

PMC-ND

(1.08.09.13)

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



RECIPIENT: Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians

STATE: CA

PROJECT TITLE : Heritage Plaza Parking Lot Improvements Project: Solar PV Carport Installation

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0001021	DE-EE0006945	GFO-0006945-001	

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:

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.)
B5.16 Solar photovoltaic systems	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 Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (Band) would utilize DOE and cost share funds to install an approximately 77kW solar photovoltaic (PV) system to offset the energy usage costs of the Tribal Education and Family Services offices located at the Band's Heritage Plaza office building, 901 Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, CA, 92262. The area where project activities would occur is presently an asphalt parking lot. The system's PV panels would be mounted on two southern carport shade structures already being installed by the Tribe as part of a larger parking lot improvement (PLI) project. This PLI project includes removal of current landscaping to replace with low water use plants, new landscape irrigation and lighting system, new parking lot lighting, asphalt will be removed and replaced with concrete, drainage catch basins will be installed underneath the parking lot, and new driveway aprons will be installed as needed. The larger PLI project funding is being provided by the Tribal Transportation Program through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The FHWA issued a Categorical Exclusion under NEPA for the PLI project on July 15, 2014, as the project only involves improvements within an existing disturbed area that consists entirely of modern development.

There would be an estimated 300 PV panels and associated equipment (inverters/controllers, electrical wires, conduit, etc.) installed on the carport shade structures already being built as part of the PLI project. Conduit connection(s) would be routed underneath the parking lot to connect the system to Heritage Plaza's main electrical service panel. In July 2014, the FHWA found no extraordinary circumstances to any resources of concern that would preclude the issuance of a CX for the PLI project and any impacts associated with the DOE funded PV installation would be minimal and insignificant compared to those associated with the larger PLI project. Due to the existing disturbance, disturbance occurring as part of the PLI project regardless of the DOE funded project, and the highly trafficked nature of the project area, DOE has determined that no resources of concern (integral elements) would be affected by the PV installation.

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.

Note to Specialist :

This NEPA Determination does not require a tailored NEPA provision.
Tribal Energy Program
Casey Strickland 04/16/15

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: 
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 4/16/2015

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: _____