

PMC-ND

(1.08.09.13)

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



RECIPIENT: Cloud County Community College

STATE: KS

PROJECT TITLE : Wind Energy Technology Project and Renewable Energy Center of Excellence

| | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Funding Opportunity Announcement Number | Procurement Instrument Number | NEPA Control Number | CID Number |
| | DE-FG36-08GO88013 | GFO-0088013-005 | GO88013 |

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:

B5.18 Wind turbines The installation, modification, operation, and removal of a small number (generally not more than 2) of commercially available wind turbines, with a total height generally less than 200 feet (measured from the ground to the maximum height of blade rotation) that (1) are located within a previously disturbed or developed area; (2) are located more than 10 nautical miles (about 11.5 miles) from an airport or aviation navigation aid; (3) are located more than 1.5 nautical miles (about 1.7 miles) from National Weather Service or Federal Aviation Administration Doppler weather radar; (4) would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on bird or bat populations; and (5) are sited or designed such that the project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts to persons (such as from shadow flicker and other visual effects, and noise). Covered actions would be in accordance with applicable requirements (such as local land use and zoning requirements) in the proposed project area and would incorporate appropriate control technologies and best management practices. Covered actions include only those related to wind turbines to be installed on land.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide federal funding to Cloud County Community College (Cloud) for the reimbursement of expenses incurred during the acquisition, installation, operation, and maintenance of wind turbines south of their campus in Concordia, Kansas. On September 9, 2008, DOE completed a NEPA Determination (GFO-08-196) that categorically excluded the development of a Wind Energy Technology (WET) training program but conditioned the acquisition and installation of a 1.8 MW wind turbine upon further NEPA review. The proposed project scope was subsequently modified from one large turbine to three smaller turbines and in early December 2010, DOE completed NEPA Determinations (GFO-GO88013-002 and 003) requiring an Environmental Assessment (EA) be completed prior to the purchase, installation, and operation of the wind turbines. DOE completed another NEPA Determination (GFO-GO88013-004) in 2013 that approved the upgrading of WET training laboratories and curriculum and marketing related activities but still restricted the purchase, installation, operation, and maintenance of the wind turbines until completion of an EA. After the NEPA Determination requiring an EA was signed, the DOE NEPA implementing regulations were updated and new categorical exclusions were created that included one specific to wind turbines that could include activities such as those completed as part of this project.

Between December 2009 and February 2010, (after the determination to require an EA, but prior to the completion of the EA) Cloud installed the turbines on the southern portion of their campus approximately 3300 feet west of Blosser Municipal Airport. Two of the turbines were Northwind 100 turbines, each with a rated generation capacity of 100 kW. The third turbine was a Nordtank 130, with a rated capacity of 130 kW. In March 2010, prior to installing the turbines, Cloud received Determinations of No Hazard to Air Navigation from the FAA. In February 2011, the FAA was advised that the installed wind turbines had been constructed to heights greater than those specified in the Determinations of No Hazard to Air Navigation and the FAA notified Cloud that new notices were required for the existing structures. In March 2011, the FAA found the turbines to have a substantial adverse impact to the navigable airspace and issued Determinations of Hazard to Air Navigation for the three installed wind turbines. The turbines were modified in February 2013 to comply with the FAA hazard evaluations. The Northwind 100 turbines were removed from monopoles, the poles were shortened, and the two turbines were reinstalled with larger blades. At that same time, the blades were permanently removed from the Nordtank 130. All three turbines now have a total height less than 99 feet above the ground surface. With these modifications, the FAA re-issued Determinations of No Hazard to Air Navigation for the three turbines in early 2013.

The wind turbines were installed on land owned by Cloud located at 39N 32' 57.3" and W 97 39' 51.42" about 0.3 miles south of the main campus building. An existing, approximately 0.5-mile-long access road was improved from College Drive south to the turbine locations, and approximately 2 acres was disturbed to excavate and install foundations and erect the three turbines. Preliminary consultations with the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Kansas State Historic Preservation

Officer indicated that there would be no significant impacts to biological resources, prime farmlands, wetlands, floodplains, or cultural resources. As part of the preliminary EA activities, DOE completed public scoping and initiated tribal consultation. Neither the public nor any Native American Tribe submitted any comments of concern related to the proposed project activities. After review of the analysis completed to date, the only resource of concern known to DOE at this time associated with the acquisition, installation, operation, and maintenance of the wind turbines was related to air navigation due to the wind turbines close proximity to Blosser Municipal Airport but this impact was mitigated to less than significant by the modifications completed in February 2013.

Based on review of the project information, DOE has determined that the reimbursement of expenses incurred for the acquisition, installation, operation, and maintenance of the three wind turbines would not have a significant individual or cumulative impact to human health and/or environment. DOE has determined that these activities were consistent with actions contained in DOE categorical exclusion B5.18 "Wind turbines," and are 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 :

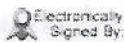
Wind Program

This NEPA Determination does not require a tailored NEPA provision.

Casey Strickland 01/26/15

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: _____



Signed By: Lori Gray
NEPA Compliance Officer

Lori Gray

Date: 1/26/2015

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: _____