



# U.S. Department of Energy Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

Proposed Action Title: Timber Salvage from Pine Ridge Storm Damage (CX-ORR-13-008)

Program or Field Office: Oak Ridge Reservation

Location(s) (City/County/State): Oak Ridge, Tennessee

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Proposed Action Description:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR) and the National Nuclear Security Administration's National Production Office (NPO) propose to perform a limited removal of storm damaged timber/hazard trees from the south and north slopes of Pine Ridge. This limited removal would include the utilization of existing roads only in order to limit impacts to the forest. The Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) Forestry Department would coordinate the salvage operation for DOE. Traffic routing would be coordinated with Security/Y-12 Plant Shift Superintendent and URS|CH2M (UCOR), as needed. The proposed action is for limited removal of on-ground marketable timber of any species and removal of damaged standing trees (i.e., pine species with broken tops and fewer than 3 live limbs; hardwood trees with broken tops or branches over 3 inches in diameter; trees with evidence of twist injury; trees with major root damage; trees with major wounds; and bent trees over 15 feet in height, or suspected of internal ring shake, splintering and separation of wood fibers, or with visible pitch/sap flow). Hazard trees either leaning or with large, lodged branches (widow makers), particularly near access, fences, and other worker areas would also be removed.

Actions would be in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forestry Service publication *How to Evaluate and Manage Storm-Damaged Forest Areas* ([http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/foresthealth/pubs/storm\\_damage/survey.html](http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/foresthealth/pubs/storm_damage/survey.html)). Best management practices, as specified in the DOE ORO Oak Ridge Hardwoods, LLC, Agreement, would be in accordance with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture *Guide to Forestry, Best Management Practices in Tennessee* (<http://www.tn.gov/agriculture/publications/forestry/BMPs.pdf>).

Ingress and egress during salvage operations would be planned safely. The C-12 Power Line Road and A-12 Power Line Road (Uranium Processing Facility [UPF] Haul Road), Hunter Access Trail, and 229 fence areas would be cleared and coordination would be planned with the Environmental Management Disposal Facility (EMDF) (leaving impediments to future access and site characterization would be avoided). Impacts to the Environmental Management Waste Management Facility (EMWMF) (UCOR) and to Y-12 operations (i.e., UPF) would be avoided.

Any felling operations would be conducted within practicable constraints favoring bat roosting (outside roosting season from March 31 through October 15, when possible). Acoustic monitoring indicated six species of bats were present, although no listed species were found. Informal consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service resulted in a not likely to adversely impact finding.

No threatened or endangered animal species/habitats were found during a recent survey of the area or during other past studies conducted in the vicinity of the site. The site was also surveyed for the occurrence of state or federal protected plant species. There are no records of such plants in the project area or in downstream areas. The main natural resources that could be potentially impacted by this project are interior forest and aquatic resources. Wetlands identified as NT2 and NT3 and identified springs and any other wetlands would be avoided and protected. Mill Branch and Gum Branch Streamline Management Zones (100-foot and buffers) would be protected. Opportunities for habitat improvement activities (e.g., various woodpecker and bat species, pink ladies slipper) would be identified. Identification of any likely problems from non-native invasive species would be facilitated.

Potential erosion concerns resulting from the storm would be identified and corrected. Any known cultural resources (e.g., F-587 tenant house site) would be protected. Landings and trails would be remediated with appropriate native vegetation. Fuel loading would be minimized to the extent practical, particularly at EMWMF and Y-12 operational interface. Local and state guidance for logging best management practices (BMPs) would be followed.

Existing roads would be utilized for the proposed tree salvage operation, i.e., no new roads would be constructed.

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Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

B1.3 - Routine maintenance

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For the complete DOE National Environmental Policy Act regulations regarding categorical exclusions, including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see Subpart D of [10 CFR Part 1021](http://www.ecfr.gov/title10/part1021).

Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410(b): (See full text in regulation)

The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D.

To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph B(4) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B; (5) involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. This proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

Based on my review of the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under DOE Order 451.1B), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class(es) of action, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

**DOE ORO NEPA Compliance Officer:** Gary S. Hartman

**Date Determined:** 9/17/2013

**DOE NPO NEPA Compliance Officer:** James Barrows

**Date Determined:** 9/17/2013