U.S. Department of Energy
Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

Program or Field Office: Advanced Research Projects Agency – Energy

Project Title: (25A5208) Foro Energy, Inc. - Low-contact drilling technology to enable economical EGS wells

Location: Colorado

Proposed Action or Project Description: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: ☒

Foro Energy is developing a hybrid thermal-mechanical drilling technology to enable rapid and sustained penetration of ultra-hard rock formations that are economically prohibitive to drill with mechanical drill bits.

Foro Energy received funding under DE-AR-0000065 to perform research, design, and prototype testing to assess the operability of the hybrid drilling technology. Work proposed in this stage of the project consists of outdoor drill tests at maximum depths of approximately 500 ft. and 3,000 ft. below the Earth's surface to assess the developmental progress, quality, and reliability of the hybrid drilling technology, as well as its functionality in an ultra-hard rock, underground environment. Outdoor testing will be completed at an active surface mine. In addition, Foro Energy will continue to perform laboratory-based research and development activities to enhance the hybrid drilling technology.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

X - B3.11 Outdoor tests, experiments on materials and equipment components, no source, special nuclear, or byproduct materials involved

X - B3.8 Outdoor ecological/environmental research in small area

X - B3.6 Siting/construction/operation/decommissioning of facilities for bench-scale research, conventional laboratory operations, small-scale research and development and pilot projects

*-For the complete DOE National Environmental Policy Act regulations regarding categorical exclusions, see Subpart D of 10 CFR10 21 Click Here

This action would not: threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, including DOE and/or Executive Orders; require siting, construction, or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities, but may include such categorically excluded facilities; disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that pre-exist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; or adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources (including but not limited to those listed in paragraph B.(4)) of Appendix B to Subpart D of 10 CFR 1021). Furthermore, there are no extraordinary circumstances related to this action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the action; this action is not "connected" to other actions with potentially significant impacts, is not related to other proposed actions with cumulatively significant impacts, and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211.

Based on my review of information conveyed to me and in my possession (or attached) concerning 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.

NEPA Compliance Officer: Matt Dunne Date Determined: Mar 15, 2011

Comments: Webmaster:

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