

PMC-ef2a

(2.04.02)

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



RECIPIENT: Energy &amp; Environmental Research Center

STATE: ND

PROJECT TITLE : Center for Biomass Utilization Renewal of Grant DE-FG36-08GO88054

<b>Funding Opportunity Announcement Number</b>	<b>Procurement Instrument Number</b>	<b>NEPA Control Number</b>	<b>CID Number</b>
	DE-FG36-05GO88054	GFO-GO88054-004	GO88054

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.
- B3.6** Siting, construction (or modification), operation, and decommissioning of facilities for indoor bench-scale research projects and conventional laboratory operations (for example, preparation of chemical standards and sample analysis); small-scale research and development projects; and small-scale pilot projects (generally less than two years) conducted to verify a concept before demonstration actions. Construction (or modification) will be within or contiguous to an already developed area (where active utilities and currently used roads are readily accessible).

## Rational for determination:

The University of North Dakota (UND) Energy & Environmental Research Center (EERC) proposes to use DOE funding to demonstrate the feasibility of converting biomass into alternative forms of energy. Phases 1 and 2 have already been reviewed by DOE and categorically excluded from further NEPA review. Portions of Phase 3 have been previously categorically excluded from further NEPA review, however the proposed scope of the phase as well as task numbers have changed. The NEPA determination applies to the changed and newly proposed Phase 3 activities. Of note, the recipient is no longer proposing to construct a pilot-scale biofuels plant at a third party location in North Dakota.

## Phase 3:

- Task 1 – Small-Scale Biomass Conversion
- Task 2 – Bench- and Pilot-Scale Conversion of Biomass to Liquid Fuels
- Task 3 – Renewable Fuels to Heat, Power, and Products
- Task 4 – Project Management and Strategic Studies
- Task 5 – Fuels of the Future Research and Development Laboratory
- Task 6 – Educational Activities and Outreach

Phase 3 will be conducted at the University of North Dakota Energy & Environmental Research Center in Grand Forks, Grand Forks county, North Dakota.

The existing EERC laboratory has established safety, laboratory procedure, chemical storage, and waste disposal procedures. UND operates under an air permit issued by the NDDH and has a written agreement with the local public treatment facility to receive and treat any discharge wastewater. All emissions and particulates generated from the gasification process would be thermally oxidized prior to discharge through an existing stack and are covered by the existing air permit. No GMOs will be used or created in the course of these activities.

This project comprises information gathering, actions to conserve energy, indoor bench-scale research projects and conventional laboratory operations therefore CX A9, B5.1 and B3.6 apply.

**NEPA PROVISION**

DOE has made a final NEPA determination for this award

Insert the following language in the award:

Note to Specialist :

None Given.

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

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

*Justin Ke*  
NEPA Compliance Officer

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

7/25/2011

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