

PMC-ND

(1.08.09.13)

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

**RECIPIENT:** Washoe Tribe of NV and CA**STATE:** NV**PROJECT TITLE :** Washoe Tribe Clean Energy Project

<b>Funding Opportunity Announcement Number</b>	<b>Procurement Instrument Number</b>	<b>NEPA Control Number</b>	<b>CID Number</b>
FOA-EE0001021	DE-EE0006947	GFO-0006947-001	

**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:

<b>A9 Information gathering, analysis, and dissemination</b>	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.)
<b>B5.16 Solar photovoltaic systems</b>	The installation, modification, operation, and removal of commercially available solar photovoltaic systems located on a building or other structure (such as rooftop, parking lot or facility, and mounted to signage, lighting, gates, or fences), or if located on land, generally comprising less than 10 acres within a previously disturbed or developed area. 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.

**Rationale for determination:**

The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California (Tribe) would utilize DOE and cost share funds to install seven commercially available ground-mount photovoltaic (PV) solar arrays on Tribal Trust land within the three Washoe Tribal communities in Nevada, covering a total of approximately two acres ranging in size from 8 AC kW to 37.6 AC kW for a cumulative installed capacity of 161 AC kW. Specific locations with sizes for each installation are listed in the EQ1. The Tribe has completed seven other renewable energy projects, including larger ground-mount PV systems within the same general area of the Dresslerville Community. The project activities would be managed through the Washoe Environmental Protection Department (WEPD). The WEPD has successfully worked with contractors to complete similar installations of solar and wind projects in the past.

All installations would occur within areas that have been previously developed and disturbed. Sites would not be graded and no underground vegetative material would be removed. The solar arrays would be installed using driven posts for racking and fencing eliminating the need for concrete. A 6" X 24" trench would be completed at each location for the electrical conduit to extend from the solar arrays to the points of interconnection (approximately 15 to 100 feet depending on the site). Soil within the trenching would be compacted upon refill. No long term impacts are anticipated as a result of the trenching. Visual impacts to the community are expected to be minimal because the Tribe has several other solar arrays with identical visual impacts and has had no negative reports. All applicable permits are in place. Proposed work would occur on Tribal Trust land and no Bureau of Indian Affairs involvement is necessary because the Tribe is not requesting a surface lease, access road right of way or power line right of way. Due to the existing disturbance and the trafficked nature of the project areas, DOE has determined that neither protected biological nor cultural/historic resources would be affected by project activities. The WEPD will complete internal environmental reviews for each site which will include consultation with the THPO and USFWS to ensure the proposed projects will not impact any known resources. Those environmental review documents will be provided to DOE once completed.

Based on review of the project information, DOE has determined that the project activities 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 B5.16 "Solar photovoltaic systems," 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.

Insert the following language in the award:

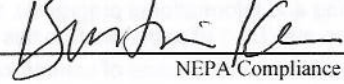
You are required to:

Upon completion of the Washoe Environmental Protection Department environmental reviews, the Tribe must provide those environmental reviews to the DOE Project Officer with notification of any findings regarding cultural or protected biological resources that could be impacted by the proposed project prior to initiation of surface disturbing activities. If during project activities the Tribe or their staff/subcontractor encounters any cultural material (i.e. historic or prehistoric), all activities should cease in the vicinity of the discovery immediately. The Tribe must inform the THPO and the DOE Project Officer of the discovery and a qualified specialist should be contacted to evaluate the discovery.

Note to Specialist :

This NEPA Determination requires a tailored NEPA provision.  
Tribal Energy Program  
Casey Strickland 04/01/15

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

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature:   
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 4/1/2015

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