

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



**RECIPIENT:** PUD No. 1 of Snohomish County

**STATE:** WA

**PROJECT TITLE :** South Everett Community Solar Installation

|  |                                      |                            |                   |
|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Funding Opportunity Announcement Number</b> | <b>Procurement Instrument Number</b> | <b>NEPA Control Number</b> | <b>CID Number</b> |
| DE-FOA-0000052                                 | DE-EE0000139                         | GFO-0000139-043            |                   |

**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:

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|--|--|
| <b>A9 Information gathering, analysis, and dissemination</b> | 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.) |
| <b>B1.11 Fencing</b>   | Installation of fencing, including, but not limited to border marking, that would not have the potential to significantly impede wildlife population movement (including migration) or surface water flow.   |
| <b>B1.13 Pathways, short access roads, and rail lines</b>    | Construction, acquisition, and relocation, consistent with applicable right-of-way conditions and approved land use or transportation improvement plans, of pedestrian walkways and trails, bicycle paths, small outdoor fitness areas, and short access roads and rail lines (such as branch and spur lines).   |
| <b>B5.16 Solar photovoltaic systems</b>                      | The installation, modification, operation, and removal of commercially available solar photovoltaic systems located on a building or other structure (such as rooftop, parking lot or facility, and mounted to signage, lighting, gates, or fences), or if located on land, generally comprising less than 10 acres 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 is proposing to provide funding to the Washington State Energy Office for the installation of a 450kW DC/ 375kW AC ground mounted photovoltaic (PV) solar array. The PV installation for the Snohomish County Public Utility District #1, (SnoPUD) would be located within land owned by the City of Everett, Washington that is managed by the city's water utility department. SnoPUD would lease the land from the City of Everett. The funds generated by this solar array would provide grants for families and individuals who need help to pay their energy bills.

On approximately 2 acres, 1,200 panels, inverters along with associated electrical wiring, conduit, racks, and ballasts would be installed. Ground disturbance would include clearing, leveling, and trenching at the site and the removal of approximately five trees to accommodate the PV array. The trees would be cut and chipped in place with the chips used for ground cover. If parts of the tree are too large for the chipper, those oversized parts of the trees would be hauled to a city facility to be repurposed. The current driveway to the nearby water towers would be extended with approximately 5,000 square feet of asphalt to provide access to the solar array. A chain link fence would encompass the entire array, with a motorized gate, a security video system and lighting. Informational signage regarding the solar array would be placed on the project site for the public to view. Electrical upgrades would include the addition of a new transformer and the possibility a new power pole to connect the array to the power grid. All activities associated with installing this new equipment would occur within the approximate 2-acre site, or within existing right-of-ways.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Information for Planning and Consultation database shows an insect (Monarch Butterfly) a mammal (North American Wolverine), two birds (Marbled Murrelet and Yellow-billed Cuckoo), and one fish (Bull Trout) with the potential to occur in the project area. Habitats for these species would require weedy fields typically near wetlands or riparian areas, marine shorelines, riparian areas, alpine or subalpine forests, and rivers and streams. These features are not at or near the project site, and no critical habitats for these species were identified in the project area. The following migratory birds could potentially be within the project site: Black Swift, Evening Grosbeak, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Rufous Hummingbird, and Western Grebe. The preferred habitat for these birds

generally includes forests and/or water environments with rivers, riparian areas or large bodies of water. These features are not at the project site. Additionally, Bald Eagle could nest in the area, however, due to the lack of marine shorelines, large lakes, or rivers, it is unlikely. Thus, DOE has determined there would be no effect to special status species resulting from the proposed project activities.

The recipient worked directly with their State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to ensure protection of cultural resources during the course of project activities, per their historic preservation programmatic agreement with DOE and the Washington SHPO. DOE concurs with the SHPO's determination of "no cultural impacts." While the project site does not include any tribal land, the recipient attempted to contact cultural resources staff at the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe, Stillaguamish Tribe, Tulalip Tribes, and Snohomish Tribe. These tribes were identified as having a possible interest in the project site. The recipient was unsuccessful in contacting any of the tribes.

DOE also considered potential impacts to other resources of concern and found that no effects would be expected to result from the proposed project activities.

Any changes to the project activities or locations are subject to additional NEPA review by DOE and are not authorized for federal funding unless and until the Contracting Officer provides written authorization on those additions or modifications.

## NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Notes:

Weatherization & Intergovernmental Programs Office/ Office of State and Community Energy Programs (SCEP) - State Energy Program  
NEPA review completed by Diana Heyder, 12/12/2022

## 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: 12/14/2022

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_