

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



**RECIPIENT:** Vitro Flat Glass LLC

**STATE:** PA

**PROJECT TITLE :** High Performance Superstrate for CdTe Modules

<b>Funding Opportunity Announcement Number</b>	<b>Procurement Instrument Number</b>	<b>NEPA Control Number</b>	<b>CID Number</b>
DE-FOA-0002609	DE-EE0010472	GFO-0010472-001	

**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.)

**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 federal funding to Vitro Flat Glass, LLC (Vitro) for the design, development, fabrication, and testing of improved cadmium telluride (CdTe) solar photovoltaic (PV) modules.

Proposed project activities would be limited to office and in-lab work such as project management, planning, stakeholder input meetings, design modeling, outreach to educational institutions, fabricating PV CdTe prototype devices and coated glass, and characterization of sample components. Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training would occur as well, in addition to DEI scholarships for individuals in disadvantaged communities.

Design, development, and fabrication of CdTe modules would take place at Vitro (Cheswick, PA). NexTC (Corvallis, OR) would develop and test precursors for glass coatings, as well as conduct meteorologic testing. Additional testing would be carried out at Oregon State University (Corvallis, OR). University of Toledo (Toledo, OH) would carry out the processing of materials and devices, characterization of components, data collection, and analyses. Colorado State University (Fort Collins, CO) would carry out further work with perovskite film semiconductors, glass substrates, electrical and material characterization, and fabrication of thin film PV devices. No change in the use, mission, or operation of existing facilities would arise out of this effort.

The proposed project would involve the use and handling of bench-scale quantities of various hazardous materials, including solvents and metal compounds. All such work would be conducted within existing, purpose-built laboratories by trained personnel. Established hazardous material handling and disposal practices would be followed at the respective project facilities, as well as all pertinent federal, state, and local environmental health and safety regulations.

DOE has considered the scale, duration, and nature of proposed activities to determine potential impacts on resources, including those of an ecological, historical, cultural, and socioeconomic nature. DOE does not anticipate impacts on these resources which would be considered significant or require DOE to consult with other agencies or stakeholders.

**NEPA PROVISION**

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Notes:

Solar Energy Technologies Office (SETO)  
NEPA review completed by Alex Colling on 4/27/2023.

**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: **Andrew Montano**  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 5/18/2023

**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: \_\_\_\_\_