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*CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION
SHIPMENT OF THORIUM LOW-LEVEL WASTE NEPA
DOC. NO. 349*

07/10/91

*DOE-HQ/DOE-FN
NEPA DOC. 349*

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CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION
Shipment of Thorium Low-Level Waste
Feed Materials Production Center, Fernald, Ohio

Proposed Action:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) proposes to ship 13,000 containers of thorium low-level waste to the Nevada Test Site for final disposal. These 13,000 containers of thorium low-level waste will be overpacked in Department of Transportation (DOT) approved containers.

Location:

The thorium will be shipped from the Feed Materials Production Center (FMPC) to the Nevada Test Site (NTS) for final disposal. The FMPC is located 20 miles northwest of downtown Cincinnati, Ohio.

Background:

An Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared in May 1985 for the proposed low-level waste processing and shipment system at the FMPC. The wastes addressed in the EA were those contaminated with low levels of radioactivity resulting from the production of uranium metal. A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was issued in June 1985. A Memorandum to File (MTF) was prepared in August 1987, which concluded that increase in shipments of waste would not have significant environmental effects. This MTF was supplemented in August 1989 to address the overpack and shipment of the 13,000 containers of thorium waste; this MTF supplement was provided to EH-25. On February 21, 1991, a categorical exclusion (CX) for the overpacking and storage of the 13,000 containers of thorium was signed by the Manager of the DOE Field Office, Oak Ridge. Upon review, the Office of NEPA Oversight had no objection with this CX.

Description of Proposed Action:

The proposed action is to ship the overpacked 13,000 containers of thorium low-level waste to an approved waste disposal facility at the NTS. The thorium shipments will occur over a period of 3 years at a rate of approximately 175 per year. Total low-level waste shipments at Fernald will be approximately 1,600 per year. The remaining 1,425 annual shipments will consist of uranium low-level waste.

The proposed action is considered a removal action and will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). All waste transported from the FMPC is shipped in accordance with DOT requirements. The proposed action is consistent with the CERCLA Consent Agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency, and is a means of ensuring an efficient response. The proposed action is estimated to cost a total of \$3.5 million, and is expected to be completed in 3 years. While the proposed action will exceed the \$2 million and the 12-month limit as specified in the September 7, 1990, Amendments to the DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Guidelines, it will not limit evaluation of alternatives for final remedial action.

The proposed action will not threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements and will not adversely affect environmentally sensitive areas.

Categorical Exclusion (CX) to be Applied:

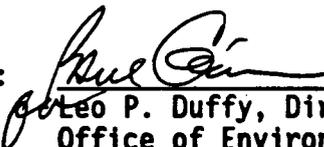
The Amendments to Section D of DOE's NEPA Guidelines, published in the Federal Register on September 7, 1990, add classes of actions generally applicable to all DOE that normally do not require EAs or Environmental Impact Statements. The Amendments specifically list the following as a type of action that is included:

Removal actions under CERCLA (including those taken as final response actions and those taken before remedial action) and actions similar in scope under RCRA (including those taken as partial closure actions and those taken before corrective action). These activities include the following: treatment (including incineration), recovery, storage, or disposal of wastes at existing facilities permitted for the type of waste resulting from the removal action, where needed to reduce the likelihood of human, animal, or food chain exposure.

The CX is appropriate since the proposed action, as described above, is to ship thorium off-site for disposal. The CX includes all activities necessary to implement the proposed action encompassed within the class of actions (such as associated transportation activities). The shipment of thorium low-level waste will not violate statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements, including requirements of DOE Orders, does not require expansion of any waste management facilities, and will not adversely affect environmentally sensitive areas.

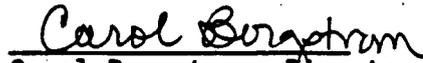
Compliance Action:

I have determined that the proposed action meets the requirements for the CX referenced above. Therefore, the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review and documentation.

Approval: 
Leo P. Duffy, Director
Office of Environmental Restoration
and Waste Management, EM-1

Date: 7/10/91

EH-25 has reviewed this determination and has no objection.

Signature: 
Carol Borgstrom, Director
Office of NEPA Oversight, EH-25

Date: 7/25/91

memorandum

DATE: JUL 10 1991

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: EM-424 (D. Kozlowski, 3-8160)

SUBJECT: Categorical Exclusion Determination - Shipment of Thorium Low-Level Waste,
Feed Materials Production Center, Fernald, Ohio

TO: Carol Borgstrom, EH-25

I have approved the subject categorical exclusion under Section D of the Department of Energy's National Environmental Policy Act Guidelines and am forwarding it to you for review.

I request that you notify me within 2 weeks, in accordance with the Interim Procedural Guidelines for implementation of SEN-15-90, whether you have any objection to this determination.



Leo P. Duffy
Director
Office of Environmental Restoration
and Waste Management

Attachment

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JUL 11 1991

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