U.S. Department of Energy
Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

Submit by E-mail

Proposed Action Title: Installation of Supplemental Ventilation System to support underground activities at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant

Program or Field Office: Carlsbad Field Office

Location(s) (City/County/State): Carlsbad/Eddy/New Mexico

Proposed Action Description:

The proposed action is to install and operate a supplemental ventilation system (SVS) as an upgrade to improve the existing WIPP Underground Ventilation System. Supplemental ventilation will facilitate some underground activities such as mining of panel 8, performing maintenance activities, drilling, bolting and salt handling in some areas of the underground. The purpose of the SVS is to provide additional intake air flow of about 130,000 +/- 8,000 cubic feet per minute to the uncontaminated portion of the underground drifts referred to as the north and construction air circuits. The use of SVS will enhance worker safety by providing supplemental ventilation to the north and construction air circuits to safely operate diesel equipment, continue to isolate uncontaminated air circuits from potentially contaminated air circuits, and minimize dust particulate loading on the HEPA filters. Dust particulate loading of HEPA filters will be minimized since the construction air split will take clean air from the surface, then channel clean air through the north and construction air circuits and then it will exhaust salt dust laden air directly through the Salt Handling Shaft. The SVS consists of one skid-mounted vane axial fan, located in the underground in the south-90 drift near the base of the Air Intake Shaft. Implementation of the SVS includes installation of several bulkheads, relocation of some bulkheads and equipment and upgrade of some equipment/instrumentation. The use of underground fans to supplement existing underground air ventilation, installing and relocating bulkheads and reconfiguring underground air ventilation paths is a common practice in mines and in the underground at WIPP. SVS will not result in a significant change in the expected life, design capacity, or function of the underground air circuits during operations.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

B2.5 - Facility safety and environmental improvements

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.

NEPA Compliance Officer: GEORGE BASABILVAZO Digitally signed by GEORGE BASABILVAZO DN: c=US, o=U.S. Government, ou=Department of Energy, cn=GEORGE BASABILVAZO, 0.9.2342.19200300.100.1.1=89001000513928 Date: 2017.04.17 13:07:15 -06'00' Date Determined: 04/13/2017

(This form will be locked for editing upon signature)