

SECTION A. Project Title: INL Fire Weather Observatory

SECTION B. Project Description and Purpose:

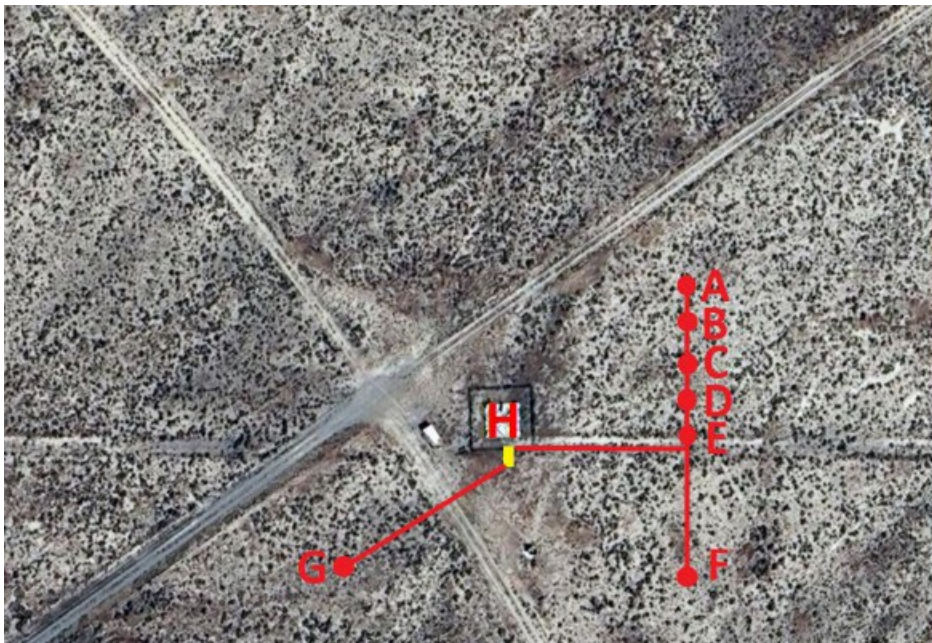
From the NOAA-DOE Interagency Agreement, NOAA is tasked with conducting research in support of INL activities. This ERP is for a Fire Weather Observatory. The site for the Fire Weather Observatory is at Grid 3 just east of ATR (see attachment B). This site was chosen because NOAA has operated in this location for decades conducting other research projects and has structures already in place to assist in facilitating the Observatory.

The scope of work for this project will be:

- Install (6) galvanized posts. One post hole will be 50" deep and 12" in diameter and the other would be 60" deep and 24" in diameter.
- Bury conduit with power lines connecting A-F 18" in the ground (see attachment A).
- Install a 10-meter flux tower on a steel plate (4ft x4ft x .25in), that will be laid on top of the ground and secured with stakes.
- A new wind profiler will be installed on a concrete pad that is already in place.
- An 8ft x 20ft Conex box will be installed that will house electronics and comms equipment relating to the wind profiler.

All work will be conducted with NOAA employees.

Attachment A



Attachment B



SECTION C. Environmental Aspects or Potential Sources of Impact:

Air Emissions

Fugitive dust may be emitted during ground disturbing activities.

Discharging to Surface-, Storm-, or Ground Water

NA

Disturbing Cultural or Biological Resources

There is the potential for this work to impact vegetation and for project personnel to interact with various wildlife species. A Biological Resource Review will be arranged within two weeks prior to the initiation of any activities that might disturb soil or vegetation and again following completion of project activities. A nesting bird survey is included with the Biological Resource Review for actions occurring between April 1 - October 1 per compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Bat surveys are also included with the Biological Resource Review in accordance with the INL Bat Protection Plan.

Cultural: A Section 106 review was completed under CRMO project number (BEA-25-026) and resulted in No Historic Properties Affected. Please refer to the Hold Points and Project Specific Instructions of the ECP.

Generating and Managing Waste

When wastes are generated, how they are disposed can adversely affect the environment. Managing wastes appropriately and responsibly and implementing recycling or reuse practices, where feasible, during project activities can reduce the potential impact on the environment.

Releasing Contaminants

When chemicals are used during the project there is the potential for spills that could impact the environment (air, water, soil).

Using, Reusing, and Conserving Natural Resources

Project activities have the opportunity to reduce the impact on our natural resources by recycling or diverting materials from disposal in the landfill.

Environmental Justice

NA

SECTION D. Determine Recommended Level of Environmental Review, Identify Reference(s), and State Justification: Identify the applicable categorical exclusion from 10 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) 1021, Appendix B, give the appropriate justification, and the approval date.

For Categorical Exclusions (CXs), the proposed action must not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environmental, safety, and health, or similar requirements of Department of Energy (DOE) or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment or facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA)-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that pre-exist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources (see 10 CFR 1021). In addition, no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal exist that would affect the significance of the action. In addition, the action is not "connected" to other action actions (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1) and is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1608.27(b)(7)).

References: B1.19 "Microwave, meteorological, and radio towers"

Justification: Based on the purpose and need and description of the proposed action and potential environmental impacts, the proposed action fits within the class of actions that is listed in Appendix B CX B1.19. There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal. The proposed action 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.

Authorizing the proposed action will not (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, including DOE and/or Executive orders; (2) require siting of new facilities or expansion of existing facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants; (4) adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources; or (5) involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species.

B1.19 Microwave, meteorological, and radio towers. Siting, construction, modification, operation, and removal of microwave, radio communication, and meteorological towers and associated facilities, provided that the towers and associated facilities would not be in a governmentally designated scenic area (see B(4)(iv) of this appendix) unless otherwise authorized by the appropriate governmental entity.

Is the project funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) ☐ Yes ☒ No

Approved by Robert Douglas Herzog, DOE-ID NEPA Compliance Officer on: 4/11/2025