



NEPA Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

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

Project Title: Installation of Wildlife Drinking Water System at the Bluewater, New Mexico, Disposal Site

Location: Bluewater, New Mexico

Proposed Action or Project Description:

The DOE-LM is proposing to install a wildlife drinking water system, commonly referred to as a 'guzzler', to improve site conditions for an elk herd frequently observed at the Bluewater, New Mexico, Disposal Site located approximately nine miles northwest of Grants, New Mexico, in Cibola County. Proposed work would involve the installation of an approximate 500 to 850-gallon in-ground or aboveground (depending on geologic site conditions at time of install), drinking water reservoir water storage tank that would include a constructed rain catchment system roof to optimize rain collection. In addition to the guzzler, a wildlife camera would also be installed at the location of the guzzler to monitor the future activity of the on-site elk herd. The proposed action is in accordance with the Long-Term Surveillance Plan in keeping with responsible land steward practices and commitments made to local stakeholder such as the New Mexico Environment Department.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

- A1 Routine Business Actions
- A9 Information Gathering, Analysis, and Dissemination
- B1.20 Protection of Cultural Resources, Fish, and Wildlife Habitat
- 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.
- 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 1501.9(e)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.1(g)(3)), 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: 2024.04.02 15:53:35 -06'00'