

PMC-ND

(1.08.09.13)

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



RECIPIENT: SunPower Corporation

STATE: CA

PROJECT TITLE Automating Solar Power Plants: Creating automated software and hardware tools to lower development, construction and O&M costs at utility-scale projects

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0001225	DE-EE0007179	GFO-0007179-001	

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.)

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

B3.2 Aviation activities Aviation activities for survey, monitoring, or security purposes that comply with Federal Aviation Administration regulations.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide federal funding to Sunpower Corp. to create a software platform for solar project development.

The proposed activities include software development, unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) flights, education/training, and outreach. The purpose of the proposed UAV flights is to collect high-resolution aerial imagery that would be used in conjunction with the developed software to provide information about ground conditions of potential solar project sites and construction status of active projects. The UAV flights would occur over multiple active solar project sites. A Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) permit (12048 FAA Exemption) and Certificate of Authorization (Section 333 Blanket 200 COA) have both been obtained for these flights. All other activities are intellectual, academic, or analytical in nature and would use no physical materials beyond basic office supplies and software.

Based on review of the project information and the above analysis, DOE has determined the proposed project would not have a significant individual or cumulative impact to human health and/or environment. DOE has determined that this project is consistent with actions outlined in DOE categorical exclusions A9 "Information gathering, analysis, and dissemination", A11 "Technical advice and assistance to organizations", and B3.2 "Aviation activities" and is therefore 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:

The recipient must follow all terms and conditions set forth in their FAA= permit (12048 FAA Exemption) and Certificate of Authorization (Section 333 Blanket 200 COA) for the UAV activities.

The recipient is prohibited from conducting UAV flights over any lands designated as a National Wildlife Refuge. If UAV flights over a National Wildlife Refuge are proposed, the recipient must obtain additional DOE NEPA review and approval prior to initiating those activities.

Note to Specialist :

Solar Energy Technologies Office
This NEPA determination requires a tailored NEPA provision.
Review completed by Rebecca McCord, 09/14/2015

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: _____



Electronically Signed By: Kristin Kerwin

Date: 9/16/2015

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