

PMC-EF2a

(20102)

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



RECIPIENT: Geothermal Technical Partners, Inc., Reno NV

STATE: NV

**PROJECT TITLE :** Recovery Act: Effectiveness of shallow temperature surveys to target a geothermal reservoir at previously explored site at McGee Mountain, Nevada

<b>Funding Opportunity Announcement Number</b>	<b>Procurement Instrument Number</b>	<b>NEPA Control Number</b>	<b>CID Number</b>
DE-FOA-0000109	DE-EE0002830	GFO-10-374	2830

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:

Geothermal Technical Partners, Inc. (GTP) would conduct geophysical and field geologic exploration, drill thermal gradient holes and two exploratory slim-hole wells, and test the wells to evaluate the potential geothermal resource at McGee Mountain, Nevada. No laboratory work is anticipated beyond sample analysis of non-hazardous geothermal fluids, which would be done at Creek Environmental Laboratories, Inc. (an OSHA approved laboratory) in San Luis Obispo, California.

The project is divided into three phases with multiple tasks and sub-tasks.

## Phase 1

1. Integration of existing geological and shallow temperature survey
2. Application of innovative geothermal exploration and resource definition techniques hydroprobe survey – A 3809 Notice has been submitted and approved by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Winnemucca District Office for this survey which would be conducted by Pediment Gold LLC with GTP utilizing only a small portion of the overall survey for this project.
3. Application of conventional resource definition techniques
  - 3.1. Detailed gravity survey - An NOI has been submitted and approved by the BLM Winnemucca District Office for this survey.

Since the locations of the temperature gradient holes, MT survey area, and confirmation wells have not been determined, Phase 1, Task 3.2 through Phase 3, Task 5 cannot be analyzed at this time. A NEPA determination for these tasks in Phase 1, 2, and 3 of the project would be too early to determine but would need to be made prior to GTP beginning any drilling.

- 3.2. Temperature Gradient Drilling – Approximately 14 intermediate depth holes are planned in two separate drilling programs. Results from tasks 2 and 3.1 would be used to target the holes in the first drilling program and results from the first program would be utilized in the targeting of the holes for the second program.
- 3.3. (Optional) MT Survey – this may or may not be done based on data collected from previous tasks.

## Phase 2

4. Resource Confirmation Well Drilling – two confirmation wells would be targeted based on data acquired from Phase 1.

## Phase 3

5. Flow testing of well
6. Project Management and Reporting – Reports and other deliverables would be provided in accordance with the Federal Assistance Reporting Checklist following the instructions included therein.



**\*\*Note:** Prior to this NEPA determination, a Limited Release of Funds was authorized via STRIPES req 10EE003275: "This action modifies the Special Terms and Conditions of this award to incorporate the Limited Availability of Funds Clause to authorize DOE funds in the amount of \$160,928 for expenditure by the Recipient." The following tasks were covered in the blanket CX for the Limited release of Funds modification:  
Task 1.0, Integration of Existing Geological and Shallow Temperature Data

Condition of Approval: Allowable – Phase 1 (Tasks 2 and 3.1) and Phase 3 (Task 6); Prohibited – Phase 1 (Tasks 3.2 and 3.3), Phase 2 (Task 4), and Phase 3 (Task 5).

Phase 1 (Tasks 2 and 3.1) and Phase 3 (Task 6) of this project are comprised of information gathering, data analysis, document preparation; and onsite site characterization activities; therefore the DOE has categorized this proposal into Categorical Exclusions A9 and B3.1.

**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 1 (Tasks 3.2 and 3.3), Phase 2 (Task 4), and Phase 3 (Task 5)

This restriction does not preclude you from:

Phase 1 (Tasks 1, 2, and 3.1) and Phase 3 (Task 6)

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 :

This project involves tasks which are unallowable under NEPA prior to submission of additional information and an additional NEPA review (Tasks 3.2, 3.3, 4, and 5). NEPA requests that this project be placed on ASAP Approval.

EF2a prepared by Casey Strickland

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

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

6/21/10

**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: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Field Office Manager

Date: \_\_\_\_\_