

Categorical Exclusion Review
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Boise District Office
Four Rivers Field Office

University of Florida Passive Seismic Survey

CE No.: DOI-BLM-ID-B020-2011-0044-CX	Lease/Serial/Case File No.: IDI-36912
Purpose and Need for Action: The University of Florida applied for a short-term Right-of-Way to conduct seismic research in support of the EarthScope Program (www.earthscope.org) in order to study, in the Idaho-Oregon border region, the boundary between the oceanic and lithospheres in a well exposed narrow zone of high deformation known as the Western Idaho Shear Zone (WISZ).	
Description of Proposed Action: Issue a short-term Right-of-Way for a passive seismic survey. At three sites adjacent to existing roads, a hand dug trash-can sized hole would be dug to accommodate a seismograph housed in a padded trash can. Active southern Idaho ground-squirrel burrows would be identified and avoided. The instrument would be buried with just the top of a data logger box and a solar panel visible. Should it be necessary to protect the solar panel from damage by livestock, the site may be fenced (approx. 10' x 10'). Installation of seismographs would occur between May and August. After two years the instruments would be removed and the holes filled back in.	
Project Location: Site 1- T 13 N, R 4 W Section 16 NENW Dry Creek Road; Site 2 - T 11 N, R 3 W Section 33 NWNW (Lot 1), Bear Creek Road; Site 3 - T 8 N, R 3 W Section 12 SENW, Big Willow Road. Sites 1 & 2 are in Washington County, site 3 is in Payette County.	
Applicant: University of Florida Dept. of Geosciences	
Part I – Plan Conformance Review	
This proposed Action is subject to the following land use plan: Date Plan Approved:	
The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s) (objectives, terms, and conditions):	
Mineral, Energy, and Geologic Resources	
BLM will manage geological, energy, and minerals resources on the public lands. Geological resources will be managed so that significant scientific, recreational, ecological and educational values will be maintained or enhanced.	
Remarks: Cascade MFP FEIS page 56	
Part II – NEPA Review	
A. Categorical Exclusion Review: This proposed action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 2, Departmental Categorical Exclusion: 1.6 Nondestructive data collection, inventory (including field, aerial, and satellite surveying and mapping), study, research, and monitoring activities.	
B. Departmental List of Extraordinary Circumstances Review: Before any non-Energy Act CX is used, you must conduct sufficient review to determine if any of the following extraordinary circumstances apply (516 DM 2, Appendix 2). If any of the extraordinary circumstances are applicable to the action being considered, either an EA or an EIS must be prepared for the action. Part 516 of the Departmental Manual	

(516 DM 2, Appendix 2) states that extraordinary circumstances exist for individual actions within CXs which may: (Mark applicable answer for each item. If "yes", prepare an EA/EIS and append this form to it.)

List of Extraordinary Circumstances

1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.

Yes No Specialist Signature/Date: *David Wolf* 4/14/2011

Comments/Explanation: The buried instruments would have no impact on public health.

2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; or ecologically significant or critical areas, or is not in compliance with the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.

Yes No Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Matt McCoy* 4/14/2011

Comments/Explanation: Site 1 occurs in R1 (perennial grass dominated) habitat for greater sage-grouse and in suitable habitat for Columbia sharp-tailed grouse. Site 2 occurs in Type 2 (annual grass dominated) and immediately adjacent to Key habitat for greater sage-grouse. All sites occur in southern Idaho ground squirrel habitat. However, because the sites would be adjacent to roads, in previously disturbed areas, and would disturb <0.1 acres, they would have negligible impacts to habitat for these species. No cultural resources, parks, refuges, wilderness, Wild & Scenic Rivers, National Natural Landmarks, prime farmlands, floodplains, monuments or other ecologically significant lands would be involved.

3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].

Yes No Specialist Signature/Date: *David Wolf* 4/14/2011

Comments/Explanation: The proposed action would have minimal environmental effects, none controversial, and would not conflict with any other resource use.

4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.

Yes No Specialist Signature/Date: *David Wolf* 4/14/2011

Comments/Explanation: The proposed action is a common scientific study practice and impacts from the activities are well understood and documented.

5. Establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.

Yes No Specialist Signature/Date: *Matt McCoy* 4/19/2011

Comments/Explanation: The proposed action would be a one-time occurrence that does not imply or establish a precedent for any future actions.

6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant environmental effects.

Yes No Specialist Signature/Date: *David Wolf* 4/14/2011

Comments/Explanation: The proposed action would be a discrete activity with no tie to other actions or activities other than related scientific studies.

7. Have significant impacts on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.

Yes No Specialist Signature/Date: *Jean E. Shaw* 4/20/2011

Comments/Explanation: No eligible sites would be involved.

8. Have significant impacts on species listed or proposed to be listed on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or on designated Critical Habitat for these species.

Yes No Specialist Signature/Date for Plants: *Mark E. Steiger* 4/15/2011
Specialist Signature/Date for Wildlife: /s/ *Matt McCoy* 4/14/2011

		Specialist Signature/Date for Aquatics: <i>J. Allen Jarter</i> 4/15/2011
Plants <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> No T&E species or Critical Habitat involved.		
Wildlife <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> No Threatened or Endangered species are known to occur in the immediate vicinity of the proposed action. The proposed activities at sites 1 and 2 could have slight affects on greater sage-grouse and Columbia sharp-tailed grouse primarily during the breeding and early brood rearing seasons. Sage-grouse is a Candidate species and sharp-tailed grouse are a BLM special status species. The Conservation Plan for Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho (Idaho Department of Fish and Game 2006) identifies human disturbance within 0.6 miles of active leks (occupied by birds between 6 PM -9 AM, March 15-May 15) as one of the primary threats to sage-grouse. Disturbance factors for sharp-tailed grouse are similar to those for sage-grouse. Site 1 would be 3 miles from an active (2010) sage-grouse lek and 2 miles from a sharp-tailed grouse dancing ground. Site 2 would be within 1.6 miles of an active (2010) sage-grouse lek. Installation of the seismographs would coincide with the last two weeks of breeding season for both species. However, because the disturbances would be adjacent to existing roads, in previously disturbed areas, for a short period of time (approximately one day per site), and would disturb <0.1 acres, they would have negligible impacts to sage-grouse and sharp-tailed grouse behavior and habitat. All sites would occur in habitat for southern Idaho ground squirrel, a Candidate species. Placement of the seismographs would occur when squirrels are active and burrows are readily identifiable. Avoidance of burrows would minimize impacts to squirrels. Other BLM special status species occur in the area; however, impacts to these species would also be expected to be negligible as discussed above.		
Aquatics <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> No riparian areas would be involved.		
9. Violate a Federal, State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date: <i>Dean C. Shaw</i> 4/20/2011
<i>Comments/Explanation:</i> Proposed action would be in conformance with all applicable laws and requirements.		
10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date: <i>David Wolf</i> 4/14/2011
<i>Comments/Explanation:</i> The proposed action would be located in an area remote from all populations.		
11. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date: <i>Dean C. Shaw</i> 4/20/2011
<i>Comments/Explanation:</i> The proposed action would not limit access to and/or use of sacred sites or adversely affect the integrity of any known site.		
12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date: <i>Lonnie Huter</i> 4/14/2011
<i>Comments/Explanation:</i> The proposed action would not involve any vegetative component or any activity that would introduce or spread noxious weeds or non-native invasive species.		
I certify that none of the Departmental exceptions (Extraordinary Circumstances) listed in the above Part II (516 DM 2, Appendix 2) apply to this action; therefore, this categorical exclusion is appropriate for this situation. Remarks:		
Authorizing Official: Terry A. Humphrey		Date: 4/20/2011
Name:		
Title:		

Part III – Decision

I have reviewed this plan conformance and NEPA compliance record and have determined that the proposed project is in conformance with the approved land use plan and that no further environmental analysis is required. It is my decision to implement the project, as described, with the mitigation measures either identified below or with the stipulation(s) described above.

Mitigation Measures/Other Remarks: Include standard ROW stipulations.

Remarks:

Authorizing Official: ***Terry A. Humphrey***

Date: 4/20/2011

Name:

Title: