

PMC-ND

(1.08.09.13)

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

**RECIPIENT:** University of Utah**STATE:** UT

PROJECT TITLE: Volumetrically Absorbing Thermal Insulator (VATI) for Monolithic High-Temperature Microchannel Receiver Modules

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0001840	DE-EE0008531	GFO-0008531-001	

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.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide federal funding to the University of Utah (UU) to develop, fabricate, and test a novel monolithic microchannel receiver module to enable efficient high-temperature Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) conversion.

The proposed project would consist of design, computer modeling, preliminary engineering, and laboratory-based demonstration tasks. Associated activities would include: development, characterization, and optimization of a silicon carbide (SiC) foam; development of SiC microchannel modules, and; fabrication and in-lab testing of the receiver module prototype. All project work would occur in computational or experimental research laboratories located on campus at UU (Salt Lake City, UT).

All project activities would be located indoors. Both of the UU research laboratories in which project work would be conducted are designed for this type of research; therefore, no physical modifications or new permits, licenses, and/or authorizations would be necessary. No change in the use, mission or operation of existing facilities would arise out of this effort.

This project would be limited in scale and require minimal consumption of materials in order to produce the prototype device and components. The proposed project would not involve the use of any hazardous materials. Developed products would be stored on-site for future use at the conclusion of the proposed project. Small amounts of non-hazardous waste generated by routine office and R&D tasks would be disposed of via existing university systems.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Notes:

[Solar Energy Technologies Office](#)

[This NEPA determination does not require a tailored NEPA Provision.](#)

[NEPA review completed by Whitney Doss, 2/15/2019](#)

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: Kristin Kerwin

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 2/19/2019

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: _____