

NOAA's Categorical Exclusions

The following series of CEs includes actions that may be implemented either directly by NOAA or by the recipient of a financial assistance award. The activities contemplated in the series of CEs have been evaluated and found not to have individual or cumulative significant impacts on the human environment, whether implemented by a grantee through a financial assistance award or directly implemented by NOAA.

For many of the categories, representative examples of the type of activities covered in the text of the categorical exclusion are provided in order to provide further clarity and transparency regarding the types of actions covered by the categorical exclusion. These examples are intended to be illustrative, but not exhaustive.

Trust Resource Management Actions		
Reference Number	Categorical Exclusion	Examples
A1	An action that is a technical correction or a change to a fishery management action or regulation, which does not result in a substantial change in any of the following: fishing location, timing, effort, authorized gear types, or harvest levels.	<p>Changes to reporting requirements</p> <p>Changes to vessel hailing requirements</p> <p>Removal, addition, or changes to provisions for allowable gear when transiting through closed areas</p> <p>Extension or change of the period of effectiveness of an FMP or regulation</p> <p>Changes to gear marking requirements</p>
A2	Preparation of a recovery plan pursuant to section 4(f)(1) of the ESA. Such plans are advisory documents that provide consultative and technical assistance in recovery planning and do not implement site-specific or species-specific management actions. However, implementation of specific tasks identified in a recovery plan may require an EA or EIS depending on the nature of the action.	
A3	Temporary fishery closures or extensions of closures under Section 305(c)(3)(C) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to ensure public health and safety.	<p>Fishery closure(s) due to an oil spill</p> <p>Fishery closure(s) due to a Harmful Algal Bloom</p> <p>Fishery closure(s) due to declared disasters</p>

A4	Minor updates to existing national marine sanctuary management plans. This CE does not apply to sanctuary designations, expansions, changes in terms of designation, or new sanctuary management plans.	
A5	Updates to existing National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) management plans, provided that the update does not change NERR boundaries or add or significantly change allowable uses, uses requiring a permit, or restrictions on uses. This CE does not apply to new NERR management plans, or to the execution of any specific action subsequently funded to support the updated NERR management plan.	
A6	Review and approval of changes to state coastal management programs under the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) § 306(e) (16 U.S.C. § 1455(e)) and NOAA's regulations at 15 C.F.R. Part 923.	
Trust Resource Authorization and Permitting Actions		
Reference Number	Categorical Exclusion	Examples
B1	Issuance of permits or permit modifications under section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA for take, import, or export of endangered species for scientific purposes or to enhance the propagation or survival of the affected species, or in accordance with the requirements of an ESA section 4(d) regulation for threatened species.	<p>Issuance of a permit or modification to a permit for takes from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aerial, vessel, and ground surveys using remotely operated vehicles and manned vehicles • controlled, close approach photography and remote sampling (e.g., biopsy, breath) • behavioral observations of animals (e.g., snorkel, or on-foot observers trained to collect data with minimum impact) • remote monitoring, including passive acoustic or video monitoring and recording • import, export, receipt, and transfer of legally collected parts (e.g., by permit or subsistence harvest) • collection of feces and sloughed skin or taking tissue samples from dead animals • studies on captive animals, except for captive propagation/breeding for release to the wild

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • capturing, handling, immobilizing, marking, tagging with instrumentation and tissue sampling
B2	<p>Issuance of permits or permit amendments under section 104 of the MMPA for take or import of marine mammals for scientific research, enhancement, commercial or educational photography or public display purposes; and issuance of Letters of Confirmation under the General Authorization for scientific research involving only Level B harassment.</p>	<p>Issuance of a scientific research or enhancement permit or modification for take, import, or export of marine mammals during:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aerial, vessel, and ground surveys using remotely operated vehicles and manned vehicles • controlled, close approach photography and remote sampling (e.g., biopsy, breath) and tagging with instrumentation • behavioral observations of animals (e.g., snorkel, or on-foot observers trained to collect data with minimum impact) • remote monitoring, including passive acoustic or video monitoring and recording • import, export, receipt, and transfer of legally collected parts (e.g., by permit or subsistence harvest) • collection of feces and sloughed skin or taking tissue samples from dead animals • studies on captive animals, except for captive propagation/breeding for release to the wild • capturing, handling, immobilizing, marking, tagging with instrumentation and tissue sampling
B3	<p>Issuance of, and amendments to, “low effect” Incidental Take Permits and their supporting “low effect” Habitat Conservation Plans under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA.</p>	
B4	<p>Issuance of incidental harassment authorizations under section 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA for the incidental, but not intentional, take by harassment of marine mammals during specified activities and for which no serious injury or mortality is anticipated.</p>	
B5	<p>Issuance of, or amendments to, general permits for activities that are included in established permit categories at 15 C.F.R. pt. 922 and that meet the regulatory review criteria at 15 C.F.R. pt. 922, that limit any potential impacts so that the proposed</p>	<p>Issuance of, or amendments to general permits for activities including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on the water tours to observe sanctuary resources for purposes of education

	activity will be conducted in a manner compatible with the National Marine Sanctuaries Act's primary objective of resource protection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> documentary filming while conducting low overflights (e.g., Big Blue Live) ocean outfall and other types of water quality and physical ocean monitoring
B6	Issuance of, or amendments to, special use permits for activities in a national marine sanctuary that are necessary to either establish conditions of access to and use of any sanctuary resource or promote public use and understanding of a sanctuary resource and must be conducted in a manner that does not destroy, cause the loss of, or injure sanctuary resources in accordance with the National Marine Sanctuaries Act.	<p>Issuance of, or amendments to special use permits for activities including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the placement and recovery of objects associated with public or private events on non-living substrate of the submerged lands of any national marine sanctuary (e.g., buoys for boat races) the placement and recovery of objects related to commercial filming (e.g., filming props) the continued presence of commercial submarine cables on or within the submerged lands of any national marine sanctuary the disposal of cremated human remains within or into any national marine sanctuary recreational diving near the USS <i>Monitor</i> fireworks displays operation of aircraft below the minimum altitude in restricted zones
B7	Issuance of or amendments to, authorizations for activities allowed by a valid federal, regional, state, local or tribal government approval (e.g., leases, permits and licenses) issued after the effective date of sanctuary designation or expansion, so long as such authorizations are based upon a consideration of the regulatory review criteria at 15 C.F.R. pt. 922, and will only result in negligible effects to sanctuary resources.	<p>Issuance of or amendments to, authorizations for activities including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> California Coastal Commission Coastal Development Permits, such as those for seawalls, coastal armoring, etc. river breach activities National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits nearshore construction and repairs placing markers or mooring buoys for purposes other than those that would solely qualify for a general permit
B8	Issuance of, or amendments to certifications for pre-existing activities authorized by a valid federal, regional, state, local, or tribal government approval (e.g., leases, permits and licenses) or rights of subsistence use or access in existence on the date of the designation or expansion of any national marine sanctuary where the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries issues terms and conditions that are either ministerial or prescribe avoidance,	Issuance of, or amendments to, certifications for pre-existing activities such as submarine cables and oil platforms

	minimization, or mitigation measures designed to ensure negligible effects to sanctuary resources.	
B9	Issuance of, or amendments to Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (as originally established by Presidential Proclamation 8031, and named Papahānaumokuākea by Presidential Proclamation 8112) permits for activities that are included in established permit categories (50 C.F.R. pt. 404) and that meet the regulatory review criteria at (50 C.F.R. § 404.11), that limit any potential impacts so that the proposed activity will be conducted in a manner compatible with the monument’s primary objective of resource protection.	Issuance of or amendments to permits for activities including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • biological and ecosystem assessment monitoring • connectivity studies • ocean exploration and education • distance-learning curriculum development and implementation • marine debris removal and alien invasive species monitoring • marine heritage, conservation, and management; • refuge operations and management • non-instrumental navigation training aboard traditional Polynesian voyaging wa’ā • Native Hawaiian cultural research, observation, and practices • recreational activities within the Midway Atoll Special Management Area.
B10	Issuance of, or amendments to, Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument special ocean use permits for activities or use of the monument that are engaged in to generate revenue or profits for one or more of the persons associated with the activity or use, and do not destroy, cause the loss of, or injure monument resources.	Issuance of or amendments to special ocean use permits for activities, including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ocean-based ecotourism and other activities, such as educational and research activities that are engaged in to generate revenue • documentary filming and photography activities of wildlife, cultural, and historical features • eco-tourism and history focused travel tours
B11	Issuance of, or amendments to permits or authorizations for activities that are conducted within Marine National Monuments other than Papahānaumokuākea that are limited in scope so that the potential impacts of the proposed activities will be conducted in a manner compatible with a monument’s primary objective of resource protection, and do not destroy, cause the loss of, or injure monument resources.	
B12	Issuance of Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs), Scientific Research Permits (SRPs), and other permits for research that may impact species regulated under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act	Issuance of permits for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional catch of regulated or unregulated species for the purposes of market testing, scientific research, or educational display

	(MSA) and the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (ATCA). This CE is limited to permits that authorize activities that are limited in size, magnitude, or duration with no potential for significant individual or cumulative impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the collection of specimens for public display purposes (e.g. for aquaria) • trial participation of fishery participants in new or modified fishery management programs (e.g. cooperatives, limited access, stamps or tags) • minor activities, allowances, or exemptions to facilitate a previously-authorized Research Set-Aside program
Habitat Restoration Actions		
Reference Number	Categorical Exclusion	Examples
C1	<p>Habitat restoration actions, provided that such action: 1) transplants only organisms currently or formerly present at the site or in its immediate vicinity (if transplant is a component of the action); 2) does not require substantial placement of fill or dredging; 3) does not involve any removal of debris, excavation, or conditioning of soils unless such removal of debris, excavation, or conditioning of soils is geographically limited to the impact area such that site conditions will not impede or negatively alter natural processes, is in compliance with all permit and disposal requirements, and will not impact critical aquifers or recharge areas; and 4) does not involve an added risk of human or environmental exposure to toxic or hazardous substances, pathogens, or radioactive materials.</p> <p>Notes: If applicable, limitations and mitigation measures identified in the NOAA Restoration Center Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Habitat Restoration Actions must be followed. This CE includes, but is not limited to, response or restoration actions under CERCLA, OPA, or NMSA, if such actions help to restore an ecosystem, habitat, biotic community, or population of living resources to a determinable pre-impact condition prior to the incident leading to the response or restoration.</p>	<p>Revegetation of habitats or topographical features, such as planting or restoration of seagrass meadows, mangrove swamps, salt marshes, coastal dunes, stream banks, or other wetland, coastal, or riparian areas</p> <p>Enhancement of natural recovery processes through the use of exclusion methods such as fencing to protect stream corridors, riparian areas or other sensitive habitats</p> <p>Dune restoration following walkover installation, including, but not limited to planting native vegetation and regrading</p> <p>Replacement or restoration of shellfish beds through placement of reef substrate, transplant, or restocking</p> <p>Structural or biological repair or restoration of coral reefs</p> <p>Restoration of tidal or non-tidal wetland inundation through enlargement, replacement or repair of existing culverts, or through modification of existing tide gates</p> <p>Restoration, rehabilitation, or repair of fish passageways or spawning areas</p>

Additional External Funding		
Reference Number	Categorical Exclusion	Examples
D1	Financial activities for the following financial services: (1) Loans for purchase, refinancing, or reconstruction of fishing vessels and purchase or refinancing of individual fishing quota through the Fisheries Finance Program; (2) Deferred tax program provided to fishermen to construct, reconstruct, or acquire fishing vessels through the Capital Construction Fund Program; and (3) Compensation to fishermen for economic and property losses caused by oil and gas obstructions on the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf under the Fishermen's Contingency Fund.	
D2	Provision of a grant, a contract or other financial assistance to a State, Fishery Management Council or Marine Fisheries Commission under 16 U.S.C. §1881a(d).	
Research Actions		
Reference Number	Categorical Exclusion	Examples
E1	Activities conducted in laboratories and facilities where research practices and safeguards prevent environmental impacts.	<p>Research, development, testing, and evaluation studies, including but not limited to analysis of previously collected samples or data</p> <p>Development and use of mathematical models and computer simulations</p> <p>Synthesis of previously collected data or information</p> <p>Database development or maintenance</p> <p>Software development and testing; fabricating or enhancing prototype or bench-scale research equipment or instrumentation and equipment calibration</p> <p>Processing methods to include, but are not limited to filtration, fluorimeters, high performance liquid chromatography, and mass spectrometers</p>

		Research and development or pilot projects conducted to verify a concept before demonstration actions (e.g., testbeds and proving grounds such as the Space Weather Prediction Testbed, Hazardous Weather Testbed, Climate Testbed that facilitate transition of research capabilities to operational implementation including pre-deployment testing and operational readiness/suitability evaluations)
E2	Social science projects and programs, including economic, political science, human geography, demography, and sociology studies, including information collection activities in support of studies.	<p>Developing and administering social science surveys</p> <p>Collecting and analyzing information from telephone, mail, online, and in-person surveys</p> <p>Cataloging and compiling sources of socioeconomic data</p>
E3	Activities to collect aquatic, terrestrial, and atmospheric data in a nondestructive manner.	<p>Use of mobile platforms (e.g., ships, aircraft, balloons, vehicles) to study biological, chemical, or physical processes</p> <p>Use of conductivity, temperature, and depth instruments or a moving vessel profiler from a platform, including the use of drop cameras</p> <p>Collection of grab samples</p> <p>Collecting and analyzing water samples through hand sampling, small pumps, a deployment rope or diver collections</p> <p>Collection of physical, chemical, and biological measurements from existing buoys, moorings, and similar instrumentation</p> <p>Deployment, operation, and retrieval of a limited number of ROVs, ASVs, AUVs, buoys, moorings, or similar instrumentation to conduct non-destructive sampling and collection of data from those instruments once installed, including physical, chemical, and biological measurements, and visual data</p> <p>Monitoring of established deep rod Surface Elevation Table (SET) marks, tide and current gauges in coastal habitats, such as bays, estuaries, marshes, and wetlands, to measure wetland elevation change to support science and monitoring</p>

		Collection of cultural and environmental data to find and assess archaeological resources
E4	Activities that remotely survey or observe living resources in the field using non-invasive techniques, which have little to no potential to adversely affect the environment or interfere with organisms or habitat.	<p>Visual observation of marine mammals and sea turtles from stationary or mobile platforms using best management practices</p> <p>Deployment and use of non-animal borne electronic monitoring devices including cameras, environmental data loggers, buoys, passive acoustics, and other non-invasive data recording instruments to study population structure, behavior, and movements</p> <p>Behavioral observations of animals (e.g., snorkel, or on-foot observers trained to collect data with minimum impact)</p> <p>Scuba diver visual observation surveys, photographic and video surveys, use of quadrats, meter tapes and other hand-held equipment or devices to measure water quality parameters (i.e. hand-held PAMS) or to quantify fish, benthic, mobile and sessile communities where there is no adverse impact to benthic communities and best management practices are observed</p>
E5	Activities involving invasive techniques or methods that are conducted for scientific purposes, when such activities are conducted in accordance with all applicable provisions of the Endangered Species Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Such activities will be limited to impacting living resources on a small scale relative to the size of their populations, and limited to methodologies and locations to ensure that there are no long-term adverse ecosystem impacts.	<p>Acoustic or traditional fish tagging</p> <p>Activities related to the collection of data and handling of marine mammals that strand and are responded to through the official marine mammal stranding network</p> <p>Studies on previously collected captive animals, not including captive propagation/breeding for release to the wild</p> <p>Small-scale, short-term finfish, crustacean, and bivalve sampling using standard gear and methods including crab/fish traps, gill nets, otter trawls, and electrofishing; provided permits from state authorities are obtained when necessary</p> <p>Fin clips or scales collected from fish</p> <p>Collection of coral tissue samples (single polyp - 1cm² or larger sections up to 10 cm branch tip) using hand tools such as syringes, shears, or pliers</p>

		<p>Coral mucus samples using blunt tip syringes</p> <p>Coral coring (large cores, 10-15 cm diameter X 0.5-5 m length, and small cores, 2.5 cm diameter X 0.5-1m length) removed from large massive colonies</p> <p>Measurement of coral colonies using hand-place calipers or flexible tapes which briefly stay in contact with the coral colony</p> <p>Limited collection of wild spawned gametes</p> <p>Limited collection (removal or manipulation experiments) of corallivores (e.g. snails, starfish, fish)</p> <p>Limited collection of fish and motile invertebrates to characterize life history stage, fecundity, growth rates, and/or diet</p> <p>Marking coral colonies using plastic tags, nails, flagging tape, or other identifying markers placed adjacent to coral colony in non-living substrate</p> <p>Limited collection of colonizing and cryptic species using collection devices (Autonomous Reef Monitoring Structures or settling plates) temporarily placed on reefs</p>
E6	Research that involves the development and testing of new and modified fishing gear and technology in order to reduce adverse effects from fishing gear on non-target species, and is limited in size, magnitude, or duration with no potential for significant individual or cumulative impacts.	Engineer and test bycatch reduction gear (e.g., Turtle Excluder Devices, leader lines, lazy chains, hook types, weak links)
E7	Collection of data and biological samples as part of previously authorized commercial and/or recreational fishing activities.	<p>Collecting data from observer coverage onboard commercial and recreational fishing vessels</p> <p>Deploying electronic monitoring technology on fishing vessels to gather catch, effort, and bycatch information</p>
E8	Biological, chemical, food production, ecological or toxicological research conducted in closed system mesocosm/aquaculture facilities that are conducted according to recommended protocols that provide containment and disposal of waste, chemicals, toxins, non-native species, etc., in	

	compliance with established Federal and state regulatory guidelines, and best management practices.	
Real and Personal Property Improvement, Maintenance, and Construction Actions		
Reference Number	Categorical Exclusion	Examples
F1	Siting, construction (or modification), and operation of support buildings and support structures (including, but not limited to, trailers and prefabricated buildings) within or contiguous to an already developed area (where active utilities and currently used roads are readily accessible).	
F2	In-kind replacement of personal property and fixtures and other components of real property when such activities do not result in a substantial change in the existing construction footprint. In-kind replacement includes installation of new components to replace outmoded components if the replacement does not result in a substantial change to the design capacity, or function of the facility.	Replacement, retrofit, and upgrade of existing microwave/radio communications towers that only require disturbance of previously disturbed ground Replacement of existing piers or floats Replacement of small structures and equipment such as sheds and ice machines
F3	(a) Routine repair, maintenance, and improvement of real and personal property, where such activities are required to maintain and preserve buildings, structures, infrastructures, vehicles, and equipment in a condition suitable to be used for its designed purpose. (b) New construction, expansion and/or improvement of facilities where all of the following conditions are met: (1) The site is in a developed area and/or a previously disturbed site; (2) The structure and proposed use are compatible with applicable Federal, Tribal, State, and local planning and zoning standards and consistent with Federally approved State coastal management programs and the National Historic Preservation Act; (3) The proposed use will not substantially increase the number of motor vehicles, marine vessels, or aircraft at the facility or in the area;	Weatherization of NOAA-owned real or personal property Routine maintenance on NOAA small boats, aircraft, or ships Minor construction actions take to repair safety and fire deficiencies, improve indoor air quality, or renovate interior spaces conducted in accordance with approved facility master plans on the interiors of non-historic NOAA-owned or leased buildings Routine maintenance and repair of existing piers, booms, buoys, or floats Renovation of an interior floor of an office building Construction of picnic facilities and gazebos in already-disturbed areas Modification of laboratory facilities within an existing building Installation and repair of fencing

	<p>(4) The site and scale of construction or improvement are consistent with those of existing, adjacent, or nearby buildings;</p> <p>(5) The construction or improvement will not result in uses that exceed existing infrastructure capacities (e.g., electrical, roads, sewer, water, parking);</p> <p>(6) The construction or improvement will not result in operational uses that adversely affect the surrounding community (e.g., noise); and</p> <p>(7) The community-valued view sheds are not adversely affected.</p> <p>(c) Installation, repair, maintenance, and enhancement of public access facilities and infrastructure, if the activity:</p> <p>(1) Is small-scale and nondestructive; and</p> <p>(2) Is consistent with applicable right-of-way conditions and approved land use plans.</p>	<p>Installing and maintaining refuse and recycling stations</p> <p>Installing and maintaining security sensors and safety equipment, including, but not limited to railings and fire suppression systems</p> <p>Installation, repair, maintenance, and enhancement of: short public access trails and walkways; beach or dune walkovers; boardwalks; boat ramps; docks; benches; observation platforms. Small-scale routine repair/maintenance of such public access facilities and access routes, including grading, clearing vegetation, and minor soil stabilization</p> <p>Installing signage</p>
F4	Routine grounds keeping and landscaping activities where ground disturbance is limited to previously disturbed areas (e.g., previously filled paved, or cleared areas).	
F5	<p>Installation, operation, maintenance, improvements, repair, upgrade, removal, and/or replacement of instruments or instrument systems in or on:</p> <p>1. an existing structure or object (e.g., tower, antenna, building, pier, buoy, terrestrial vehicle, or bridge) or</p> <p>2. on previously disturbed (e.g., filled, paved, or cleared) ground, or</p> <p>3. on undisturbed ground, if the equipment installation, operation, and removal will require no or minimal ground disturbance.</p> <p>Microwave/radio communications towers and antennas must be limited to 200 feet in height without guy wires.</p>	<p>PORTS® instruments and systems, either permanent, temporary, or re-locatable (e.g., antennas, telemetry, water level instruments, tide stations)</p> <p>Radar equipment that conforms to the current American National Standards Institute/Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers guidelines for maximum permissible exposure to electromagnetic fields.</p> <p>Temporary installation and operation of sampling instrumentation (e.g., tide gauges)</p> <p>Installation of deep rod Surface Elevation Table (SET) marks, tide and current gauges in coastal habitats, such as bays, estuaries, marshes, and wetlands, to measure wetland elevation</p>
F6	The determination that real property is excess to the needs of the Agency, when the real property is excessed in conformity with General Services	

	Administration procedures or is legislatively authorized to be exceeded.	
F7	The disposal, demolition or removal of real property and related improvements, buildings and structures, including associated site restoration, and the disposal of personal property and debris in accordance with all applicable agency procedures and legal requirements.	Disposal of equipment or waste, (or contracts for waste disposal) to established, permitted landfills and facilities (e.g., recycling, reclamation, and treatment facilities and incinerators) Declaration of aircraft and/or ships as excessed to MARAD
Operational Actions		
Reference Number	Categorical Exclusion	Examples
G1	Routine administrative actions such as (1) program planning, direction and evaluation, (2) administrative tasks, services and support including personnel and fiscal management, advisory services, document and policy preparation, and records management, and (3) development, establishment, and revisions to documents including, but not limited to interagency agreements, memoranda of understanding, memoranda of agreement, cooperative agreements, and university agreements. This CE does not include any associated activities proposed in these documents beyond the administrative task of creating and establishing the document. Actions subsequently funded by or undertaken pursuant to the approved documents may require additional NEPA review at the time those actions are proposed.	Executive direction, strategic, operational, and program planning Budgeting Administrative services, including personnel, fiscal, management, and administrative activities (e.g., recruiting, processing, paying, recordkeeping, resource management, budgeting, training, and travel) Administrative support to advisory bodies Establishment or modification of an interagency agreement, memorandum of understanding, or university agreements for administrative purposes Interagency or inter-line office funds transfer for administrative purposes Full or partial cooperative conservation agreements under section 6 of the ESA
G2	Routine movement of mobile assets, such as vessels and aircraft, for homeport reassignments or repair/overhaul, where no new support facilities are required.	
G3	Topographic, bathymetric, land use and land cover, geological, hydrologic mapping, charting, and surveying services that do not involve major surface or subsurface land disturbance and involve no permanent physical, chemical, or biological change to the environment.	Use of lidar technology and other remote sensing, including aircraft operations for mapping applications

G4	Basic environmental services and monitoring, such as weather observations, communications, analyses, and predictions; environmental satellite operations and services; digital and physical environmental data and information services; air and water quality observations and analysis, and IT operations. All such activities must be conducted within existing facilities.	<p>Office-based weather observations, communications, predictions, and data analyses</p> <p>Office-based integrated ocean observing system data analysis and management</p> <p>Office-based tidal and tsunami data analysis and management</p> <p>Collection and processing of navigation, schedule status, calibration, and system information from satellites in orbit to monitor their operations</p> <p>Collection and processing of data and images transmitted from satellites</p> <p>Operation and maintenance of the NOAA Satellite Information Service website</p> <p>Collection, processing, and electronic dissemination of climatic, geophysical and oceanographic data</p>
G5	Enforcement operations conducted under legislative mandate such as the MSA, ESA, MMPA, the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 (Lacey), and/or the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. This does not include bringing judicial or administrative civil or criminal enforcement actions which are outside the scope of NEPA in accordance with 40 CFR 1508.18(a).	<p>Investigations and patrols for civil and criminal violations, seizure of illegal property and contraband, and gathering of information on criminal activities</p> <p>Developing and deploying Vessel Monitoring Systems on fishing vessels for the enforcement of fishery regulations</p>
G6	Actions that change the NEXRAD radar coverage patterns that do not lower the lowest scan elevation and do not result in direct scanning of previously non-scanned terrain by the NEXRAD main beam.	
G7	Preparation of policy directives, rules, regulations, and guidelines of an administrative, financial, legal, technical, or procedural nature, or for which the environmental effects are too broad, speculative or conjectural to lend themselves to meaningful analysis and will be subject later to the NEPA process, either collectively or on a case-by-case basis.	
G8	Activities that are educational, informational, or advisory to other agencies, public and private entities, visitors, individuals, or the general public, including training exercises and simulations.	On-site personnel providing support (e.g., data, modeling, interpretation, and administrative) to the National Response Framework of National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan

		<p>Formal or informal education and scholarship programs (e.g., NOAA's Bay Watershed Education and Training Program, National Marine Sanctuary Foundation and associated programs, Nancy Foster Scholarships, The Jason Project, Science on a Sphere, Cooperative Program for Earth System Education)</p> <p>Outreach events to provide training, education, and environmental literacy</p> <p>Experiential learning activities that take place in the environment (e.g., field trips to terrestrial, coastal, and marine/aquatic habitats for educational purposes; Nature's Classroom)</p> <p>Marine debris public education and outreach</p>
G9	<p>Actions taken to identify, determine sources of, assess, prevent, reduce, remove, dispose, or recycle marine debris when removal is undertaken in a non-destructive manner and actions are in accordance with Federal, State, and local laws and regulations for environmental protection, and where all relevant regulatory consultation, and/or permit requirements have been satisfied.</p>	<p>Compaction, recycling, or financial incentives for returning fishing gear or other materials that may potentially become marine debris</p> <p>Identification, assessment and sourcing activities including field-, laboratory-, and computer-based research, assessment and monitoring activities</p> <p>Activities to remove marine debris (e.g., waste products, derelict fishing gear, derelict vessels) from upland, coastal and marine (surface and submerged) environments including the use of manual and mechanical removal techniques</p>
Acquisition and Real Property Actions		
Reference Number	Categorical Exclusion	Examples
H1	<p>Procurement of labor, equipment, materials, data and software needed to execute mission requirements in accordance with applicable procurement regulations, executive orders, and policies. This includes, but is not limited to,</p>	<p>Procurement of general supplies</p> <p>Procurement of architectural and engineering studies and supplies</p>

	procurement of mobile and portable equipment that is stored in existing structures or facilities.	Procurement of non-invasive site surveys to support environmental compliance requirements Procurement of Vessel Monitoring Systems or navigation instrumentation
H2	Procurement of space by purchase or lease of or within an existing facility or structure in accordance with applicable procurement regulations, executive orders, and policies when there is no change in the general type of use, no new construction of buildings or utilities, and minimal change in design from the previous occupancy level.	New leases Succeeding leases Extensions of leases
H3	Outgranting of government-controlled property in accordance with applicable regulations, executive orders, and policies to a Federal entity for any purpose consistent with the existing land or facility use or to a non-Federal entity, when the use will remain substantially the same.	
H4	Acquisition of real property (including fee simple estates, leaseholds, and easements) that is not acquired through condemnation of a lease interest, and will not result in significant change in use and does not involve construction or modification.	Lease of real property rights to utilize existing structures (e.g., towers, facilities, piers, bridges) to site equipment Lease of existing piers without any modification Lease of land (submerged or not submerged) for purposes that do not involve construction or modification Funding for land acquisition under the CZMA and Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act to purchase land (submerged or not submerged) or interests in land that includes but is not limited to conservation easements, for purposes that do not involve construction or modification
H5	Granting easements or rights of entry to use NOAA controlled property for activities that, if conducted by NOAA, could be categorically excluded. Grants of easements or rights-of-way for the use of NOAA controlled real property complementing the use of existing rights-of-way or real property use for use by vehicles (not to include significant increases in vehicle loading); electrical, telephone, and other transmission and communication lines; water, wastewater, stormwater, and irrigation pipelines,	

	pumping stations, and facilities; and similar utility and transportation uses.	
H6	Relocation of employees into existing Federally-owned or commercially leased office space within the same metropolitan area not involving a substantial increase in the number of motor or other vehicles at a facility.	
H7	Transferring real property to a non-Federal entity, an agency other than GSA, as well as to States, local agencies and Indian Tribes, including return of public domain lands to the Department of the Interior.	