

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

Categorical Exclusion

**Withdrawal Revocation of Lands Segregated for a Geophysical
Observatory — PLO 5275
DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2014-89-CX**

PREPARING OFFICE

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Prepared by
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Chapter 1. Categorical Exclusion

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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 The lands were withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the public land laws, including the mining laws (30 U.S.C., Ch. 2), from the filing of applications and offers under the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

DOI-BLM-UT-G010–2014—89–CX

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.

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 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) : 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.

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, referenced in 516 DM 11.9 E (3). This reference states an EA or EIS 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



Michael G. Stiewig
Field Office Manager



Date

Contact Person

Katie White Bull
Realty Specialist
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Chapter 2. Extraordinary Circumstances Worksheet

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CX Number:	DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2014-0089-CX
Date:	02/20/2014
Lease/Case File/ Serial Number:	UTU-11462
Regulatory Authority (CFR or Law):	402L of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of October 21, 1976, as amended through September 1999, (90 Stat. 2776; 43 U.S.C. 1761).

Section 1.1 Impacts on Public Health and Safety

1. Does the proposed action have significant impacts on public health and safety?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Katie White Bull / Realty Specialist

Rationale: Public health or safety would not be affected given the scope of the proposal.

Section 1.2 Impacts on Natural Resources or Unique Geographic Characteristics

2. Does 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 or wilderness study 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 (Executive Order 13186); and other ecologically significant or critical areas?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Katie White Bull / Realty Specialist

Rationale: No resources have been identified by the interdisciplinary team as being impacted by this action. There would be no adverse effects on natural resources.

Section 1.3 Level of Controversy

3. Does the proposed action have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)]?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Katie White Bull / Realty Specialist

Rationale: Resource specialists did not identify any highly controversial environmental effects or unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.

Section 1.4 Highly Uncertain or Unique or Unknown Environmental Risks

4. Does the proposed action have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Katie White Bull / Realty Specialist

Rationale: BLM specialists reviewed the proposed project and determined there are no uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects, nor are there any unique or unknown environmental risks.

Section 1.5 Precedent Setting

5. Does the proposed action establish a precedent for future action, or represent a decision in principle about future actions, with potentially significant environmental effects?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Katie White Bull / Realty Specialist

Rationale: This withdrawal revocation would establish no precedent for future actions, nor would it represent a decision in principal for future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.

Section 1.6 Cumulatively Significant Effects

6. Does the proposed action have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant, environmental effects?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Katie White Bull / Realty Specialist

Rationale: The proposed authorization was reviewed by BLM specialists and it was determined that there would be no additive or cumulative impacts by revoking the withdrawal and removing the land from its segregated status.

Section 1.7 Impacts on Cultural Properties

7. Does the proposed action 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	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Cameron Cox / Archaeologist

Rationale: The BLM Archaeologist reviewed this project and determined there would be no adverse effects on properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Section 1.8 Impacts on Federally Listed Species or Critical Habitat

8. Does 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?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Brandon McDonald / Wildlife
	X	Jessica Brunson / Botany (T&E plants)

Rationale: The BLM biologist and botanist reviewed and determined that Threatened or Endangered species and their habitat would not be impacted due to the high concentration of existing disturbance and timing restrictions.

Section 1.9 Compliance With Laws

9. Does the proposed action violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Katie White Bull / Realty Specialist

Rationale: The proposal is in conformance with appropriate Federal and State statutes, and county ordinances.

Section 1.10 Environmental Justice

10. Does the proposed action have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898)?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Katie White Bull / Realty Specialist

Rationale: The proposed project does not adversely affect any minority or low income population in a disproportionate way.

Section 1.11 Indian Sacred Sites

11. Does 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 (Executive Order 13007)?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Cameron Cox / Archaeologist

Rationale: The proposed action would not have a significant individual or cumulative effect on the quality of the human environment, nor, are there any "extraordinary actions" within the proposed project area, which may 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 pursuant to Executive Order 13007 (DOI, 516 DM 1-5, NEPA Revised Implementing Procedures, Chapter 2; Appendix 2, sec. 2.11).

Section 1.12 Noxious and Non-Native Invasive Species

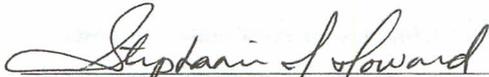
12. Does the proposed action contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area, or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112)?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Jessica Brunson / Botany

Rationale: There are no known noxious weeds or non-native species in the withdrawal revocation area.

Section 1.2 Preparer Information

Katie J. White Bull
Katie J. White Bull / Realty Specialist

4-21-2014
DATE


Stephanie Howard / NEPA Coordinator

4/17/14
DATE


Michael G. Stewig / Field Office Manager

4/21/14
DATE