

PMC-EF2a

(20102)

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
EERE PROJECT MANAGEMENT CENTER  
NEPA DETERMINATION**



RECIPIENT: University at Albany

STATE: NY

**PROJECT TITLE :** Geothermal Heat Pump System for New Student Housing at University at Albany

<b>Funding Opportunity Announcement Number</b>	<b>Procurement Instrument Number</b>	<b>NEPA Control Number</b>	<b>CID Number</b>
DE-FOA-EE0000116	DE-EE0003009	GFO-10-305	0

Based on my review of the information concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (authorized under DOE Order 451.1A), I have made the following determination:

**CX, EA, EIS APPENDIX AND NUMBER:**

Description:

- A9** Information gathering (including, but not limited to, literature surveys, inventories, audits), data analysis (including computer modeling), document preparation (such as conceptual design or feasibility studies, analytical energy supply and demand studies), and dissemination (including, but not limited to, document mailings, publication, and distribution; and classroom training and informational programs), but not including site characterization or environmental monitoring.
- B3.1** Onsite and offsite site characterization and environmental monitoring, including siting, construction (or modification), operation, and dismantlement or closing (abandonment) of characterization and monitoring devices and siting, construction, and associated operation of a small-scale laboratory building or renovation of a room in an existing building for sample analysis. Activities covered include, but are not limited to, site characterization and environmental monitoring under CERCLA and RCRA. Specific activities include, but are not limited to:

**Rational for determination:**

The University at Albany is proposing to install a Ground Source Heat Pump which will service a 500-bed apartment-style student housing to be constructed at the Uptown campus. However this project is in the process of conducting their feasibility study and has yet to select neither a Ground Source Heat Pump system nor the exact project locations for installation. Therefore DOE will issue a determination for Phase 1 "Feasibility Study and Conceptual Engineering Design" of the project. Phase 2 "Installation and Commissioning of Equipment" will require further NEPA review immediately following site selection and conceptual system design. DOE will require all information collected during Phase 1 to be submitted to the Department for review before project implementation can occur. Phase 1 investigations will include the drilling of a test borehole at the proposed project location in order to determine the thermal conductivity of the soil, each borehole will be contiguous to the building and will be on previously disturbed land this test borehole will not effect any Wetland, Floodplain, and/or Coastal area.

This information gathering presents no environmental impact and therefore this task is Categorical Excluded under CX A9 "Information Gathering" and CX A11 "technical advice" from further NEPA review.

The drilling of a test borehole will had no significant impact to human health and/or environment due the restrictions and mitigated measures outlined above, therefore the drilling of test boreholes for thermal conductivity testing is Categorical Excluded under B3.1 "Environmental Monitoring and Site Characterization".

**NEPA PROVISION**

DOE has made a conditional NEPA determination for this award, and funding for certain tasks under this award is contingent upon the final NEPA determination.

Insert the following language in the award:

You are restricted from taking any action using federal funds, which would have an adverse affect on the environment or limit the choice of reasonable alternatives prior to DOE/NNSA providing either a NEPA clearance or a final NEPA decision regarding the project.

Prohibited actions include:

Phase 2 "Installation and Commissioning of Equipment"

Any Demolition, Construction, and/or Installation related to the proposed project. Excluding activities related to the test borehole.

Final Project Design

Each test borehole will be contiguous to the school and will be on previously disturbed land this test borehole cannot be drilled on or directly surrounding any Wetland, Floodplain, and/or Coastal area.

This restriction does not preclude you from:  
Phase 1 "Feasibility Study and Conceptual Engineering Design"

All other actions which involve information gathering (including, but not limited to, literature surveys, inventories, audits), data analysis (including computer modeling), document preparation (such as conceptual design or feasibility studies, analytical energy supply and demand studies), and dissemination (including, but not limited to, document mailings, publication, and distribution; and classroom training and informational programs).

If you move forward with activities that are not authorized for federal funding by the DOE Contracting Officer in advance of the final NEPA decision, you are doing so at risk of not receiving federal funding and such costs may not be recognized as allowable cost share.

Note to Specialist :

None Given.

**SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.**

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature:  Date: 3/23/10  
NEPA Compliance Officer

**FIELD OFFICE MANAGER DETERMINATION**

Field Office Manager review required

**NCO REQUESTS THE FIELD OFFICE MANAGER REVIEW FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON:**

- Proposed action fits within a categorical exclusion but involves a high profile or controversial issue that warrants Field Office Manager's attention.
- Proposed action falls within an EA or EIS category and therefore requires Field Office Manager's review and determination.

**BASED ON MY REVIEW I CONCUR WITH THE DETERMINATION OF THE NCO :**

Field Office Manager's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Field Office Manager