



Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Categorical Exclusion Determination Form



Categorical Exclusion ID#: NV-2023-019

Proposed Action Title: Transport of Large Equipment

Program or Field Office: Nevada Field Office

Location(s) (City/County/State): Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque, New Mexico and Nevada National Security Site, Nye County, NV

Proposed Action Description

The U.S. Department of Energy proposes to transport large equipment (a transformer and ancillary equipment) from Sandia National Laboratories (SNL) in New Mexico to the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS). A SNL-approved transportation subcontractor (TC) would transport the equipment from Kirtland Air Force Base (AFB) in Albuquerque, NM, to the NNSS. The TC would transport the equipment from the Kirtland Gate at SNL through the Lathrop Wells Gate in Area 25 to the approved staging location in Area 26 of the NNSS. The NEPA review for transport of the equipment on SNL and U.S. Air Force (USAF) properties on Kirtland AFB was performed by Sandia National Laboratories and/or USAF. Associated, signed NEPA checklists will be stored in the project files.

The TC would follow an approved, predetermined route from Kirtland AFB to the NNSS. The proposed route is attached (Attachment 1); however, the final route would be dependent on Department of Transportation (DOT) permits and approvals, which would be identified in the TCs approved Transportation Plan. The TC would obtain all federal, state, and local permits required for this activity. The TC would coordinate with the appropriate authorities for an escort by law enforcement. There would be a review of the routes in advance to determine obstacles and coordinate with local municipalities and utility companies in each jurisdiction. Based on weather, routing may need to be adjusted after transport has begun. Personnel would travel ahead of equipment to raise power and communication lines and move streetlights and traffic signals, as needed. Any coordination with local municipalities would be identified prior to departure by the TC.

The TC would be staging the equipment (large transformer on a concrete pad and approximately six flatbed trucks with ancillary equipment [e.g., bushings, radiators]) at the Test Bed 2 location. A separate NEPA checklist, (NV-2023-008) was completed for the proposed staging of the equipment at the NNSS; a separate NEPA review will be required prior to operation and/or use of this equipment at the NNSS.

The TC would use a total of 8 tractor trucks with a specialized trailer to conduct the operation, with a combined weight with equipment of 1,000,000-1,100,000 lbs, and overall dimensions of 305 feet long x



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20 feet wide x 17.3 feet high. The transportation unit for the equipment would consist of a trailer with multiple axles (approximately 32 axles). Travel time is expected to take approximately 3 weeks from SNL to the NNSS, traveling at approximately 15 miles per hour.

The TC would be responsible for the certification of the equipment used in support of the transport. The TC would provide refueling operations with auxiliary tanks and have suitable equipment available in the event of equipment failure and/or emergencies. The TC would be responsible for maintaining the health and safety of personnel involved in the transportation of this equipment, following all applicable DOT and Occupational Safety and Health Administration guidelines. Transportation-related use of petroleum in vehicles and other support equipment would be the responsibility of the transportation contractor, in keeping with the agreed-upon specifications. No oil would be in any of the equipment when it is being transported or staged.

Based on the experience of the TC, damage to the transportation infrastructure (e.g., roads, bridges, traffic lights, etc.) in moving this equipment from Albuquerque to the NNSS is not expected. The Departments of Transportation in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Nevada are very thorough in approving permits for large loads like the proposed equipment. If there is a potential issue, the route would be changed. The actual weight on the road would be the same or less than the regular 5- and 6-axle loads per tire. The weight would be spread over the 305-foot length of the trailer and the 20-foot tandems that are considered dual lane.

The transportation of the equipment would be conducted on paved roads and highways with no offroad driving. To facilitate entry onto the NNSS at the Lathrop Wells Gate, the removal of concrete bollards would be necessary. Once on site, the equipment would be escorted by a pilot car to the destination at Test Bed 2 in Area 26. The proposed route information and final Transportation Plan, when available, will be maintained in the project files.

The TC safety plan is currently being approved by the states of Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, and Utah. All state permits will be approved before transporting the equipment.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied

10 CFR 1021, B1.30 Transfer Actions

Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021

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 1021.



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

NEPA Compliance Officer: Patricia Gallo

Date Determined: March 3, 2023