

U.S. Department of Energy
Categorical Exclusion Determination
Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management



SAPPHIRE GAS SOLUTIONS
DOCKET NO. 24-57-LNG

PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION: Sapphire Gas Solutions (Sapphire) filed an application (Amendment Application) with the Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management (FECM) on March 28, 2025, pursuant to section 3 of the Natural Gas Act (NGA)¹ and 10 CFR Part 590 of the Department of Energy’s (DOE) regulations.

In the Amendment Application, Sapphire seeks to amend its existing long-term authorization to export domestically produced liquefied natural gas (LNG) under DOE/FECM Order No. 5186.² Under Order No. 5186, in relevant part, Sapphire is authorized to export LNG in approved International Organization for Standardization (ISO) containers transported by barge in a volume equivalent to 51.75 billion cubic feet (Bcf) per year (Bcf/yr) of natural gas, to any country with which the United States does not have a free trade agreement (FTA) requiring national treatment for trade in natural gas, and with which trade is not prohibited by U.S. law or policy (non-FTA countries).³ DOE determined that these exports qualify as “small-scale natural gas exports” under DOE’s regulations.⁴ Sapphire is currently authorized to source the LNG for export from any of the 16 facilities listed in Appendix C of Sapphire’s original application.

In the Amendment Application, Sapphire asks DOE to amend Order No. 5186 to add 3 facilities to its list of approved facilities, for a total of 19 facilities from which it would be authorized to source LNG for its small-scale exports. Sapphire lists these 19 facilities in Appendix C of its Amendment Application. Sapphire further requests that its authorization include exports from the Port of Houston, Texas and Port Everglades, Florida, in addition to the Port of Miami, Florida, from which it states its currently-authorized exports originate.

DOE’s proposed action is to grant the requested amendment to Order No. 5186. If granted, Sapphire will be authorized to export LNG sourced from any of the 19 facilities identified in Appendix C of the Amendment Application, and to export from the Port of Houston, Texas, and Port Everglades, Florida, in addition to the Port of Miami, Florida, subject to certain terms and conditions set forth in both Order No. 5186 and the DOE order granting the Amendment Application.

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION APPLIED: B5.7 - Export of natural gas and associated transportation by marine vessel

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.

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

¹ 15 U.S.C. § 717b.

² *Sapphire Gas Solutions*, DOE/FECM Order No. 5186, Docket No. 24-57-LNG, Order Granting Long-Term Authorization to Export Liquefied Natural Gas to Free Trade Agreement Nations, and Long-Term Authorization for Small-Scale Exports of Liquefied Natural Gas (Oct. 21, 2024).

³ 15 U.S.C. § 717b(a). Under Order No. 5186, Sapphire is also authorized to export LNG in the same volume to FTA countries under NGA section 3(c), 15 U.S.C. § 717b(c), on a non-additive basis. Sapphire’s requested amendment to the FTA portion of Order No. 5186 is not subject to this categorical exclusion determination.

⁴ 10 C.F.R. §§ 590.102(p), 590.208(a).

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, 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.

Signature: _____

Date Determined: _____

Brian Lavoie, NEPA Compliance Officer, Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management