



Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Categorical Exclusion Determination Form



Categorical Exclusion ID#: NV-2025-010

Proposed Action Title: State of Nevada License Renewal for Skull Mountain Communications Site

Program or Field Office: Nevada Field Office

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

Proposed Action Description

The National Nuclear Security Administration proposes to renew a license with the State of Nevada ("State") for a microwave communication site at Skull Mountain located in Area 25 of the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS). The State utilizes the land provided by the Department of Energy (DOE) at Skull Mountain to operate the communication site for point-to-point digital microwave to Sawtooth Mountain, Angel Peak, Mercury, and Mt. Schader, all in support of public safety communications in the region and statewide support of the Nevada Shared Radio System. The State provides to DOE a TI from Skull to Angel Peak, and OSO circuits to Mt. Brock, TV Hill, Sawtooth, Prospect Peak, Cave Mountain, and Highland Peak. The existing license issued by DOE to the state expires in 2025 and a NEPA Checklist is required for submittal as part of the renewal documentation.

The site consists of an 11 feet (ft) x17 ft communication shelter and a 6 ft x 9 ft battery shelter, occupying approximately a total area of 30 ft x 40 ft (1200 square ft). The State site was constructed as requested with the exception of the generator shelter, which was never installed. However, DOE provides diesel generator backup power to the site. All associated antennas were installed on the DOE tower. The State utilizes this 40 ft self-supporting tower for microwave and mobile communications antennas.

At the time of this review, activities involving ground disturbance (e.g., future construction) are not anticipated at the site. If future activities require ground disturbance, an additional NEPA review of those actions by NNSA/NFO would be required prior to the start of work.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied

10 CFR 1021: Appendix B, B1.19 Microwave, meteorological, and radio towers

Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021

For the complete DOE National Environmental Policy Act regulations regarding categorical



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exclusions, including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see Subpart D of 10 CFR 1021.

To find that a proposal is categorically excluded, DOE shall determine the following:

- (1) The proposal fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D;
- (2) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- (3) The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. 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 individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

The classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, include the following conditions as integral elements of the classes of actions. To fit within the classes of actions in Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph B(4) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B; (5) involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those of the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health.

NEPA Compliance Officer Determination

Based on my review of information conveyed to me and in my possession concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under NNSA NAP 451.1 and DOE P 451.1), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class(es) of action and I have reviewed the proposal for integral elements. I have determined that there are no extraordinary circumstances present and that the proposal has not been segmented to meet



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the definition of a categorical exclusion. Therefore, the application of a categorical exclusion is appropriate.

NEPA Compliance Officer: Patricia Gallo

Date Determined: March 17, 2025