



National Nuclear Security Administration Categorical Exclusion Determination Form



NEPA ID#: HEDLP 15-001-001

Proposed Action Title: RSL Helicopter Wildland Fire Bucket Training (NV-2017-022)

Program or Field Office: Nevada Field Office

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

Proposed Action Description:

The Remote Sensing Laboratory (RSL) in North Las Vegas, Nevada needs a place to conduct helicopter training for fighting wildfires. Training would be conducted in Area 22 at the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS). RSL pilots would train for fighting wildfires by practicing loading and releasing 100 – 300 gallon buckets of water suspended from helicopters. Helicopters would take off and land from Desert Rock Airport (DRA) in Area 22. The helicopters would fly up to an altitude of approximately 1,000 feet, but the water would most likely be dropped at a lower altitude, e.g. approximately 500 feet. The water reservoir would be maintained at Desert Rock Airport by NNSS Fire and Rescue.

Approximately one dozen releases would take place within Area 22 in unpopulated, open desert areas, on flat areas as well as hillsides. No infrastructure or workers would be affected. Activities would take place over several days. This training would be a recurring activity.

Area 22 is located in desert tortoise habitat. It was determined by the Ecological & Environmental Monitoring Department that the training activities would not affect biological resources, including the desert tortoise.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

10 CFR 1021: B1.2 Training exercises and simulations

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: 4/4/2017