# U.S. Department of Energy
## Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

Submit by E-mail

Proposed Action Title: National Renewable Energy Laboratory -- Smart-DS: Synthetic Models for Advanced, Realistic Testing: Distribution Systems and Scenarios

Program or Field Office: Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy

Location(s) (City/County/State): Golden, CO; Cambridge, MA; Austin, TX

Proposed Action Description:

SECOND AMENDED NEPA DETERMINATION: (See attached original Determination and First Amended Determination, dated April 6, 2016 & March 20, 2019)
This Second Amended Determination follows the approval of new team members and additional funds to support the project team's information gathering and analysis efforts to develop synthetic bid-in demand for industrial, commercial, and residential customers and to build combined distributed energy resources (DER) participation models for wholesale markets. Specifically, the project team will (1) build a set of tools to augment scenario generation of customer time-level load, solar, wind data, and DER adoption patterns and (2) collaborate with existing GO Competition dataset teams to utilize these models to increase the realism of the synthetic dataset effort. If successful, the datasets will be publicly released and the project team will develop approaches and software tools for generating similar demand-bid representations for test systems.

Project activities will be conducted at existing facilities at National Renewable Energy Laboratory (Golden, CO), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Cambridge, MA), University of Texas-Austin & Ross Baldick Consulting (Austin, TX), designed for the applicable activities. Project tasks under this award are limited exclusively to intellectual, academic, or analytical activities. The project team will not conduct physical experiments, prototype fabrication, demonstration projects, or similar activities under this award.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

A9 - Information gathering, analysis, and dissemination

For the complete DOE National Environmental Policy Act regulations regarding categorical exclusions, including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see Subpart D of 10 CFR Part 1021.

Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410(b): (See full text in regulation)

☑ The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D.

To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph B(4) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B; (5) involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

☑ There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

☑ The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. This proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

Based on my review of the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under DOE Order 451.1B), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class(es) of action, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

NEPA Compliance Officer: GEOFFREY GOODE Digitally signed by GEOFFREY GOODE Date: 2021.04.08 10:44:40 -04'00' Date Determined:

(This form will be locked for editing upon signature)