



Department of Energy
Chicago Operations Office
9800 South Cass Avenue
Argonne, Illinois 60439

OCT 1 1998

Paul E. Bayer
NABIR Field Research Center
Manager, HQ
ER-74/GTN

SUBJECT: NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA) DETERMINATION FOR
PROPOSED FLOW-CELL INSTALLATIONS AND TRACER EXPERIMENTS,
SOUTH OYSTER FIELD SITE, NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

The activities for the proposed flow-cell installations and tracer experiments located at the South Oyster Field Site, Northampton County, Virginia, have been evaluated for potential environmental impacts.

NEPA review for characterization studies (Gold-0020, Gold-0020-Modification 1, and Gold-0020-Modification 2) were conducted prior to the selection of the South Oyster Field Site. Consequently, general environmental issues have already been addressed for this Site. The proposed action submitted for the current determination is to conduct a research study of bacterial transport in a subsurface aquifer under both aerobic and hypoxic conditions. The property on which the proposed research will take place belongs to the Nature Conservancy and is part of the Virginia Coast Reserve. The proposed field work will be conducted on the edges of actively cultivated fields. Prior to conducting any research on this Site, the Nature Conservancy has required that a Research Permit Application be submitted and approved. The project managers have met all the rigorous requirements and environmental constraints, consequently, a research permit to conduct the studies has been issued.

No environmental impacts would occur to (or result from): threatened/endangered species and/or critical habitats; archaeological/historical resources; prime, unique, or important farmland; special sources of groundwater; coastal zones; the floodplain; noise; and hazardous, toxic, or criteria pollutant air emissions. There is no threatened violation of Environment, Safety & Health regulations/permit requirements at the South Oyster Field Site.



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- 2 -

OCT 1 1998

Based upon my review of the data presented in the Environmental Evaluation Notification Form, I have determined that the proposed action is covered by Categorical Exclusion B3.6 (Siting/construction/operation/decommissioning of facilities for bench-scale research, conventional laboratory operations, small-scale research and development and pilot projects) and B3.8 (Outdoor ecological/environmental research in a small area). No further NEPA review nor documentation is required for the proposed actions at the South Oyster Field Site, Northampton County, Virginia.

Signature: _____

W. Sedgefield White
Chicago Operations Office NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: October 1, 1998

cc: C. Hickey, HQ, ER-8.2/GTN
W. Timothy Griffin, Golder Associates, Inc.
F. Wobber, HQ, ER-74/GTN
M. Broido, HQ, ER-74/GTN
J. Houghton, HQ, ER-74/GTN