

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



RECIPIENT: New York State Energy Research and Development Authority

STATE: NY

PROJECT TITLE : National Offshore Wind Research and Development Consortium

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number DE-FOA-0001767	Procurement Instrument Number DE-EE0008390	NEPA Control Number GFO-0008390-045	CID Number G08390
--	--	---	-----------------------------

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 funding to the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) to form a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) entity, the "National Offshore Wind Research and Development Consortium" which would be led by NYSERDA, along with key industry stakeholders and research institutions. The Consortium would finance research initiatives seeking to address the technical barriers faced by offshore wind developers, original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), and supply chain partners, with the goal of reducing the Levelized Cost of Electricity (LCOE) for U.S. offshore wind plants and increasing opportunities for U.S. manufacturing.

The proposed project is divided into four (4) Budget Periods (BPs). DOE previously completed NEPA reviews for BP1, 2, 3, and 4 (respectively GFO-0008390-001 CX A1, A9, and A13, 10/09/2018; GFO-0008390-002 CX A1, A9, and A13, 01/13/2020; GFO-0008390-019 CX A1, A9, and A13, 12/02/2020; GFO-0008390-042 CX A1, A9, A11, and A13, 12/28/2021). In addition, DOE completed NEPA reviews for 16 subawards made by the consortium under Task 19, 22 subawards made by the consortium under Task 27, and 4 subawards made by the consortium under Task 35 as well as awards under an Annual Operating Plan to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (various CX determinations and dates). This NEPA review is for a subaward proposed to be made under Task 35 to Dive Technologies Inc.

Task 35 in BP4 involves reviewing applications received in response to the solicitation released in Task 34 and then choosing specific projects which would receive a subaward. While NYSERDA is allowed under the previous NEPA determination to proceed with choosing projects under Task 35, all projects chosen for subaward are subject to additional NEPA analysis prior to NYSERDA contracting for the subaward and prior to any work being completed on the subaward.

Under this proposed subaward, Dive Technologies would develop and demonstrate a subsea asset inspection autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV). Tasks include developing new AUV algorithms for subsea wind farm power export cable anomaly detection, fully integrating the sensor suite on a DIVE-LD (large displacement) vehicle and testing and final demonstration of the vehicle on the Point Judith-to-Block Island power cable. The resulting data set containing the full wide-coverage survey of the cable route, as well as close-up images of the pre-identified scour protection and anomalies detected would be made publicly available to the offshore wind community.

This project is divided into 5 tasks. In order to proceed to Task 3, a go/no-go review would be conducted in which Dive

must demonstrate to NYSERDA that substantial progress has been made during Task 0 through Task 2. Accordingly, this NEPA Determination will be applicable only to Tasks 0 through 2, as these tasks consist of planning activities needed to prepare for future ocean-based inspection/imaging work. Tasks 3 through 5 are conditioned upon completion of an additional NEPA review.

Task activities are described below:

Task 0 – Project Management and Progress Reporting. This task would be ongoing throughout the project and would consist of the performance of administrative functions relating to the management of the project. These would include submitting reports, holding meetings, and participating with a Project Advisory Board.

Task 1 – System Design Phase. This task would consist of sensor suite integration, detailed design, sensor data collection, and algorithm development. Mechanical, electrical, and software design work would be completed to integrate a commercial side-scan sonar, sub-bottom profiler, multi-beam echo sounder, and camera into the vehicle. The vehicle would be trained to detect key features of interest for offshore wind seafloor infrastructure and bathymetric features relevant to sea floor infrastructure inspection.

Task 2 – Vehicle Integration Phase. This task would consist of mechanical integration of the sensor suite and electrical and software integration. Sensors would be physically installed into the vehicle and electrically connected. Initial power ups and software checks would be conducted.

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.

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
Budget Period 2
Budget Period 3
Budget Period 4
Subaward to Dive Technologies Inc: Task 0 - Task 2

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

Budget Period 4 - Subaward to Dive Technologies Inc. Task 3 - Task 5

All subawards made under Task 35 will be subject to additional NEPA review prior to any work being completed on those projects.

Notes:

Wind Energy Technologies Office
Review completed by Shaina Aguilar on 9/23/22.

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: _____



Casey Strickland

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 9/23/2022

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: _____