

AMES LABORATORY NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT PLAN

The Ames Laboratory National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Plan shall ensure that all Division, Institute and Program Directors and Department Managers properly address environmental concerns involving their research and/or operational activities. The plan will also ensure environmental concerns of site investigation and restoration activities are addressed.

1.1 APPROVAL RECORD

- Reviewed by: Document Control Coordinator (Hiliary Burns)
- Approved by: ESH&A Manager (Sean Whalen)
- Approved by: Legal Counsel (Barbara Biederman)
- Approved by: Assistant Director for Scientific Planning (Cynthia Jenks)
- Approved by: Associate Laboratory Director for Sponsored Research (Deb Covey)
- Approved by: Chief Operations Officer (Mark Murphy)
- Approved by: Chief Research Officer (Duane Johnson)
- Approved by: Deputy Director (Thomas Lograsso)
- Approved by: Director (Adam Schwartz)

The official approval record for this document is maintained in the Training & Documents Office, 105 TASF.

2.0 REVISION/REVIEW INFORMATION

The revision description for this document is available from and maintained by the author.

3.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this plan is to ensure that proposed actions at Ames Laboratory are reviewed in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the Department of Energy (DOE). Applicable CEQ regulatory guidance is in 40 CFR 1500 through 1508, and DOE specific NEPA is found in 10 CFR 1021. Research activities and site investigation and restoration activities will be conducted in such a manner that worker and public safety, including protection of the environment, is given the highest priority. The Laboratory will comply with all applicable federal and state environmental laws and regulations.

3.1 Definitions

Categorical Exclusion (CX): Categorical Exclusions are a class of actions, as defined in CEQ Regulations in 40 CFR 1508 and listed in Section D, Appendix A, of the DOE NEPA guidelines (10CFR 1021), that do not individually or cumulatively have significant impact on the human environment and for which neither an Environmental Assessment (EA) nor an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is normally required.

NEPA Environmental Evaluation Notification Form (Form CH-560): The Environmental Evaluation Notification Form is a DOE comprehensive checklist that is used by the Laboratory's NEPA Coordinator to determine the proposed activity's impact on the environment. The checklist may also be used to support a determination for a CX or for a recommendation to the Secretarial Officer in support of a preliminary proposal form (where authority has not been delegated to the Chicago Operations Office Manager). **Environmental Assessment (EA):** An Environmental Assessment is a document defined in 40 CFR 1508 that assesses whether a proposed action is a "major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment," and serves as the basis for determining whether to prepare an EIS or a Finding of No

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Significant Impact (FONSI).

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): An EIS is a document defined in 40 CFR 1508 and prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 102(2)(C) of NEPA for DOE, the CEQ regulations, and the DOE NEPA guidance. The EIS thoroughly details the environmental impacts of a proposed action.

ES&H Hazard Identification Checklist: This is an internal form that helps the Project Manager and ESH&A identify hazards associated with the proposed activity.

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI): A FONSI is a document defined in 40 CFR 1508.13 of the CEQ Regulations. It is prepared to record a decision that the environmental impacts of a proposed activity considered in an EA will not have a significant effect on the environment, and that an EIS is not required for the proposed action.

Preliminary Proposal Form: The principal investigator completes this form using a web application. The form contains a concise description of a proposed activity and discussion of relevant potential environmental impacts intended to assist ESH&A and DOE Chicago Operations Office (DOE-CH) in determining the appropriate level of NEPA documentation needed for a proposed activity.

Work Authorization System (WAS): A comprehensive document describing research proposals and continuations, and requesting funding for the described work. NEPA and safety and health issues are addressed in the WAS for each project individually.

4.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Line management is responsible for assuring minimal environmental impact by the Laboratory's activities and for implementing the Laboratory's environmental protection requirements. All employees are responsible for performing their work in a manner that complies with established environmental protection requirements. Employees are encouraged to suggest improvements in the environmental protection program. They have the right to bring to the attention of their supervisors or ESH&A any condition they believe is environmentally unsound or out of compliance with applicable environmental laws, regulations or orders. This plan applies to all employees at the main campus, the Applied Science Complex (ASC), the Sensitive Instrument Facility and all spaces rented by the Laboratory.

4.1 Director:

The Director shall approve the Laboratory's NEPA plan to ensure that environmental factors are adequately considered along with other action considerations in the decision making process.

4.2 ESH&A Manager:

The ESH&A Manager has delegated the authority for signatory approval of NEPA documentation to the Laboratory's NEPA Coordinator, the Environmental Specialist, and the ESH&A Assistant Manager.

4.3 Division, Institute and Program Director and Department Manager (DD/ID/PD/DM):

Division, Institute and Program Directors and Department Managers are responsible for being knowledgeable of and implementing applicable environmental protection policies, procedures and directives. They are responsible for taking actions as required to assure

that personnel and operations they supervise comply with requirements. This includes taking positive action to determine and reduce, to as low as reasonably achievable, the environmental impact associated with their activities. They will ensure that environmental factors are adequately considered along with other action considerations in the decision making process, and inform employees of the environmental hazards associated with their work.

4.4 Group Leader:

If required by the NEPA Coordinator or the ESH&A Assistant Manager, the Group Leader shall prepare, sign and date an environmental evaluation form for each applicable activity. They shall initiate and coordinate necessary environmental documentation, reviews, and permit applications during the appropriate phases of action development. They shall assess any potential environmental impacts and develop suitable mitigation measures to minimize these impacts. They shall coordinate the applications for any environmental permits through the ESH&A office, and provide the NEPA Coordinator with sufficient documentation in a timely manner so as not to delay the proposed action.

4.5 Ames Laboratory NEPA Coordinator:

The Ames Laboratory NEPA Coordinator, the Environmental Specialist, shall provide the Group Leader with assistance concerning environmental factors that should be considered in action planning and execution. The NEPA Coordinator shall keep the ESH&A Manager advised of all NEPA activities. The NEPA Coordinator or ESH&A Assistant Manager shall review each preliminary proposal form and determine if the proposed activity falls under one of the following Laboratory CX's: 1) "Bench-Scale Research Projects and Conventional Laboratory Operations" or 2) "Renovations and Maintenance Activities for Buildings, Structures and Equipment". In coordination with the ESH&A Manager, the Coordinator shall advise the Group Leader and the applicable DD/ID/PD/DM of noncompliance with applicable laws and regulations, and Ames Laboratory or DOE policies.

The Coordinator shall conduct reviews of the environmental evaluations for accuracy and completeness, and sign, date and transmit them to DOE-Chicago Operations Office. The NEPA Coordinator shall process and coordinate all necessary environmental permit applications through the DOE-Chicago Operations Office, and shall transmit DOE NEPA determinations and information requests to the appropriate Project Manager. The ESH&A Office shall maintain environmental documentation for all actions, including NEPA documentation in a suitable format for compliance auditing.

4.6 ESH&A Assistant Manager:

The ESH&A Assistant Manager shall assume the duties of the NEPA Coordinator in their absence and shall have signature authority as delegated by the ESH&A Manager.

4.7 Budget Officer:

The Budget Officer will notify ESH&A when new funding is received for new and/or significantly modified research activities.

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5.0 PREREQUISITE ACTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

All new or continuing activities, including projects, programs, and activities entirely or partly financed, assisted, conducted, regulated or approved by DOE shall require NEPA evaluation prior to commencement of the proposed activity. Each work proposal shall be identified with one of the four Work Authorization Systems (WAS) categories. If NEPA documentation needs to be prepared for DOE approval, it shall result in a categorical exclusion (CX), an environmental assessment (EA), or environmental impact statement (EIS).

6.0 PROGRAM/POLICY/PROCEDURE INFORMATION

6.1 NEPA Policy

It is the policy of Ames Laboratory to conduct all its activities in an environmentally safe manner. This will be accomplished through formal reviews and evaluations at appropriate levels of the organizational structure.

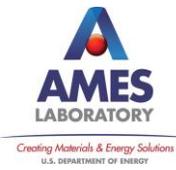
6.2 NEPA Procedure

The NEPA Coordinator or Assistant ESH&A Manager should be contacted during the preliminary proposal stage of all proposed activities. Work Authorization Systems (WAS) submissions, along with the [ES&H Hazard Identification Checklist](#), are reviewed by the NEPA Coordinator and/or ESH&A Assistant Manager. The preliminary proposal form is reviewed by the NEPA Coordinator and/or the assistant ESH&A Manager. The DOE-CH NEPA Compliance Officer will be consulted as needed by the NEPA Coordinator. The NEPA Coordinator will provide guidance on the NEPA review process and on preparation of the environmental evaluation form, if required, to the appropriate personnel.

If the proposed activity does not fall under one of the Laboratory's CXs, as determined by the NEPA Coordinator, the Group Leader of the proposed activity must fill-out DOE's environmental evaluation form (Form CH-560, See Appendix A). The NEPA Coordinator will assist in filling out this form to ensure completion and accuracy. When the environmental evaluation has been satisfactorily prepared, the NEPA Coordinator will sign and date the form and transmit it to the DOE-CH NEPA Compliance Officer.

The environmental evaluation is reviewed by DOE-CH for accuracy and completion. If the environmental form is found to be deficient in any way, the NEPA Coordinator will be requested by DOE-CH to obtain the additional information from the Group Leader. DOE's determination as to the level of NEPA documentation (i.e. CX, EA, or EIS) required for the proposed action is transmitted to the Ames Laboratory's NEPA Coordinator. DOE-CH has authority to approve CX's and some EA's. Upon receipt of the official notification from DOE-CH, the NEPA Coordinator notifies the Group Leader and the appropriate DD/ID/PD/DM. Upon receipt of official notification from DOE-CH of a CX determination, the approved activity may proceed. If an EA or EIS is determined to be necessary, the Group Leader must respond to the DOE request by preparing the document and submitting it to DOE via the NEPA Coordinator. After a period of review and document on EA or EIS, DOE will notify the NEPA Coordinator of the final NEPA decision. The NEPA Coordinator will notify the Group Leader and appropriate DD/ID/PD/DM of DOE's final decision.

An additional step in the process at Ames Laboratory is supportive to the NEPA procedure. The Readiness Review ([Procedure 10200.010](#)) of a new activity addresses



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safety, health, and environmental concerns. The Group Leader identifies any hazards associated with the proposed activity. ESH&A staff meets to discuss the concerns and assign a lead specialist. The lead specialist works with the activity supervisor to resolve safety and environmental concerns from project proposal, equipment procurement, testing and operation of the new activity.

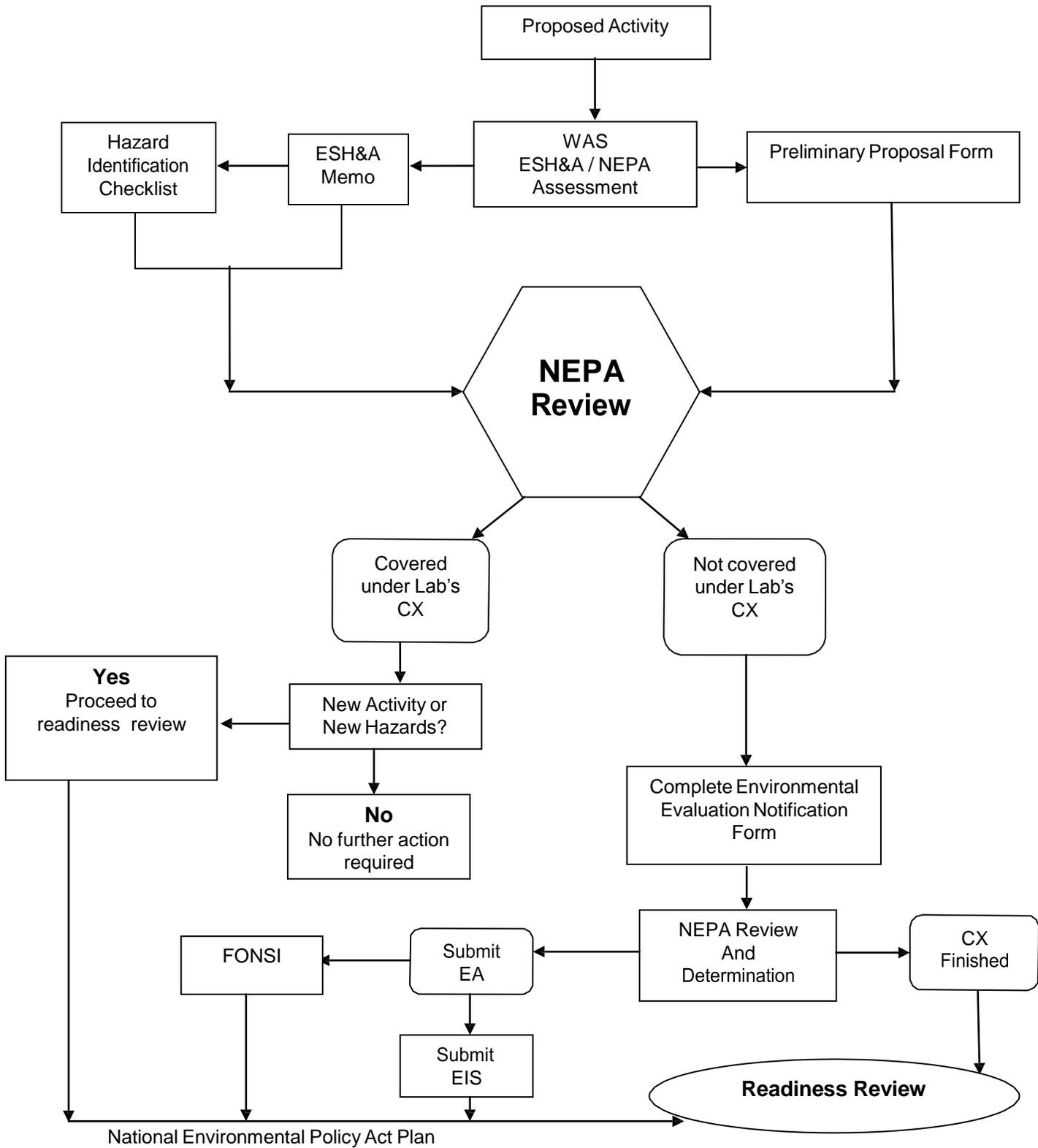
7.0 APPENDIX

Appendix A: NEPA Review Flow Chart

Appendix B: NEPA Environmental Evaluation Notification Form (Form SC-CHF 560)

Appendix A

NEPA REVIEW FLOW CHART



**U. S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, OFFICE OF SCIENCE
INTEGRATED SUPPORT CENTER—CHICAGO OFFICE**

**NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA)
ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION NOTIFICATION FORM**

To be completed by “Applicant,” i.e., organization receiving funds and/or implementing Federal Actions as defined by 40 CFR § 1508.18. For assistance, refer to “Instructions for Preparing ISC-CH F-560, Environmental Evaluation Notification Form.”

Solicitation/Award No. (if applicable): _____

Organization Name: _____

Title of Proposed Action: _____

Total DOE Funding/Total Funding: _____

I. Project Description: **(Use explanation pages if additional space is required)**

A. Proposed Project/Action (if applicable, delineate Federally funded/Non-Federally funded portions)

B. Would the project proceed without Federal funding?

Yes No

If “yes,” use explanation page.

II. Description of Affected Environment: **(Use explanation pages if additional space is required)**

III. Preliminary Questions:

- | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | Yes | No |
| A. | <u>Is the DOE-funded work routinely administrative or <i>entirely</i> advisory or a "paper study?"</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If "Yes", ensure that the description in Section I reflects this and go directly to Section V.

- B. Is there any potential whatsoever for: (*Provide an explanation for each "Yes" response*)

- | | | | |
|-----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | Yes | No |
| 1. | Work to be performed outdoors? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | Major modification of a building interior? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | Threat of violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. | Siting, construction or major expansion of waste treatment, storage, or disposal facilities? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. | Disturbance to hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants preexisting in the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. | The presence of any environmentally-sensitive resources? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. | Potential for high consequence impacts to human health or the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. | The work being connected to another existing/proposed activity that could potentially create a significant impact? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. | Nearby past, present, and/or reasonably foreseeable future actions such that collectively significant impacts could result? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. | Scientific or public controversy, uncertainty over potential impacts, or conflicts regarding resource usage? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If "No" to ALL Section III.B. questions, go directly to Section V.

IV. Potential Environmental Effects: (*Provide an explanation for each "Yes" response*)

- A. Sensitive Resources: Could the proposed action potentially result in changes and/or disturbances to any of the following resources?

- | | | | |
|-----|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | Yes | No |
| 1. | Threatened/Endangered Species and/or Critical Habitats | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | Other Protected Species (e.g., Burros, Migratory Birds) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | Sensitive Environments (e.g., Tundra/Coral Reefs/Rain Forests) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. | Cultural or Historic Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. | Important Farmland | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. | Non-Attainment Areas for Ambient Air Quality Standards | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. | Class I Air Quality Control Region | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. | Special Sources of Groundwater (e.g. Sole Source Aquifer) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. | Navigable Air Space | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. | Coastal Zones | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. | Areas with Special National Designation (e.g. National Forests, Parks, Trails) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. | Floodplains and/or Wetlands | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- B. Regulated Substances/Activities: Would the proposed action involve any of the following regulated Items or activities?

- | | | | |
|-----|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | Yes | No |
| 13. | Natural Resource Damage Assessments | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. | Invasive Species or Exotic Organisms | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. | Noxious Weeds | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. | Clearing or Excavation (indicate if greater than one acre) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. | Dredge or Fill (under Clean Water Act, Section 404, greater than one acre) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

B. Regulated Substances/Activities: Would the proposed action involve any of the following regulated Items or activities? (continued)

	Yes	No
18. Noise (in excess of regulations)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Asbestos Removal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Import, Manufacture, or Processing of Toxic Substances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Chemical Storage/Use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Pesticide Use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Hazardous, Toxic, or Criteria Pollutant Air Emissions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. Liquid Effluents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. Spill Prevention/Surface Water Protection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. Underground Injection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. Hazardous Waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. Underground Storage Tanks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. Radioactive or Radioactive Mixed Waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. Radiation Exposure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. Nanoscale Materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. Genetically Engineered Microorganisms/Plants or Synthetic Biology?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. Ozone Depleting Substances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. Greenhouse Gas Generation/Sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36. Off-Road Vehicles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37. Biosafety Level 3-4 Laboratory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. Research on Human Subjects or other Vertebrate Animals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39. Facility footprint exceeds 5,000 Square Feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C. Other Relevant Information: Would the proposed action involve the following?

	Yes	No
40. Disproportionate Nearby Presence of Minority and/or Low Income Populations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41. Existing, Modified, or New Federal/State Permits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42. Involvement of Another Federal Agency (e.g. license/permit, funding, approval)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43. Action in a State with NEPA-type law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. Expansion of Public Utilities/Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45. Depletion of a Non-Renewable Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46. Subject to an Existing Institutional Work Planning and Control Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
47. Other Pertinent Information Which Could Impact Human Health or the Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

V. Applicant Certification that to the best of their knowledge all information provided on this form is accurate:

	Yes	No
Does this disclosure contain classified, confidential, or other exempt information that DOE would not be obligated to disclose pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

A. Organization Official (Name and Title): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

e-mail: _____ Phone: _____

B. Optional Secondary Approval (Name and Title): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

e-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Remainder to be completed by DOE

VI. DOE Concurrence/Recommendation/Determination:

A. DOE Project Director/Program Manager or Contract/Grant Management Specialist:

	Yes	No
Has the Applicant completed the Form correctly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does an existing Generic Categorical Exclusion apply?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If yes, indicate: _____

Name and Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

B. DOE NEPA Team Review:

	Yes	No
Is the class of action identified in the DOE NEPA Regulations (Appendices A-D to Subpart D (10 CFR § 1021))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If yes, specify the class(es) of action: _____

Name and Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

C. DOE Counsel (if requested):

Name and Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

D. DOE NEPA Compliance Officer:

The preceding pages are a record of documentation required under DOE Final NEPA Regulation, 10 CFR § 1021.400.

- Action may be categorically excluded from further NEPA review. I have determined that the proposed action meets the requirements for Categorical Exclusion referenced above.
- Action requires approval by Head of the Field Organization. Recommend preparation of an Environmental Assessment.
- Action requires approval by Head of the Field Organization or a Secretarial Officer. Recommend preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement.

Comments/limitations if any:

NEPA Compliance Officer:

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Optional Additional Narrative: (add additional detail to description to Sections I and II or explanations to responses in Sections III and IV.

