



# U.S. Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management Categorical Exclusion Determination Form



**Program or Field Office:** Office of Legacy Management

**Project Title and I.D. No.:** Routine site activities and seismic survey at Gnome-Coach Site, New Mexico. LM #01-12

**Location:** Gnome-Coach Site, Eddy County, New Mexico

**Proposed Action or Project Description:**

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is responsible for monitoring contaminant levels in groundwater from three groundwater monitoring wells at the Gnome-Coach, New Mexico, Site. Two of the wells contain elevated levels of radionuclides and these samples are managed in accordance with the DOE Investigation-Derived Waste Plan. Activities related to the groundwater monitoring program include installing water access tubes and obtaining water levels each time the wells are sampled. Some or all of the wells would have a new well box installed and/or the well head would be modified. The top well casing would be surveyed. A potential future action may include downloading transducers. DOE monitors the wells on an annual basis.

In addition to routine site activities, a 2D seismic survey using a mini-vibroiseis source would be conducted along approximately 15 miles of developed and undeveloped roads; some cross-country travel is anticipated and the off-road travel is approved by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). All work would occur on land administered by the BLM. Approximately 1 mile of route would be traversed each day, and the project would be completed in 3 weeks by five field personnel. A cultural resources inventory of the proposed route identified six cultural resource sites. In these areas, the archaeological services contractor rerouted the proposed seismic line to avoid the sites and the reroutes were approved by BLM. No listed species would be affected by any of the proposed activities. If the seismic survey has not been completed by March 1, 2012, BLM would require that the seismic work be completed on a reduced work schedule (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.) to protect potential breeding or nesting birds.

Negligible impacts would be associated with the routine and seismic survey activities.

**Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:**

- B1.3: Routine maintenance
- B3.1 Site characterization and monitoring

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 Part 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 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 under DOE Order 451.1B), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class(es) of action, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

*Tracy S. Ribicco*  
NEPA Compliance Officer:

02/09/12  
Date Determined: