



## NEPA Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

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

**Project Title:** Groundwater Profiling and Well Installation

**Location:** New Rifle, CO, Processing Site Institutional Control Boundary

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### Proposed Action or Project Description:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Legacy Management (LM) is proposing to install up to five new monitoring wells within the Institutional Control (IC) boundary to the southwest of the New Rifle Processing Site in Colorado. This work would consist of groundwater profiling work using a Geoprobe, installing new monitoring wells to better characterize plume extents, and installing surface water monitoring stations along the Colorado River. Work details include:

- Groundwater profiling would be conducted using a Geoprobe along three transects on the southwestern portion of the alluvial aquifer. Water would be analyzed for field parameters (dissolved oxygen, temp, specific conductivity, pH, etc.), major cations, anions, and the site contaminants of concern (arsenic, molybdenum, nitrate, selenium, uranium, and vanadium). LMS would complete this work. The work would not result in any permanent site features.
- Up to five monitoring wells would be installed within the IC boundary. The well locations would be determined based on data obtained from the initial phase of groundwater profiling. The wells would be installed by a subcontractor with LMS oversight using a drill rig with a hollow stem auger. Soil and groundwater samples may be taken during drilling for laboratory testing.
- Up to three surface water monitoring stations would be installed along the banks of the Colorado River to a depth that would monitor river level fluctuations even at low river level. The transducers would be in use until at least September 2023.

The proposed action location is owned by several private entities and by the City of Rifle. Access requirements or use permissions would be acquired. The groundwater profiling and surface water monitoring stations installation is proposed to be completed in the fall of 2022 and would take approximately three to four working days to complete. The monitoring wells would be installed after groundwater profiling is completed in 2022 and would take approximately five to six working days to complete.

Monitoring wells would be installed in accordance with the Colorado Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Division of Water Resources 2 CCR 402.2 Rules and Regulations for Water Well Construction, Pump Installation, Cistern Installation, And Monitoring and Observation Hole/Well Construction. The DNR would be involved in notifications and obtaining well permits for the monitoring wells. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment would approve the proposed plan prior to implementation and Colorado 811 would be contacted to ensure the work does not disturb any underground utilities.

No listed species would be harmed as a result of this project either because suitable habitat is not present or none of the proposed activities would have a significant affect. Best management practices would be followed to avoid any impacts to the natural environment.

The proposed work would only be conducted in areas that have been repeatedly disturbed in the recent past. LM determined in accordance with 36 CFR 800.4(d)(1) that there would be no historic properties subject to effect by the proposed work as none are present within the project area due to this prior disturbance. This information was submitted to the Colorado State Historic Preservation Officer on September 8, 2022. The SHPO's response on September 12, 2022, agreed that the finding of no historic properties affected is appropriate for the subject undertaking.

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### Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

- B3.1 Site Characterization and Environmental Monitoring
- B1.24 Property Transfers

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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



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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 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: 2022.09.30 08:15:32 -06'00'