



National Nuclear Security Administration Categorical Exclusion Determination Form



NEPA ID#: HEDLP 15-001-001

Proposed Action Title: Communications ROW N-82646 - Seismic and Meteorological Monitoring Activities (NV-2015-007)

Program or Field Office: Nevada Field Office

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

Proposed Action Description:

The action covered by this NEPA Checklist is to modify the BLM Communication Right-of-Way (ROW), N-82646, to include the existing access road from the Yucca Mountain Site to the crest of the mountain as well as the road on the crest to provide access to existing equipment adjacent to the crest road for servicing and maintenance purposes. This includes, but is not limited to seismic and meteorological monitoring equipment locations on the crest of Yucca Mountain. There is a main communications tower location, a OPS monitoring location, a meteorological tower, and an existing access road to the sites from the NNS. These are all existing facilities that are being grouped together under a single BLM Communication Right-of-Way N-82646

The current and projected needs of the NNSA, based on its commitment to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, requires the operational capability provided by maintaining seismic monitoring equipment in the ROW N-82646, Nye County, Nevada. The primary reason for maintaining seismic monitoring equipment in the same location is yield diagnostics through a system that uses statistics over many tests to substantiate data and reduce statistical errors. The credibility of the statistics relies on the stability of the recording stations, eliminating a source of error. In addition to providing useful data today, the recording of the tests keeps the seismic technicians and seismologists ready for a resumption of underground testing. Meteorological monitoring is necessary for a variety of reasons including hazard identification, emergency response, environmental permit maintenance, and work planning.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

10 Part 1021, Appendix B, 83.1 - Site characterization and environmental monitoring

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: Linda Cohn

Date Determined: 2/10/2015