

**DOE-ID NEPA CX DETERMINATION
Idaho National Laboratory**

SECTION A. Project Title: WRRTF Test Pad East Improvements

SECTION B. Project Description and Purpose:

Revision 1:

Research and Development activities at the WRRTF East Test Pad are expected to increase in the future and infrastructure improvements to the facility are needed to meet that demand. The approximately 800' long access road from the parking area at the end of McKinley Blvd to the improved test pad will be utilized much more than in previous years. The original ECP identified mowing a defensible barrier around the test pad but did not identify any mowing along the road to the test pad. Vegetation needs to be mowed down (15' to 20') on each side of the road to keep it from encroaching into the road, and to create a defensible space from wild fires. See highlighted area on Figure 1-1 below.



Figure 1-1. Access Road to be moved.

Original ECP:

N&HS would like to improve the existing test area east of WRRTF for the Wireless Test Bed. The test area is used to erect temporary antennae and towers in support of various projects. There is an existing unnamed gravel road which extends east of Tyler Blvd. The test pad is at the east end of the gravel road. Improvements would enhance safety by removing grass and brush, provide a stable level and compacted test area, and allow for trucks with trailers to better access the area (including during rain or snow conditions). By mowing and clearing the disturbed area, and then placing and leveling the gravel, the action will improve safety, soil erosion prevention, and fire defensible space. It is proposed to upgrade the existing test area to a gravel test pad (WRRTF Test Pad East), in a circular area configuration with a 200-foot diameter. Graveling (or at least mowing) an additional 30 feet outside of the circle diameter would create a fire defensible barrier for the test pad. Figure 1 shows the location and approximate size of the test pad.

Ground rods have already been placed in the test area but it is possible that additional ground rods may be necessary especially if the existing ones are damaged during the clearing and graveling activity.

Projects using this area will need to have separate environmental reviews.



Figure 1. Approximate location and size of the gravel test pad.

SECTION C. Environmental Aspects or Potential Sources of Impact:

Air Emissions

Removal of vegetation may result in the generation of fugitive dust. Emissions will result from the use of heavy equipment and trucks. These emissions are not regulated.

Discharging to Surface-, Storm-, or Ground Water

N/A

Disturbing Cultural or Biological Resources

Vegetation will be removed which includes a small amount of sagebrush. This area will need biological surveys. Completed Cultural Resource Review can be found in BEA-21-51.

Generating and Managing Waste

Some vegetation will be waste as a result of removal.

Releasing Contaminants

When fuel is used there is a potential to spill to air, water, or soil.

Using, Reusing, and Conserving Natural Resources

N/A

SECTION D. Determine Recommended Level of Environmental Review, Identify Reference(s), and State Justification: Identify the applicable categorical exclusion from 10 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) 1021, Appendix B, give the appropriate justification, and the approval date.

For Categorical Exclusions (CXs), the proposed action must not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environmental, safety, and health, or similar requirements of Department of Energy (DOE) or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment or facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA)-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that pre-exist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources (see 10 CFR 1021). In addition, no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal exist that would affect the significance of the action. In addition, the action is not

DOE-ID NEPA CX DETERMINATION
Idaho National Laboratory

“connected” to other action actions (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1) and is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1608.27(b)(7)).

References:

10 CFR 1021 Categorical exclusion B1.19 "Microwave, meteorological and radio towers".

Justification:

Project activities are consistent with CX B1.19 "Siting, construction, modification, operation, and removal of microwave, radio communication, and meteorological towers and associated facilities, provided that the towers and associated facilities would not be in a governmentally designated scenic area (see B(4)(iv) of this appendix) unless otherwise authorized by the appropriate governmental entity."

Is the project funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) Yes No

Approved by Jason L. Anderson, DOE-ID NEPA Compliance Officer on: 05/24/2022