

PMC-ND

(1.08.09.13)

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

**RECIPIENT:** [Regents of the University of Michigan](#)**STATE:** MI

PROJECT TITLE: [Mapping and Bridging Barriers in Knowledge Flows of How Solar Photovoltaics Affect Rural Community Economies](#)

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0002243	DE-EE0009361	GFO-0009361-001	

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 federal funding to the Regents of the University of Michigan to characterize how knowledge flows and trusted stakeholders affect rural communities' decisions on zoning utility-scale solar photovoltaic (PV), develop a scalable model for estimating the short- and long-term impacts of utility-scale PV deployments in rural economies, and test mechanisms for disseminating information on how utility-scale PV would affect rural economies. The proposed study system encompasses rural regions of MN, MI, WI, IL, IN, and OH.

The scope of the proposed project would be limited to data analysis, computer modeling, outreach, and education. Activities associated with the proposed project would include: surveys of solar stakeholders; collection of solar zoning ordinances; modeling of economic and power system impacts of solar deployment; studies to determine effective means of disseminating knowledge related to solar energy, and; publications of factsheets and a webinar.

The project would involve no physical infrastructure, equipment installations and/or facility modifications. All activities would be conducted in existing offices. The only materials used would be basic office supplies and software. No change in the use, mission, or operation of existing facilities would arise out of this effort.

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 Donoghue, 1/28/2021

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** _____ Date: 1/28/2021
NEPA Compliance Officer

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: _____ Date: _____
Field Office Manager