

# **Categorical Exclusion**

**Prepared by**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
**Bureau of Land Management**

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# **Chapter 1. Name**

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## A. Background

The National Science Foundation requested that the Department of Interior issue a public land order to withdraw certain public lands in Uintah County, Utah for use of the National Science Foundation in March of 1970. These lands were approved for segregation on October 20, 1972. The lands were withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the public land laws, including the mining laws (30 U.S.C., Ch. 2), from the filing of application and offers under the mineral leasing laws, and from disposals of materials under the Act of July 31, 1947, 61 Stat. 681, as amended, 30 U.S.C. § 601–604 (1964), and reserved for the use of the National Science Foundation as a Seismological Observatory.

**BLM Office: Vernal Field Office**

LLUTG01110

**Lease/Serial/Case File No.: UTU-11462**

**Proposed Action Title/Type:** Withdrawal Revocation of Lands Segregated for a Geophysical Observatory Under Public Land Order 5275

**Location of Proposed Action:**

Salt Lake Meridian, Uintah County, Utah,

T. 6 S., R. 21 E.,

Sections 4, 5, 8 and 9.

**Description of Proposed Action:** On October 17, 1983, the National Science Foundation requested that the withdrawal for the Seismological Observatory (Public Land Order 5275) be revoked. Field inspections were completed to determine any residual hazmat evidence on June 29, 2004. The inspection revealed no evidence of hazards or potential environmental liabilities were present.

## B. Land Use Plan Conformance

**Land Use Plan Name:** Vernal Field Office RMP/ROD

**Date Approved/Amended:** October 31, 2008

**The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s):** The proposed withdrawal revocation would be in conformance with the Vernal Field Office RMP/ROD (October 31, 2008). The RMP/ROD LAR-46 decision allows BLM to review existing withdrawals and classifications on BLM-administered lands to determine the need and consistency with the intent of the withdrawals in accordance with section 204(l) of FLPMA, and recommend continuing, modifying, or terminating as applicable (RMP/ROD p.92). It also states in LAR-47 that any lands becoming unencumbered by withdrawals or classifications will be managed according to the decision made in the RMP (RMP/ROD p.92). It has been determined that the proposed action would not conflict with other decisions throughout the plan.

**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) :**

### **C. Compliance with NEPA:**

The action described above generally does not require the preparation of an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS), as it has been found to not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment.

The applicable Categorical Exclusion, effective May 27, 2004, reference in 516 DM 11.5 E (3). This reference states an EA may not be required for, “Withdrawal revocations, terminations, extensions, or modifications; classification terminations or modifications; or opening actions where the land would be opened only to discretionary land laws and where subsequent discretionary actions (prior to implementation) are in conformance with and are covered by a Resource Management Plan/EIS (or plan amendment and EA or EIS).”

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply.

I considered: the project described above and field office staff recommendations attached, I have determined that the project is in conformance with the land use plan and is categorically excluded from further environmental analysis. It is my decision to approve the action as proposed.

### **D. Approval and Contact Information**

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Michael G. Stiewig  
Field Manager, Vernal Field Office

Date

#### **Contact Person**

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