



**U.S. Department of Energy  
Office of Legacy Management  
Categorical Exclusion Determination Form**



**Program or Field Office:** Office of Legacy Management

**Project Title and I.D. No.:** Routine Activities at the Site A/Plot M, Illinois, Decommissioned Reactor Site. LM # 52-11.

**Location:** Chicago, Illinois

**Proposed Action or Project Description:**

DOE proposes to conduct routine activities as needed at Site A/Plot M. The site is in the Palos Forest Preserve in Cook County, Illinois, 20 miles southwest of Chicago. The Forest Preserve District of Cook County owns the land. DOE is responsible for the radioactive materials buried onsite. Site A is a 19-acre area that contained experimental laboratories and nuclear reactor research facilities. Plot M, which is about 1,500 feet north of Site A, is a 150-foot-by-140-foot area that was used for the sealed burial of the two nuclear reactor shells, building debris, and radioactive wastes. There are 5 surface water sampling areas and 25 groundwater monitoring wells.

Site inspections are performed annually as part of the Long-Term Surveillance Plan in order to confirm the integrity of the protective structures, the monitoring wells, and site soil/vegetation, and to meet with owner representatives. Water monitoring and routine maintenance activities are contracted to Argonne National Laboratory and may occur during the annual site inspection or during quarterly water sampling events. Routine maintenance actions may include mulch-mowing in the Plot M area, minor erosion repair, monitoring well maintenance or component replacement, and efforts to improve site access and safety for members of the public who visit the site. No pesticides or fertilizers are applied to the site.

Maintenance activities or site visits may result in incidental amounts of solid waste (e.g., materials that have been replaced, packaging). Solid waste would be managed in accordance with applicable waste requirements and recycled whenever possible. Surface and groundwater sampling activities may result in the use of approximately 5 liters of surface water and 150 liters of groundwater. All activities would be conducted in accordance with applicable requirements and best management practices. Only negligible environmental concerns were identified during the evaluation of these actions, and all actions were found to be categorically excluded from further evaluation under the National Environmental Policy Act.

**Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:**

- B1.3 Routine maintenance
- B3.1 Site characterization and environmental monitoring (pertaining to surface and groundwater 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 Part 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

To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, 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 listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

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. This 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.

Based on my review of 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, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

*Gracy A. Ribeiro*  
**NEPA Compliance Officer:**

02/09/12  
**Date Determined:**