

## U.S. Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management National Environmental Policy Act Environmental Checklist

**Project/Activity:** Brush Clearing for Geoprobe Well Installation, Shiprock, NM, Disposal Site

### A. Brief Project/Activity Description

Tamarisk trees or limbs need to be removed to access and clear areas for installation of seven monitor wells on the San Juan River floodplain near Shiprock, NM. The trees vary between 2 and 25 feet in height. A backhoe would be used to clear the larger trees. When possible, hand methods or use of a chainsaw would be employed. An operator and two laborers would be able to complete clearing operations in 1 to 2 days. All materials would be removed to the side and left in place. Approximately 100 to 200 square feet would be cleared around each well and in several locations to provide access for a small truck-mounted Geoprobe rig.

An environmental checklist was completed previously (LM # 05-09) that evaluated impacts related to installing the wells.

### B. Environmental Concerns

Evaluate the following elements and indicate by checking "yes" or "no" if any phase of the project/activity would result in a change or impact that is subject to regulatory permits, controls, or plans or that would require additional evaluation. If the "yes" column is checked, provide a brief explanation below and attach sheets with additional detail as necessary or appropriate.

Element	Yes	No	Element	Yes	No
Air emissions/air quality	X		Exposure/impacts to public or workers		X
Noise	X		Need for public awareness/involvement		X
Solid waste generation	X		Transportation/traffic control required		X
Mixed waste management		X	Access to/use of DOE property	X	
Chemical storage on site		X	Visual resources impacted		X
Pesticide/herbicide use		X	Cultural/archaeological resources present	X	
Toxic substances management		X	Wetland/floodplain impacted	X	
Regulated quantities of petroleum used or stored on site		X	Protected species present: federal, state, or tribe listed		X
Radioactive materials/soils		X	Migratory birds breeding or nesting		X
Surface (ground) disturbance	X		Wild/scenic rivers impacted		X
Surface water use/contamination		X	Prime/unique farmlands present		X
Surface water quality		X	Groundwater use/contamination		X
Groundwater quality affected		X	Other considerations		X

### C. Explanation and Qualification of All "Yes" Responses

Air emissions/air quality: The use of a backhoe to remove larger trees would result in temporary minor fugitive dust. Dust would be present during the short-term use of equipment only.

Noise: Noise levels would be elevated above background levels during operation of heavy equipment.

Solid Waste Generation: Brush would be pushed to the side and left in place.

Surface (ground) disturbance: Minor ground disturbance would be associated with removal of the tamarisk. An estimated area of 100 to 200 square feet would be cleared around each well location. An additional small area would be cleared to access several of the wells.

Access to/use of DOE property: DOE has an agreement in place with the Navajo Nation to conduct necessary operations on their land.

Cultural/archaeological resources present: Per verbal confirmation (dated 11/30/09) with the Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Officer, cultural resource inventories and formal Section 106 consultation surveys are not required on the active floodplain of the San Juan River.

Wetland/floodplain impacted: Proposed actions would occur outside of jurisdictional wetlands, and therefore no permits are required. A prior floodplain assessment included vegetation removal actions on the floodplain. No additional permitting would be required.

#### D. Eligibility/Conditions

The proposed action fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix A or B to Subpart D of Title 10 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 1021 (10 CFR 1021); DOE has determined that these classes of actions do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment (see 10 CFR 1021.410). There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposed action, and the proposed action is not "connected" to other actions with potentially significant impacts. Finally, the action is not related to other proposed actions with cumulatively significant impacts and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211.

#### E. Recommendation

The proposed action to remove tamarisk trees around seven monitor well locations and also to provide access from an existing road to the well locations would be considered categorically excluded from further environmental evaluation under 10 CFR 1021, Appendix B to Subpart D, B1: Categorical exclusions applicable to facility operation B1.3 Routine maintenance activities, including vegetation control.

☒ Meets Criteria

☐ Does Not Meet Criteria

☐ Unsure

#### F. NEPA Determination

The scope of actions proposed under Section A of this Environmental Checklist, and the information relevant to the potential for environmental impacts in Section B have been reviewed, and the following has been determined:

☒ The proposed actions meet the criteria for categorical exclusion.

☐ The proposed actions do not meet the criteria for categorical exclusion; therefore, I recommend that the LM NEPA Planning Board be convened based on my recommendation (see attached rationale) to complete:

☐ an Interim Action

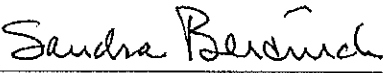
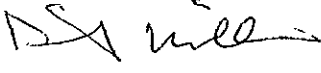


☐ an Environmental Assessment

☐ an Environmental Impact Statement

☐ a Supplemental Analysis

## Concurrences

**Project/Activity:** Brush Clearing for Geoprobe Well Installation, Shiprock, NM, Disposal Site

<b>LM Site Name</b> Shiprock Disposal Site	<b>LM Site Program</b> UMTRA Title I	
<b>Contractor</b> <b>NEPA Coordinator</b> Sandra Beranich	<b>Signature</b> 	<b>Date</b> 12/01/09
<b>Contractor Site Manager</b> David Miller	<b>Signature</b> 	<b>Date</b> 12/2/09
<b>LM Site Manager</b>  Tracy Ribeiro	<b>Signature</b> 	<b>Date</b> 12/2/09
<b>LM NEPA Compliance Officer</b> Tracy Plessinger	<b>Signature</b> 	<b>Date</b> 12/14/09

Distribution upon signature:

T. Plessinger, LM NEPA Compliance Officer

T. Ribeiro, LM Site Manager

S. Beranich, Stoller NEPA Coordinator

D. Miller, Stoller Site Manager

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