

PMC-ND

(1.08.09.13)

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

**RECIPIENT:** West Biofuels, LLC**STATE:** CA**PROJECT****TITLE:** Agricultural and Woody Biomass to Diesel Fuel with Bio-oil Intermediate, Control Number: 1926-1574

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0001926	DE-EE0008510	GFO-0008510-001	GO8510

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.

B5.15 Small-scale renewable energy research and development and pilot projects Small-scale renewable energy research and development projects and small-scale pilot projects, provided that the projects are located 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 U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide federal funding to West Biofuels LLC (West) to demonstrate production of bio-diesel blend stock from biomass derived materials by use of a catalytic fast pyrolysis (CFP) process.

Proposed activities would be divided into three Budget Periods (BPs). BP1 would only involve an initial verification by DOE that West has the facilities, personnel, and expertise to conduct the proposed work.

BP2 would include initial pyrolysis system design. Once designed, work would include configuration of an existing dual-bed gasification system as a recirculating pyrolysis reaction system. This would occur at the West facility located in Woodland, CA. This would not include any modifications to existing facilities or construction of new facilities. West would then operate the pyrolysis system for the production of low oxygen content bio fuel using existing feedstock of western forest thinnings from fire management projects and/or almond production residues. Through this process West would produce approximately 5 liters of bio-fuel samples. These samples would then be shipped to the National Renewable Energy Lab in Golden, CO for co-processing and analysis.

In BP3 West would optimize the pyrolysis system based on results from BP2. West would then engage in continuous

production of bio-fuel using up to 2,000 pounds of the same feedstocks as used in BP2. Through continuous production West would generate approximately 100 gallons of bio-fuel (diesel). This product would then be shipped to the National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL) in Golden, CO for co-processing and analysis.

In addition, in BP3 West would conduct a techno economic and life cycle analysis of the project, an evaluation of project benefits, a knowledge transfer plan, and a production readiness plan. These activities are limited to information gathering, data analysis, and dissemination and would take place at the West facility.

The West research and development facility is a preexisting permitted research facility purpose built for the type of work to be conducted for this project. No modifications to the facility would be required. No new permits would be required. At the facility West will handle products that would include various hazardous materials including bio-oils, hydrocarbon products, and industrial solvents. All such handling would occur within the facility and would follow existing corporate policies and procedures for handling and disposal of these products. All hazardous materials would be handled in accordance with existing Federal, state, and local regulations. Existing health and safety policies and procedures would be followed including employee training, proper protective equipment, engineering controls, monitoring, and internal assessments.

NREL is an existing US government owned research lab. All work conducted at NREL would be in accordance with Federal, state and local laws.

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:

This NEPA determination does not require a tailored NEPA Provision. Please include the standard DOE laboratory language in the award.

Bioenergy Technologies Office
Roak Parker 6.28.19

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: _____


NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 6/28/2019

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: _____