

PMC-ND
(1.08.09.13)

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



RECIPIENT: Plug Power Inc.

STATE: NY

PROJECT TITLE: Autonomous Hydrogen Fueling Station

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0001874	DE-EE0008421	GFO-0008421-001	GO8421

Based on my review of the information concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (authorized under DOE Policy 451.1), 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.)
B3.6 Small-scale research and development, laboratory operations, and pilot projects	Siting, construction, modification, operation, and decommissioning of facilities for smallscale research and development projects; conventional laboratory operations (such as preparation of chemical standards and sample analysis); and small-scale pilot projects (generally less than 2 years) frequently conducted to verify a concept before demonstration actions, provided that construction or modification would be within or contiguous to a previously disturbed or developed area (where active utilities and currently used roads are readily accessible). Not included in this category are demonstration actions, meaning actions that are undertaken at a scale to show whether a technology would be viable on a larger scale and suitable for commercial deployment.
B5.22 Alternative fuel vehicle fueling stations	The installation, modification, operation, and removal of alternative fuel vehicle fueling stations (such as for compressed natural gas, hydrogen, ethanol and other commercially available biofuels) on the site of a current or former fueling station, or within a previously disturbed or developed area within the boundaries of a facility managed by the owners of a vehicle fleet. 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 U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide federal funding to Plug Power, Inc. for the design, development, fabrication, and field testing of automated hydrogen fueling dispensers. Design, development, fabrication and testing activities would occur at Plug Power's facility in Latham, NY; Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY; and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) in Golden, CO. NREL activities include testing robotic manipulation of hydrogen fueling hose and nozzle for fueling of passenger vehicles at NREL's Hydrogen Infrastructure Testing and Research Facility. Additional testing of an indoor automated dispenser is expected to occur at a to be determined (TBD) customer facility in the United States. This facility would be an existing Plug Power customer facility that already has manual hydrogen dispensing equipment in place.

The proposed project involves laboratory, research, and testing procedures in facilities that are specifically designed for these types of activities and would not result in any incremental health and safety risks to the public or project workers. No modifications, new permits, additional licenses and/or authorizations would be necessary and no ground disturbing activities, or changes in operation of existing facilities would occur for project activities occurring at the recipient and subrecipients facilities. Some equipment would be installed outdoors on an existing slab adjacent to an existing outdoor hydrogen refueling dispenser with approved communication and electrical connections. Equipment installed at the TBD customer facility would be installed indoors adjacent to an existing hydrogen refueling dispenser with approved communication and electrical connections. All permits required to install the automated dispensing equipment inside the facility would be obtained and the dispenser would meet all safety and code requirements for deployment prior to those activities moving forward.

The project would involve the use and handling of hydrogen gas. All facilities involved in the handling of hydrogen already have infrastructure on site to safely handle and dispense hydrogen. These locations also have existing corporate health and safety policies and procedures in place that would be followed, including employee training, proper protective equipment, engineering controls, monitoring, and internal assessments. To help ensure compliance with applicable health and safety regulations and minimize health and safety risks to employees and the public, additional policies and procedures would be implemented as necessary as new health and safety risks are identified. Work occurring at NREL would involve the use of an automated robot moving a hydrogen hose and nozzle to attach a receptacle on a vehicle. This movement could result in collisions or pinch points so the area would be cordoned off before activation of the robot. Testing would be conducted first without hydrogen present and once that is proven to be safe, the testing would be moved to hydrogen equipment. Although the location of the field testing has yet to be determined, the location chosen would be an existing facility with hydrogen fueling that currently uses manual hydrogen fueling dispensers. There would be no change in the potential impacts associated with hydrogen fueling between the existing manual fueling dispenser and the automated dispenser that would replace it during the testing period. DOE does not anticipate any impacts to resources of concern due to the proposed activities of the project.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Include the following condition in the financial assistance agreement:

Any work proposed to be conducted at a federal facility may be subject to additional NEPA review by the cognizant federal official and must meet the applicable health and safety requirements of the facility.

Notes:

Fuel Cell Technologies Office

This NEPA determination requires a tailored NEPA provision.

FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATIONS


The proposed action (or the part of the proposal defined in the Rationale above) fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D. To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph B(4) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B; (5) involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

The proposed action has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. This proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature:  **Electronically Signed By: Casey Strickland**
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 1/3/2019

FIELD OFFICE MANAGER DETERMINATION

- Field Office Manager review not required
- Field Office Manager review required

BASED ON MY REVIEW I CONCUR WITH THE DETERMINATION OF THE NCO :

Field Office Manager's Signature: _____
Field Office Manager

Date: _____