on July 9, 2021 with comments due on July 23, 2021. On July 22, 2021 Reclamation extended the public comment period to July 30, 2021. The final EA includes updates to include a cultural monitor for TS13 and TS13.2 and contains an updated description of the cultural resources consultation.

Reclamation’s Technical Service Center proposes to conduct a study to obtain data from previously unstudied seismic faults in the Keswick, Whiskeytown, and Shasta areas within Shasta County and Tehama County. Reclamation proposes to obtain this data by conducting trenching along identified fault lines. Trenching will allow Reclamation to study a fault’s geologic seismic history, including the frequency and magnitude of historic seismic activity. Studying the trenches will involve visual observations and core sampling.

Reclamation is the lead for this federal action, with the Bureau of Land Management and the Western Area Power Administration as cooperating agencies.

## Alternatives Including Proposed Action

### No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not conduct trenching in order to study previously unidentified seismic faults in the Keswick, Whiskeytown, and Shasta area. Reclamation would not gain a better understanding of the seismic history of the area and would continue its operations in the nearby geographic area without this knowledge.

### Proposed Action Alternative

Under the Proposed Action, Reclamation would conduct trenching in order to study previously unidentified faults in the Keswick, Whiskeytown, and Shasta area. Reclamation would conduct visual observations and core sampling at each trench, gaining knowledge of the previous geologic seismic history of the area.

## Findings

Reclamation requested informal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on May 7, 2021 in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (17 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), and on June 7, 2021 received a concurrence letter on Reclamation’s determination that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the valley elderberry longhorn beetle, California red-legged frog, and western distinct population segment of the yellow-billed cuckoo.

Reclamation identified one historic property within the area of potential effect and applied the criteria of adverse effects for the proposed undertaking and found that it will result in no adverse

effects to historic properties pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.5(b). Pursuant to 36 CFR § 800, Reclamation, initiated consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer on a determination of no adverse effect. Pursuant to the regulations at 36 CFR §800.5(c) Reclamation completed the Section 106 process and found the proposed action would have no significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places.

Based on the attached EA Reclamation finds that the Proposed Action is not a major Federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The EA was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Department of the Interior Regulations (43 CFR Part 46). Following are the reasons why the impacts of the Proposed Action are not significant, with respect to the affected environment and degree of effects of the action (40 CFR 1501.3(b)).

1. The Proposed Action will not significantly affect public health or safety (40 CFR 1501.3(b)(2)(iii)).
2. The Proposed Action will not violate federal, state, tribal, or local law protecting the environment (40 CFR 1501.3(b)(2)(iv)).
3. The Proposed Action will not affect any Indian Trust Assets (512 DM 2, Policy Memorandum – July 2, 1993).
4. Implementing the Proposed Action will not disproportionately affect minorities or low income populations and communities (EO 12898 – February 11, 1994).
5. The Proposed Action will not 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 (EO 13007 – May 24, 1996 and 512 DM 3 – June 5, 1998).