

PMC-ND

(1.08.09.13)

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

**RECIPIENT:** Stantec Consulting Services Inc.**STATE:** ME

PROJECT TITLE: Activity-based Informed Curtailment: Using Acoustics to Design and Validate Smart Curtailment at Wind Farms

| | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Funding Opportunity Announcement Number | Procurement Instrument Number | NEPA Control Number | CID Number |
| DE-FOA-0001924 | DE-EE0008728 | GFO-0008728-001 | |

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.)

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide funding to Stantec Consulting Services Inc. (Stantec) to undertake a field study on improving the technique of curtailment of wind turbines for reducing and avoiding impacts to rare and vulnerable bat species. Testing would be carried out using a tower/nacelle mounted acoustic monitoring system that would be installed on pre-existing wind turbines.

The project would be completed over two Budget Periods (BPs), with a Go/No-Go Decision Point in between each BP. This NEPA Determination only applies to BP1 tasks, which would consist of analysis of existing data related to bat fatalities at wind farms, development of an Intellectual Property Management Plan, site selection and the development of the research study plan a for the proposed field study site, and coordination and completion of permitting and NEPA requirements for proposed BP2 testing. BP2 tasks are all dependent on site selection, the finalization of the research study plan, as well as permitting and NEPA requirements. Accordingly, BP2 tasks are restricted until further NEPA review is completed. Additional NEPA review will be completed by DOE once the research study plan is approved by DOE, and all necessary information associated with BP2 activities has been provided by the Recipient.

Proposed project activities for BP1 include the following:

Task 1: Existing Data Summary and Analysis – This task would consist of evaluation of an existing set of acoustic, weather, operation, and fatality data collected at two wind projects in West Virginia. Analysis would include comparison studies and regression analysis.

Task 2: Intellectual Property (IP) Management Plan – This task would consist of development of an IP plan.

Task 3: Research Study Plan and Host Site Selection – This task would consist of identification of potential host sites which would be willing to engage with Stantec for the proposed research, and then development of a research study plan specific to the proposed host site or sites.

Task 4: Agency Coordination and NEPA Review – This task would consist of coordinating with state and federal wildlife agencies to obtain necessary approvals and permits to enable research as well as engaging in consultation under the Endangered Species Act, if necessary.

Task 5: Equipment Evaluation and Preparation – This task would include identification of potential equipment for utilization during testing, including determining whether remote data access equipment could be utilized. This task

would not include procurement of any equipment.

All project work under BP1 would be completed by Stantec at existing office facilities. All BP 1 activities would be limited to data gathering, analysis, plan preparation, and reporting and would not involve equipment procurement, laboratory testing, or field operations. Accordingly, no significant health or safety risks are anticipated.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a conditional NEPA determination.

The NEPA Determination applies to the following Topic Areas, Budget Periods, and/or tasks:

[Budget Period 1](#)

The NEPA Determination does not apply to the following Topic Area, Budget Periods, and/or tasks:

[Budget Period 2](#)

Notes:

[Water Power Program](#)

[This NEPA determination does require a tailored NEPA provision
NEPA review completed by Roak Parker 8.14.19](#)

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.

A portion of the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review. The NEPA Provision identifies Topic Areas, Budget Periods, tasks, and/or subtasks that are subject to additional NEPA review.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: _____


NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 8/16/2019

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: _____