

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Carson City District Office

**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

Project Lead: Perry Wickham

Field Office: Sierra Front

Lead Office: Sierra Front

Case File/Project Number: NVN 091271

Applicable Categorical Exclusion (cite section): Reference 516 DM 11.9 J. Other, (3) Conducting preliminary hazardous materials assessments and site investigations, site characterization studies and environmental monitoring. Include are siting, construction, installation and/or operation of small monitoring devices such as wells, particulate dust counters and automatic air or water samples.

NEPA Number: DOI-BLM-NV-C020-2012-0055-CX

Project Name: Pyramid Highway and U.S. Highway 395 Connector

Project Description: Construction Material Engineers, Inc. (CME) proposes to perform geotechnical field exploration in association with the proposed Pyramid Highway and U.S. Highway 395 Connector in Washoe County. Exploration will consist of drilling exploratory borings at two (2) locations to approximate depths ranging from 60 to 120 feet. The bore holes will be approximately 3 inches in diameter. Extracted cores will be placed in a cardboard box and removed from the site. After completion of coring, the holes will be backfilled with a mixture of Bentonite and cuttings. The proposed borings are located in Township 20 North, Range 20 East, M.D.M., Section 20, NW ¼ of the SE ¼ and Township 20 North, Range 20 East, M.D.M., Section 28, Government Lot 34. Geotechnical field exploration will require the use of track-mounted equipment and support vehicles and will utilize existing unimproved access roads to obtain access to the two (2) proposed drilling sites. There will be no improvements or land development as a result of this Land Use Application and Permit. The exploratory drilling will begin shortly after the issuance of a Land Use Permit.

The project area is not located within preliminary general or priority habitat for the greater sage-grouse.

Applicant Name: Construction Material Engineers, Inc. (CME)

Project Location (include Township/Range, County):

Township 20 North, Range 20 East

Section 20, NW ¼ of the SE ¼;

Township 20 North, Range 20 East

Section 28, Government Lot 34;

BLM Acres for the Project Area: Less than 0.10 acres

Land Use Plan Conformance (cite reference/page number): LND-7, #6: “Exchanges and minor non-Bureau initiated realty proposals will be considered where analysis indicates they are beneficial to the public.”

Name of Plan: NV – Carson City RMP.

Screening of Extraordinary Circumstances: The following extraordinary circumstances apply to individual actions within categorical exclusions (43 CFR 46.215). The BLM has considered the following criteria:

<i>If any question is answered 'yes' an EA or EIS must be prepared.</i>	YES	NO
1. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on public health or safety? (project lead/P&EC)		X
2. Would the Proposed Action 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 (EO 11990); floodplains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds (EO 13186); and other ecologically significant or critical areas? (wildlife biologist, hydrologist, outdoor recreation planner, archeologist)		X
3. Would the Proposed Action have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA 102(2)(E)]? (project lead/P&EC)		X
4. Would the Proposed Action have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks? (project lead/P&EC)		X
5. Would the Proposed Action establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects? (project lead/P&EC)		X
6. Would the Proposed Action have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects? (project lead/P&EC)		X
7. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the NRHP as determined by the bureau or office? (archeologist)		X
8. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the list of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species? (wildlife biologist, botanist)		X
9. Would the Proposed Action violate federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment? (project lead/P&EC)		X
10. Would the Proposed Action have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EA 12898)? (project lead/P&EC)		X
11. Would the Proposed Action 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 (EO 13007)? (archeologist)		X
12. Would the Proposed Action contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native 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 EO 13112)? (botanist)		X

SPECIALISTS' REVIEW: During ID Team consideration of the above Proposed Action and extraordinary circumstances, the following specialists reviewed this CX:

Realty Specialist: Perry Wickham PBW

Outdoor Recreation Planner: Arthur Callan A

Hydrologist: Niki Cutler nc

Archaeologist: Jim Carter ___ or Rachel Crews RCC

Wildlife Biologist: Pilar Ziegler PZ

Botanist: Dean Tonenna DT

Planning & Environmental Coordinator: Brian Buttazoni BB

Range Management Specialist: Katrina Leavitt KL or Ryan Leary ___

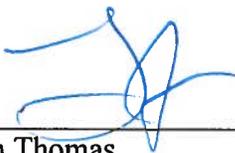
Wild Horse and Burro Specialist: John Axtell JA

Geologist: Dan Erbes DE

Forester: Coreen Francis CF

CONCLUSION: Based upon the review of this Proposed Action, I have determined that the above-described project is a categorical exclusion, in conformance with the LUP, and does not require an EA or EIS.

Approved by:



Leon Thomas
Field Manager
Sierra Front Field Office

9-11-12

(date)