

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
OFFICE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY
NEPA DETERMINATION



RECIPIENT: Solar Dynamics LLC

STATE: CO

PROJECT TITLE : CSP Plant Optimization Study for the California Power Market

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0002378	DE-EE0009809	GFO-0009809-001	

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

CX, EA, EIS APPENDIX AND NUMBER:

Description:

A9 Information gathering, analysis, and dissemination Information gathering (including, but not limited to, literature surveys, inventories, site visits, and audits), data analysis (including, but not limited to, computer modeling), document preparation (including, but not limited to, conceptual design, feasibility studies, and analytical energy supply and demand studies), and information dissemination (including, but not limited to, document publication and distribution, and classroom training and informational programs), but not including site characterization or environmental monitoring. (See also B3.1 of appendix B to this subpart.)

A11 Technical advice and assistance to organizations Technical advice and planning assistance to international, national, state, and local organizations.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide funding to Solar Dynamics LLC to carry out a systems study to optimize the design of concentrating solar power (CSP) plants and alternative plants (ex: PV plus batteries) to meet the power needs of California. The project would be completed over two Budget Periods (BPs) with a Go/No-Go decision point between each BP. This NEPA determination is applicable to both BPs.

Activities include gathering information, developing conceptual designs and computer models, conducting analysis on computers, generating feasibility studies, and information dissemination through reports and meetings.

Studies would include evaluations on CSP technologies, configurations, and regions where CSP plants might be developed. Evaluation criteria would include power needs, transmission capacity, cost and environmental impacts, factors that might limit CSP development, and economic advantages to the State of California. In addition, barriers that impede CSP deployment and strategies to overcome those barriers would be evaluated. A detailed technoeconomic analysis of the selected CSP technology would be conducted to accurately reflect project finances and the cost of power. Key finding would be shared with stakeholders.

The proposed project would consist solely of intellectual, academic, and/or analytical activities. All project activities would be conducted from existing offices or computational facilities and use no materials beyond basic office supplies, software, and computer hardware. No modifications to facilities, field testing, or field work would occur as part of this project.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Notes:

Solar Energy Technologies Office

This NEPA determination does not require a tailored NEPA provision.
Review completed by Shaina Aguilar on 2/7/22.

FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATIONS

The proposed action (or the part of the proposal defined in the Rationale above) 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 proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

The proposed action 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.

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: _____

 Electronically Signed By: **Kristin Kerwin**
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 2/11/2022

FIELD OFFICE MANAGER DETERMINATION

- Field Office Manager review not required
- Field Office Manager review required

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

Field Office Manager's Signature: _____

Field Office Manager

Date: _____