

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



RECIPIENT:NREL

STATE: NY

PROJECT TITLE : NREL - GSA Alexandria Bay NY Border Station-Addition of SODAR Unit; NREL Tracking No. 15-008

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
	DE-AC36-08GO28308	NREL-15-008	GO28308

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:

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| 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.) |
| B3.1 Site characterization and environmental monitoring | Site characterization and environmental monitoring (including, but not limited to, siting, construction, modification, operation, and dismantlement and removal or otherwise proper closure (such as of a well) 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). Such activities would be designed in conformance with applicable requirements and use best management practices to limit the potential effects of any resultant ground disturbance. Covered activities include, but are not limited to, site characterization and environmental monitoring under CERCLA and RCRA. (This class of actions excludes activities in aquatic environments. See B3.16 of this appendix for such activities.) Specific activities include, but are not limited to: (a) Geological, geophysical (such as gravity, magnetic, electrical, seismic, radar, and temperature gradient), geochemical, and engineering surveys and mapping, and the establishment of survey marks. Seismic techniques would not include large-scale reflection or refraction testing; (b) Installation and operation of field instruments (such as stream-gauging stations or flow-measuring devices, telemetry systems, geochemical monitoring tools, and geophysical exploration tools); (c) Drilling of wells for sampling or monitoring of groundwater or the vadose (unsaturated) zone, well logging, and installation of water-level recording devices in wells; (d) Aquifer and underground reservoir response testing; (e) Installation and operation of ambient air monitoring equipment; (f) Sampling and characterization of water, soil, rock, or contaminants (such as drilling using truck- or mobile-scale equipment, and modification, use, and plugging of boreholes); (g) Sampling and characterization of water effluents, air emissions, or solid waste streams; (h) Installation and operation of meteorological towers and associated activities (such as assessment of potential wind energy resources); (i) Sampling of flora or fauna; and (j) Archeological, historic, and cultural resource identification in compliance with 36 CFR part 800 and 43 CFR part 7. |

Rationale for determination:

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) proposes to add a sonic detection and ranging (SODAR) unit to an ongoing wind resource assessment for the General Services Administration and Department of Homeland Security at the Alexandria Bay Land Port of Entry (LPOE), located in the Village of Alexandria Bay, Wellesley Island, New York.

PROPOSED ACTION

On April 8, 2010, the U. S. Department of Energy issued a NEPA determination (NREL-10-007) for the installation of a meteorological (met) tower for a wind resource assessment at the Alexandria Bay LPOE. Due a delay in funding and a minor scope change (See NEPA Compliance Officer Memorandum to File dated April 15, 2014 uploaded to the PMC under NREL-10-007), the met tower was not installed until spring 2014.

To further the wind resource data collection, NREL is proposing to add a SODAR unit to the existing wind resource monitoring project. The SODAR unit would be installed approximately 300 feet from the met tower in the potential locations depicted in the figures uploaded to the PMC database. The SODAR unit would either be trailer-mounted or sit on a piece of 4' x 4' piece of plywood or sheet metal, and would be solar powered. The SODAR unit would be located on a flat, graded area previously disturbed during the construction of the new LPOE facilities by the GSA. The SODAR unit would be located onsite for less than one year. At the conclusion of the assessment, the SODAR unit would be removed and returned to the company it would be leased from.

PREVIOUS NEPA DETERMINATIONS

On April 8, 2010, the U. S. Department of Energy issued a NEPA determination (NREL-10-007) for the installation of a meteorological (met) tower for a wind resource assessment at the Alexandria Bay LPOE. This determination is incorporated by reference. Additionally, the overall LPOE improvement project was analyzed in the February 2009 GSA Final Environmental Assessment of the Alexandria Bay Land Port of Entry Modernization and Expansion, Wellesley Island, New York. This document is uploaded to the PMC under NREL-10-007.

IMPACTS OF PROPOSED ACTION

The installation of the SODAR would be temporary and would not require land disturbing activities. No impacts to wetlands, floodplains, prime farmlands, cultural resources or wildlife resources are anticipated. Transportation of the SODAR unit by truck to and from the site would generate air emissions, but these emissions would be de minimis given their short duration and small number of mobile sources. Installation and use of the SODAR would not require the use of hazardous materials or generation of hazardous waste.

The proposed project site is located with a designated Coastal Management Zone. GSA received concurrence on a Section 307 of the Coastal Zone Management Act Negative Determination from the State of New York on February 17, 2011 for the wind resource assessment (uploaded to PMC under NREL-10-007).

NEPA DETERMINATION

NREL's installation and operation of a SODAR unit would not have a significant individual or cumulative impact to human health and/or environment. DOE has determined that these activities are consistent with actions contained in DOE categorical exclusions A9 "Information gathering, analysis, and dissemination," and B3.1 "Site characterization and environmental monitoring," and is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination for this award

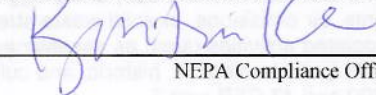
Insert the following language in the award:

If you intend to make changes to the scope or objective of your project you are required to contact the Project Officer identified in Block 11 of the Notice of Financial Assistance Award before proceeding. You must receive notification of approval from the DOE Contracting Officer prior to commencing with work beyond that currently approved.

Note to Specialist :

NEPA review completed by Rob Smith on 12/23/2014.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature:  Date: 12/23/2014
NEPA Compliance Officer

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: _____ Date: _____
Field Office Manager