

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



RECIPIENT: Chitina Electric Inc.

STATE: AK

PROJECT TITLE: Fivemile Hydroelectric

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0003045	DE-IE0000189	GFO-0000189-001	

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:

C12 Energy system demonstration actions Siting, construction, operation, and decommissioning of energy system demonstration actions (including, but not limited to, wind resource, hydropower, geothermal, fossil fuel, biomass, and solar energy, but excluding nuclear). For purposes of this category, "demonstration actions" means 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 United States Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide funding to Chitina Electric Inc. (Chitina) to install a year-round operation 250 kW run-of-the-river hydroelectric system with no dam on Fivemile Creek, a tributary to the Copper River, in Chitina, AK. Components of the system would include a stream diversion and intake structure, overland penstock, access roads, turbine house, and tie-in to the existing electrical grid. The project would provide year-round clean energy to 76 buildings in the Chitina community, minimizing or eliminating the dependency on the current fossil fuel electric generator system. The proposed project area is on Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) lands.

The run-of-the-river hydroelectric system would be installed on Fivemile Creek, the project would not have a dam. The hydro facility would include an intake/diversion structure with a bar rack and pneumatic gates, approximately 8,000 feet of 18 to 20-inch penstock, an access road for maintenance and construction, a turbine house containing the turbine and switchgear, and electrical tie-ins and controls. Stream diversion and intake would consist of a gravity concrete structure with pneumatic gates, connected to penstock, which in turn would deliver water to the turbine house for hydroelectric power generation. Installation of the access road, penstock, and turbine house would result in ground disturbance.

Project activities would be divided into 5 tasks. Project tasks would involve project management and administration, RFP development and procurement, technical oversight of the design and procurement of the hydroelectric project, and constructing, installing and monitoring hydroelectric project.

At this time DOE is only proposing to provide funding for Tasks 1, 2, and 3 activities. Tasks 1, 2, and 3 activities are considered by DOE to be connected actions to the construction, installation, and operation of the proposed hydroelectric project.

Based on a review of the proposal, DOE has determined that an Environmental Assessment (EA) is required. DOE has determined that Tasks 1, 2, and 3 activities, as identified in the workplan, are allowable interim actions that can be completed prior to the conclusion of the EA. Project construction, installation, and monitoring, outlined in Task 4 and 5 activities, are dependent on completion of an EA.

All office and preparatory work would occur in preexisting facilities which are purpose-built for the type of work that would be conducted. Existing corporate health and safety procedures would be followed. No tasks in Tasks 1, 2, and 3 would have an adverse environmental impact or limit the choice of reasonable alternatives.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a conditional NEPA determination.

The NEPA Determination applies to the following Topic Areas, Budget Periods, and/or tasks:

Tasks 1, 2, and 3.

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

Task 4, 5.

Notes:

Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs (IE)
NEPA review completed by Dustin Hill, 4/4/2024

FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT DETERMINATIONS

The proposed action does not fit within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D.

DOE shall prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) and, on the basis of that EA, determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact.

The following tasks constitute allowable interim actions, per 40 CFR 1506.1 and 10 CFR 1021.211:

Tasks 1,2, and 3.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature:  Electronically Signed By: Matthew Blevins Date: 4/12/2024
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: _____ Date: _____
Field Office Manager