

PMC-EF2a

(20402)

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



RECIPIENT: WA Department of Commerce

STATE: WA

PROJECT TITLE : Cascade Community Wind Mid Scale Wind Turbines

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
	DE-EE0000139	GFO -10-603	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.
- B5.1** Actions to conserve energy, demonstrate potential energy conservation, and promote energy-efficiency that do not increase the indoor concentrations of potentially harmful substances. These actions may involve financial and technical assistance to individuals (such as builders, owners, consultants, designers), organizations (such as utilities), and state and local governments. Covered actions include, but are not limited to: programmed lowering of thermostat settings, placement of timers on hot water heaters, installation of solar hot water systems, installation of efficient lighting, improvements in generator efficiency and appliance efficiency ratings, development of energy-efficient manufacturing or industrial practices, and small-scale conservation and renewable energy research and development and pilot projects. The actions could involve building renovations or new structures in commercial, residential, agricultural, or industrial sectors. These actions do not include rulemakings, standard-settings, or proposed DOE legislation.

Rational for determination:

Cascade Community Wind Company (CCWC) is proposing a project that would use DOE funding to construct, operate and maintain two, 120 kW Vesta V20 wind turbines located at two separate sites in Kittitas County, Washington. The purpose and need of this project is to develop and construct a community wind turbine to the benefit of the private landowner and the Kittitas County community.

The dimensions of both wind turbines are a 60 foot (18.3 meter) diameter rotor and an 80 foot (24.4 meter) monopole tower. Because the turbines do not exceed 180 feet (55 meters), this project does not require FAA clearance.

The Knudson site #1, located at 47°04'32.80"N 120°43'15.30"W, is an irrigated pasture land already heavily impacted by agricultural uses. The environmental footprint for the tower site is less than one acre. Construction of the eight foot square concrete pad will be straightforward and follow industry procedures. At this time, construction of the wind turbine will not require a rocked roadbed since the proposed tower location site is in an old agricultural field, which is able to handle heavy equipment.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Office of Rural Development provides financial assistance to programs intended to improve the economy and quality of life in rural America. The USDA prepared a preliminary site assessment for the recipient. Based on the findings of the USDA after consultation with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the proposed site is not a priority habitat and there were no indications of priority species within two miles of the turbine. There are no known federally listed threatened or endangered species within one mile of the proposed site. There are known occurrences of golden and bald eagles near the Yakima River, approximately 1.5 miles east of the proposed site. The general site area does not provide large trees and isolation, which is conducive to bald eagle, golden eagle or other raptor nesting species.

The proposed site is on top of a hill, is not in a wetland and there are no natural surface waters on the site, or within one mile of the site. According to the data provided, there would be no affect of this one turbine on any state or federally threatened or endangered species, or any critical habitat as a result of this action.

In May 2010, CCWC hired Cultural Resource Consultants (CRC, Inc.) to complete a cultural resource assessment of this project and found no known national register sites near this project. The Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) concurred with the CRC's determination of No Historic Properties Affected. In order to mitigate potential impacts, the CCWC has committed to having an archeological technician on site during excavation to look for

any indication of subsurface cultural material.

The 3 Bar G site #3, located at 47o06'03.07"N 120o45'04.74"W, is a heavily grazed rangeland used for livestock grazing, open space and wildlife habitat. The environmental footprint for the tower site is less than one acre. Construction of the eight foot square concrete pad will be straightforward and follow industry procedures. At this time, construction of the wind turbine will not require a rocked roadbed since the proposed tower location site is in an old field, which is known to be able to handle heavy equipment.

Based on the findings of the USDA after consultation with WDFW, the proposed site is not a priority habitat and there were no indications of priority species within two miles of the turbine. There are no known federally listed threatened or endangered species within four miles. There are known occurrences of golden and bald eagles near the Yakima River, approximately two miles to the east of the project. Some sensitive species, including the western grey squirrel and the sharptail snake, are located in Tanneum Canyon riparian zones to the west and south of the project at a distance of over two miles.

The proposed site is on top of a hill, is not in a wetland and there are no natural surface waters on the site, or within one mile of the site. According to the data provided, there would be no affect of this one turbine on any state or federally threatened or endangered species, or any critical habitat as a result of this action.

In May 2010, CCWC hired CRC to complete a cultural resource assessment of this project and found no known national register sites near this project. The DAHP concurred with the CRC's determination of No Historic Properties Affected. In order to mitigate potential impacts, the CCWC has committed to having an archeological technician on site during excavation to look for any indication of subsurface cultural material.

According to the USDA determination, the turbine selected for both projects would meet the existing Kittitas County ordinance. Noise would not exceed 55 decibels at the property line, which is the maximum permissible environmental noise level established by the Washington State Legislature.

Based on consultation, current uses and mitigation efforts applied by CCWC, impacts related to the project are anticipated to have negligible impacts to the human and natural environment. In accordance with the information above, DOE has determined that this project qualifies for an A9 (information gathering and dissemination) and B5.1 (actions to conserve energy via small-scale renewable energy project).

NEPA PROVISION

Note to Specialist :

EF-2a prepared by Cristina Tyler on 9/30/2010.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature:


NEPA Compliance Officer

Date:

9/30/10

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:
