



NEPA Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

Program or Field Office: U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Legacy Management (LM)

Project Title: Routine Monitoring and Maintenance Activities, Bronco, Colorado, Plowshares Program

Location: Bronco, Colorado, Plowshares Program

Proposed Action or Project Description:

The Bronco, Colorado, Site had two wells plugged and the surrounding area reclaimed in the summer of 2020. Reclamation work included plugging and abandoning the Colorado Core Hole No. 3 (CCH-3) and CCH-2 wells, soil stabilization, downed timber distribution, seed bed preparation, and broadcast seeding the area surrounding the well road and the road leading to the well pad. Current activities include inspection of the site and follow-up vegetation surveys to ensure that the area is meeting vegetation success criteria. These measures ensure that LM is meeting its commitment to mitigating risks for human health and the environment.

Site activities would include vegetation surveys for the CCH-2 and CCH-3 bore holes. Legacy Management Support (LMS) staff would walk from County Road 122 to the Bronco site following the former road. Vegetation surveys would be comprised of seven transect locations. Three transects are near the CCH-2 and CCH-3 bore holes while the other four are across the access road. Vegetation surveys utilize 6-inch metal stakes that would penetrate the ground by hand to hold transect tape in place. LMS staff would analyze plants along various intervals along the 50-meter transect tape.

Stormwater inspections may also take place. These inspections require LMS staff to examine drainages and best management practice effectiveness against sediment migration and erosion. General site maintenance may also be conducted during site visits, to include noxious weed management and bore hole maintenance. Any ground-disturbing activities would be of small scale and limited to the use of hand-powered tools (e.g., powered landscaping tools). The use of mechanized ground-disturbing equipment and tools would be excluded from this scope of work. To the extent possible, all vehicles onsite would stay on existing travel routes. Personnel may occasionally need to travel off-road in previously disturbed areas to conduct maintenance and inspection activities. The generation and management of trash and recycled material associated with site visits would be recycled or sent to a permitted landfill.

If required during proposed maintenance and monitoring activities, fueling of gas-powered hand tools or all-terrain vehicles would be performed in accordance with the *Routine Site Maintenance* (LMS-004) job safety analysis, using a 5-gallon approved fuel container with spill containment in place and a spill kit on hand.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

- A9 Information Gathering, Analysis, and Dissemination
- B1.3 Routine Maintenance
- B3.1 Site Characterization and Environmental Monitoring

For the complete DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations regarding categorical exclusions, including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see Subpart D of Title 10 *Code of Federal Regulations* Section 1021 (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

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.



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- 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 by the LM Director per DOE Policy 451.1), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified classes 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 Signature and
Determination Date**

JOYCE CHAVEZ Digitally signed by JOYCE CHAVEZ
Date: 2023.04.04 11:33:42 -06'00'
