



National Nuclear Security Administration Categorical Exclusion Determination Form



NEPA ID#: HEDLP 15-001-001

Proposed Action Title: Weather Support for the NNSA (NV-2017-014)

Program or Field Office: Nevada Field Office

Location(s) (City/County/State): Nevada National Security Site (NNSA), Nye County NV

Proposed Action Description:

The Air Resources Laboratory (ARL) Special Operations Research Division (SORD) provides a comprehensive meteorology program for the NNSA/NFO on the Nevada National Security Site (NNSA). This program includes the measurement of meteorological parameters near the surface (1 to 10 meters) and aloft (10 to 35,000 meters). Building 22-1, Desert Rock Meteorological Observatory, is the official National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather station for the NNSA. Wind, temperature, relative humidity, pressure, precipitation, solar and terrestrial radiation measurements are taken at this facility and at more than 20 locations on the NNSA. These data are collected and analyzed in support of the health, safety, environmental compliance, and emergency response of the NNSA for the NNSA/NFO.

Weather tower and equipment sites (e.g., weather stations, precipitation gage stations, lightning sensors, etc.) on the NNSA are visited to install/remove equipment and to perform regularly scheduled maintenance (PM) and repair work which originates from the Observatory. Each weather station/sensor location is visited a minimum of 2 times per year to perform semi-annual maintenance and calibration. Anything above 2 times per year would be to repair the sensors if something failed or upgrades were necessary. Most of the sites are located near main roads, but there are a few that require travel on established dirt roads. No off-road driving on undisturbed desert is required.

Upper air weather balloons are released from the Observatory and other NNSA locations to gather meteorological data aloft in support of special projects and experiments. Weather balloons are released in accordance with Federal Aviation Regulations, FAR 101, Subpart A, Section 101.7 and are coordinated, in advance, with the Operations Command Center (OCC) and the Air and Ground Operations Support (AGOS) to ensure safety of aviation assets. Building 22-1, Desert Rock Meteorological Observatory, serves as the backup weather forecast and consequence assessment team location for ARL/SORD.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

10 CFR 1021: B.1.19 Microwave, meteorological, and radio towers

For the complete DOE National Environmental Policy Act regulations regarding categorical exclusions including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see Subpart D of 10 CFR 1021. Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410(b): (See full text in regulation)

The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D.

There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

Based on my review of information conveyed to me and in my possession concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under DOE Order 451.1B), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class(es) of action and that other-regulatory requirements set forth above are met. Therefore, the application of a categorical exclusion is appropriate.

NEPA Compliance Officer: Carrie Stewart

Date Determined: January 9, 2017