

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



RECIPIENT: Native Village of Port Heiden

STATE: AK

PROJECT TITLE : Powering Tribal Facilities in Port Heiden, Alaska

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOE-0002771	DE-IE0000186	GFO-0000186-001	GO186

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.)

B1.7 Electronic equipment

Acquisition, installation, operation, modification, and removal of electricity transmission control and monitoring devices for grid demand and response, communication systems, data processing equipment, and similar electronic equipment.

B2.1 Workplace enhancements

Modifications within or contiguous to an existing structure, in a previously disturbed or developed area, to enhance workplace habitability (including, but not limited to, installation or improvements to lighting, radiation shielding, or heating/ventilating/air conditioning and its instrumentation, and noise reduction).

B4.12 Construction of powerlines

Construction of electric powerlines approximately 10 miles in length or less, or approximately 20 miles in length or less within previously disturbed or developed powerline or pipeline rights-of-way.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide funding to the Native Village of Port Heiden to install minor electrical improvements, phase meters, basic wiring, and connecting Tribal buildings to the existing energy grid.

Fourteen Tribal buildings in the Native Village of Port Heiden currently have varying levels of energy infrastructure. Award activities would install two single phase electric meters to nine facilities, three phase electric meters to two facilities, three phase section cabinets, voltage reactors, transformers, and other equipment necessary for interior wiring and grid connection. Secondary conductors totaling 1,300 linear feet would be installed to connect the facilities, meters, and transformers. Primary power cable totaling 25,000 linear feet would be buried in 8,750 linear feet of trench measuring four feet deep and two feet wide. All trenching would connect to existing lines and would follow existing easements and rights-of-way.

A majority of the proposed award activities would occur as a subset of the Alaska Energy Authority's (AEA) existing project in Port Heiden, AK, which has already undergone NEPA review by the Denali Commission. DOE award activities would be part of phase 6 of AEA's project, and would occur within the footprint of the previously reviewed AEA project site, in which ground disturbing activities are being executed regardless of this award from DOE. Based on information from the previous Denali Commission review, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) has concurred with the Denali Commission that there would be No Historic Properties Affected and that there had been no identification of sacred sites in conjunction with Tribal consultation. The project would occur outside of the critical habitat for two threatened species as identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Stellar's Eider and Northern Sea Otter.

Based on the information received for this award and the previous Denali Commission review and SHPO concurrence, DOE does not anticipate any impacts to cultural resources or artifacts as a result of the proposed award activities. DOE includes the following as part of best management practices for the project: If the recipient or their contractors encounter any archeological resources during project activities, all activities in the vicinity of the discovery must be interrupted until the resources have been evaluated in terms of the National Register of Historic Places eligibility criteria (36 CFR 60.4), in consultation with the Alaska SHPO. The recipient must inform the DOE Project Officer of the discovery in order for DOE and the SHPO to evaluate the discovery prior to continuing work.

The installation of a three-phase transformer that would service the three facilities at Meshik Farm would fall outside of Phase 6 and the existing NEPA review completed by the Denali Commission. Meshik Farm is located along and connected to buried power distribution lines that were installed during Phase 3 of AEA's Port Heiden project. The buried power distribution lines would replace existing old lines, so ground disturbance associated with the DOE project would be minimal and confined to areas of former and existing disturbance. DOE has considered the potential impacts of these activities on resources, including those of an ecological, historical, cultural, and socioeconomic nature. DOE does not anticipate impacts on these resources.

Award activities would involve exposure to hazards such as high-powered construction equipment and electricity. Established Tribal health and safety policies and procedures would be followed to mitigate against potential risks. Existing tribal and government health, safety, and environmental policies and procedures would be followed at all times, including personnel training, use of proper personal protective equipment (PPE), engineering controls, monitoring, and assessments. DOE does not anticipate any impacts to resources of concern due to the proposed activities of this award.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Include the following condition in the financial assistance agreement:

If the Recipient or their contractors encounter any archeological resources during project activities, all activities in the vicinity of the discovery must be interrupted until the resources have been evaluated in terms of the National Register of Historic Places eligibility criteria (36 CFR 60.4), in consultation with the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). The Recipient must inform the DOE Project Officer of the discovery in order for DOE and the SHPO to evaluate the discovery prior to continuing work.

Notes:

Office of Indian Energy (OIE)
Review completed by Alex Colling on 12/04/2023.

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: _____



Signed By: **Casey Strickland**

Date: **12/5/2023**

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: _____

Field Office Manager

Date: _____