



Office of Environmental Management

U.S. Department of Energy

Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

Proposed Action Title: New Land Lease Agreement for SREL Research, Education and Outreach Area (REOA)

Program or Field Office: Savannah River Site

Location(s) (City/County/State): Aiken/Aiken County/South Carolina

Proposed Action Description:

The purpose of this EEC is to support only the administrative action of processing a Land Lease Agreement between DOE and The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia for the use of approximate 4,225 acres of DOE-owned property for the establishment of the Savannah River Ecology Laboratory (SREL) Research, Education and Outreach Area (REOA), located north of US Highway 278 on the Savannah River Site (SRS). The requested leased land would be used to establish a large scale outdoor laboratory for full-time access to ecological education, outreach, and research areas on the periphery of the SRS. SREL will expand long-term outreach programming and educational opportunities at SRS of interest to the general public, educators, researchers, and the greater scientific community.

Future research, education, and/or outreach activities intended to be conducted after the execution of the SREL REOA Land Lease may be subject to further NEPA evaluations, warranting submission of individual EECs for review and approval.

Analysis of 10 CFR 1021.410(b):

1. The currently proposed action (land lease) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B. - *CX B1.24 Property Transfers*
 2. There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal. - *Experiments and outreach activities are routine in nature and are not anticipated to present scientific controversy regarding environmental effects, uncertain effects, or effects involving unique or unknown risks.*
 3. The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. Segmentation can occur when a proposal is broken down into smaller parts in order to avoid the appearance of significance of the total action. - *Future research, education, and/or outreach activities will require submittal of an EEC for further NEPA evaluations. DOE anticipates that these future activities will fit within the B3 Categorical Exclusions Applicable to Site Characterization, Monitoring, and General Research. These activities will be consistent with research activities currently conducted by SREL at SRS. These activities are small-scale in nature and adhere to site procedures to ensure impacts to the environment are eliminated or mitigated to avoid potential cumulative impacts. Future activities conducted at REOA will be conducted on small tracts of land and will not disturb the entire 4,225-acre lease area.*
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Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

B1.24 PROPERTY TRANSFERS

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. 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 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions 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, 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.

NEPA Compliance Officer:

Date Determined: 11/04/2022

Comments: EEC No: REO-O-2022-01001 Rev No: 0