

PMC-ND

(1.08.09.13)

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

**RECIPIENT:** Montana State University**STATE:** MT

PROJECT TITLE: Heteroatom-Modified and Compacted Zeolite-Templated Carbons for Gas Storage

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0002044	DE-EE0008815	GFO-0008815-001	GO8815

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.

B3.15 Small-scale indoor research and development projects using nanoscale materials Siting, construction, modification, operation, and decommissioning of facilities for indoor small-scale research and development projects and small-scale pilot projects using nanoscale materials in accordance with applicable requirements (such as engineering, worker safety, procedural, and administrative regulations) necessary to ensure the containment of any hazardous materials. Construction and modification activities would be within or contiguous to a previously disturbed or developed area (where active utilities and currently used roads are readily accessible).

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide federal funding to Montana State University (MSU) for synthesis, modification, characterization, compaction, and testing of porous carbon materials for natural gas storage. Design, synthesis, and modification of materials would occur at MSU, and characterization of material properties (including gas adsorption capacity) would occur at MSU and the California Institute of Technology. The Recipient would coordinate and collaboratively conduct work with Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (separately funded through HyMARC) on tasks integral to the completion of the project. The results of this collaborative effort with the national laboratory would be included in all project reporting. The project would be completed over three Budget Periods (BPs), with a Go/No-Go Decision Point in between each BP.

Project work is limited to laboratory activities that would occur in existing facilities/laboratories designed for this type of work that would utilize standard laboratory equipment; therefore no modifications, new permits, additional licenses and/or authorizations would be necessary. No ground disturbing activities, no changes in operation of existing facilities, and no installation of equipment outdoors would occur at any of the facilities involved in the project. The project would involve the use and handling of various hazardous materials, including gaseous and liquid precursors and solvents. All such handling would occur in dedicated laboratory space with dedicated proper hazardous material handling and disposal practices so project activities are not expected to pose any risk to the public. All hazardous

and non-hazardous materials would be managed in accordance with Federal, state, and local environmental regulations. Existing health and safety policies and procedures would be followed, including employee training, use of proper protective equipment, use of engineering controls, monitoring of all hazardous processes, and internal assessments. Additional policies and procedures would be implemented as necessary as new health and safety risks are identified to help ensure compliance with applicable health and safety regulations, and minimize health and safety risks to employees and the public. Nanoscale materials would be utilized during project activities. The materials being used are harmless except by inhalation due to the particle size of the powders. During the handling of these materials, the inhalation hazard would be mitigated through the use of fume hoods and appropriate safety masks fit tested by Safety and Risk personnel. Nanoscale materials would be disposed of in specialized solid waste containers in quantities of 0.1-0.5 g at a time, and formed into a bulk composite waste material by employing a carbon-based binder (e.g., epoxy) to ensure the inhalation hazard is negated after disposal. 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.

Notes:

Fuel Cell Technologies Office

This NEPA determination does not require 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: 
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 10/22/2019

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: _____