



## NEPA Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

**Program or Field Office:** U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Legacy Management (LM)

**Project Title:** Disposal Cell Cover Enhancement Pilot Project, Phases II & III

**Location:** Rifle, Colorado, Disposal Site

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### Proposed Action or Project Description:

LM is proposing to conduct Phases II & III of the Disposal Cell Cover Enhancement Pilot Project at the Rifle Disposal site to address the potential long-term implications of pore water accumulating within the disposal cell. The pilot study would offer insights into a potential mid-to-long-term remedy to improve water balance performance by retrofitting the existing cover using enhanced natural processes (i.e., soil water storage, vegetation, evaporation, and transpiration).

The project would include implementing and monitoring different disposal cell cover enhancement approaches. The project would be implemented in three phases. This review only addresses those activities being conducted under Phases II and III. Phase I was assessed in a separate environmental review. Phase II of fieldwork would involve adding a gravel-sized rock and soil admixture to the existing rip rap layer on a 2.5-acre test plot on the disposal cell. Phase III of fieldwork would involve revegetation of two of the test plots; one plot with the soil admixture applied during Phase II of the work and one plot with no soil added.

This proposed action would fulfill the general license requirements in Title 10 Code of Federal Regulations Section 40.27 (10 CFR 40.27) that identifies LM as the long-term custodian of the site and would be performed in a manner that protects human health and the environment.

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### Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

- B1.3 Routine maintenance
- B3.1 Site characterization and environmental monitoring
- B1.33 Stormwater runoff control

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For the complete DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations regarding categorical exclusions, including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see Subpart D of Title 10 *Code of Federal Regulations* Section 1021 (10 CFR 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 1501.9(e)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.1(g)(3)), 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 by the LM Director per DOE Policy 451.1), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified classes of action, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.



## **NEPA Categorical Exclusion Determination Form**

**NEPA Compliance Officer Signature and  
Determination Date**

**JENNIFER  
O'BRIEN**

Digitally signed by  
JENNIFER O'BRIEN  
Date: 2025.07.15  
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