



**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

**Office of the  
Assistant Secretary  
for Administration**

Office of Operations

1400 Independence  
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Washington, DC  
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APR 29 2009

Mr. Horst Greczmiel  
Associate Director for NEPA Oversight  
White House Council on Environmental Quality  
722 Jackson Place, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Mr. Greczmiel,

The USDA Office of Operations is submitting the Council on Environmental Quality's required reporting form concerning the status of environmental compliance documentation for programs and projects to be implemented with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. The enclosed reporting form identifies the level of environmental compliance documentation prepared as of April 24, 2009 for the South Building Modernization project.

The USDA South Building was built between 1930 and 1936. The South Building is over 2 million square feet and houses 5,800 federal employees and contractors. From 1995-2003 funds were appropriated to modernize the South Building. An eight phased modernization plan was developed. The Modernization Project was reviewed and a Categorical Exclusion was issued in 1997. I have reviewed the current specifications of the project and found them to be consistent with the original criteria for the determination of Categorical Exclusion.

Currently, USDA has completed three of the eight phases of the South Building Modernization Project (Phases 1, 2 and 3). Design of Phase 4A was completed in FY 2006. Updating the design prior to construction will be required and will be accomplished using FY 2009 Agriculture Buildings and Facilities and Rental Payments Appropriation. Design update will take approximately three months and construction will be completed in 15 months. USDA will use the \$24 million Recovery Act funds to begin renovation of Wing 5 of the South Building. The construction portion of the project will be open competition through an Invitation for Bid process.

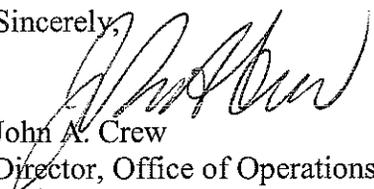
Mr. Greczmiel

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As of the required reporting date, there are no obligations that have been made under the treasury symbol for the modernization project. It is anticipated that there will be a contract award in the fourth quarter of FY 2009.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 202-720-3937

Sincerely,



John A. Crew  
Director, Office of Operations

Enclosure