



Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Determination Form



Proposed Action Title: Categorical Exclusion for Domestic Atmospheric Radiation Measurement Campaigns- Eastern Pacific Cloud Aerosol Precipitation Experiment (EPCAPE)

Program or Field Office: Los Alamos Field Office

Location(s) (City/County/State): United States

Proposed Action Description

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Office of Science, in conjunction with Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), conduct atmospheric and environmental research and monitoring activities by deploying mobile facilities and equipment (including weather balloons) for 1- to 2-year campaigns at locations throughout the United States. DOE and Triad National Security, LLC, the operating contractor for LANL, propose to deploy equipment and launch weather balloons to support the Eastern Pacific Cloud Aerosol Precipitation Experiment (EPCAPE). This project will characterize the extent, radiative properties, aerosol interactions, and precipitation characteristics of stratocumulus clouds in the Eastern Pacific year-round at two coastal locations owned and managed by the University of California San Diego Scripps Institute of Oceanography: the Scripps Pier and Scripps Mt. Soledad sites in La Jolla, California. To facilitate gathering data, the project plans to launch weather balloons at a rate of two per day, plus an additional 360 balloons during the spring and summer months. An additional six or so weather balloon launches are planned during project setup. In total, the project proposes to launch roughly 1,100 weather balloons over the 1-year life of the EPCAPE campaign. Activities would be designed in conformance with applicable regulatory requirements and use of best management practices. Following the data collection period and each site would be restored to pre-project conditions.

NEPA Analysis

The proposed action as described above meets the conditions that are integral elements of 10 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B3.1 *Site characterization and environmental monitoring* and B3.2 *Aviation activities*. This determination is made pursuant to the 42 U.S. Code § 4321 et seq., the U.S. Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the NEPA [40 CFR 1500-1508], and the DOE NEPA Implementing Procedures [10 CFR 1021].

NEPA Compliance Officer Determination

Based on my review of information conveyed to me and in my possession concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer as authorized under NNSA Policy 451.1 *National Environmental Policy Act Compliance Program* and DOE Policy 451.1 *National Environmental Policy Act Compliance Program*, I have determined that the proposed action fits within the class of actions specified at 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B3.1. and B3.2. I have determined that there are no extraordinary circumstances present and that the proposal has not been segmented. I approve the proposed project under 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B3.1 and B3.2.

NEPA Compliance Officer:

Date Determined: