



# U.S. Department of Energy

## Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

Submit by E-mail

Proposed Action Title: Argonne National Laboratory - Non-neutron Transmutation of Used Nuclear Fuel

Program or Field Office: Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy

Location(s) (City/County/State): Lemont, IL, Upton, NY, Idaho Falls, ID, Cambridge, MA, Ann Arbor, MI, Berkeley, CA

Proposed Action Description:

Funding will support the project team's information gathering and analysis efforts to design a long-lived fission product (LLFP) transmutation using energetic photons and protons to reduce disposal impacts of nuclear waste by eliminating the need for a geologic-time-scale repository. Specifically, the project team will: 1) perform transmutation option studies and fuel cycle analyses to support the experimental demonstration of the proposed technology and 2) prepare a conceptual design of a national transmutation facility to transmute LLFPs recovered from the nuclear fleet, including the cost for assessment of economic benefit of the proposed technology by comparing it to direct disposal of the nuclear waste. If successful, transmutation technology could facilitate the building of a disposal repository, and contribute to expanding a commercially proven, dispatchable, zero-carbon nuclear energy to the future clean energy market.

The proposed project activities under this award are limited exclusively to intellectual, academic, or analytical activities. The project team will not conduct physical experiments, prototype fabrication, demonstration projects, or similar activities under this award.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

A9 - Information gathering, analysis, and dissemination

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.

NEPA Compliance Officer: **Approved via email**

Date Determined: 04/28/2022