

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



RECIPIENT: Solar and Storage Industries Institute

STATE: DC

PROJECT TITLE: Developing Resources for Deploying Agrivoltaics at Scale

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0002697	DE-EE0010443	GFO-0010443-001	

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 funding to Solar and Storage Industries Institute (SSII) to conduct surveys and interview key stakeholders involved in the deployment of co-located solar energy and agricultural installations, i.e., agrivoltaics. The proposed project aims to reduce technical and financial barriers associated with large-scale agrivoltaic deployments through the creation and dissemination of informational reports.

The proposed project is limited to intellectual, academic, and analytical activities and includes literature reviews, information gathering, data analysis, analytical reviews, data dissemination, and paper studies. The proposed project consists of two budget periods (BPs). BP1 involves literature reviews to understand barriers currently experienced by three stakeholder groups (farmers, solar developers, and rural electric cooperatives). The design and dissemination of surveys to the stakeholder groups would also occur in BP1 along with the identification of six to eight operating agrivoltaic sites for the creation of detailed case studies. BP2 would focus on the completion of the case studies and a document reporting on lessons learned. At the end of BP2, three reports tailored to each stakeholder group would be created using the data collected throughout the proposed project and disseminated to target audiences.

The project team proposes to gather information and produce case studies and reports at dedicated office facilities. The principal investigator, SSII, would hold project advisory committee meetings and perform project management activities at the office of project partner, Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), in Washington, DC. SEIA would conduct computer-based research at the same office facility. Both the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF; Washington, DC) and the National Rural Electric Cooperatives Association (NRECA; Arlington, VA) would be responsible for the execution of project goals. Project activities would extend to visits of the selected agrivoltaic sites associated with the case studies. However, activities at these sites are limited to in-person interviews and the collection of photographs and videos. All facilities are preexisting purpose-built facilities for the type of work to be conducted for this award. Facility modifications would not be required.

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. A diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) plan would be implemented to encourage the inclusion of individuals from underrepresented groups in fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Notes:

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: 7/26/2023

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: _____