



National Nuclear Security Administration Categorical Exclusion Determination Form



NEPA ID#: HEDLP 15-001-001

Proposed Action Title: Skull Mountain Microwave Communications Site (NV-2015-011)

Program or Field Office: Nevada Field Office

Location(s) (City/County/State): Nevada National Security Site (NNSS), Nye County NV

Proposed Action Description:

The National Nuclear Security Administration proposes to renew a license with the State of Nevada ("State") for a microwave communication site at Skull Mountain, located in Area 25 of the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS). The State utilizes the land provided by the Department of Energy (DOE) at Skull Mountain to operate the communication site for point-point digital microwave to Sawtooth Mountain, Angel Peak, Mercury, and Mt. Schader, all in support of public safety communications in the region and statewide support of the Nevada Shared Radio System. The State provides to DOE a T1 from Skull to Angel Peak, and DSO circuits to Mt. Brock, TV Hill, Sawtooth, Prospect Peak, Cave Mountain, and Highland Peak. A license was issued in May, 2005 between the State and DOE for the communication towers. It expires in 2015 and a NEPA Checklist is required for submittal as part of the renewal documentation.

The site consists of an 11'x17' communication shelter and a 6'x9' battery shelter, occupying approximately a total area of 30'x40' (1200 sq ft). The State site was constructed as requested with the exception of the generator shelter, which was never installed. However, DOE did and still does provide diesel generator backup power to the site. All associated antennas were installed on the DOE tower. The State utilizes this 40' self-supporting tower for microwave and mobile communications antennas. There are no plans for any future construction at this communication site. Preventive maintenance is performed on the generator several times per year, requiring that the rough and rocky access road be bladed once or twice per year. Blading is restricted to the existing road.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

CFR 10 part 2021 - 81.19- Microwave tower operation

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 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.

Based on my review of information conveyed to me and in my possession concerning 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 and that other-regulatory requirements set forth above are met. Therefore, the application of a categorical exclusion is appropriate.

NEPA Compliance Officer: Linda Cohn

Date Determined: 2/12/2015