OCED
Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations

THE OFFICE OF
CLEAN ENERGY DEMONSTRATIONS

Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas (ERA) Program Fixed Award Grant Program National Briefing

Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations

U.S. Department of Energy

May 2, 2024

Webinar Logistics

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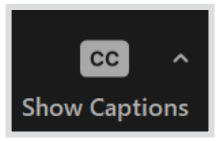

Click on the **“Show Captions”** button in the control panel at the bottom of your screen.

Is this webinar being recorded?

Yes, this webinar is being recorded and will be available on the DOE YouTube channel and the OCED website within the next week.

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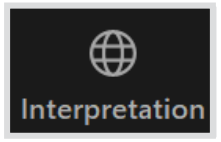


Click on the **“Interpretation”** button in the control panel at the bottom of your screen.

Will the slides be shared?

Yes, a copy of the presentation slides will be shared via email with registrants and on the OCED website within the next week.

Agenda

- Welcome
- Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations
- Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas Program
- Community Benefits
- Project Overviews
- Community Engagement & Resources
- Wrap-up & Close

Opening Remarks

Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations (OCED)

OCED Mission

Deliver clean energy technology **demonstration projects at scale** in partnership with the **private sector** to **accelerate deployment**, **market adoption**, and the **equitable transition** to a decarbonized energy system.

Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas (ERA) Program

ERA Program Overview

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) authorizes U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to invest **$1 billion in Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas**. The DOE Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas (ERA) Program is managed by the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations.

Purpose

To provide financial assistance to improve, in rural or remote areas of the United States, the resilience, safety, reliability, and availability of energy and environmental protection from adverse impacts of energy generation.

Program Goals

1. **Deliver measurable benefits to energy customers in rural or remote areas** by funding replicable energy projects that lower energy costs, improve energy access and resilience, and/or reduce environmental harm;
2. **Support new rural or remote energy system models** using climate-resilient technologies, business structures that promote economic resilience, new financing mechanisms, and/or new community engagement practices; and
3. **Build clean energy knowledge, capacity, and self-reliance in rural America**.

ERA $50M Funding Opportunity

In May 2023, OCED announced a $50 million grant Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) for the Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas (ERA) program for small community-driven projects. This FOA is a direct response from rural communities' feedback.

Reduce Barriers to Federal Funding

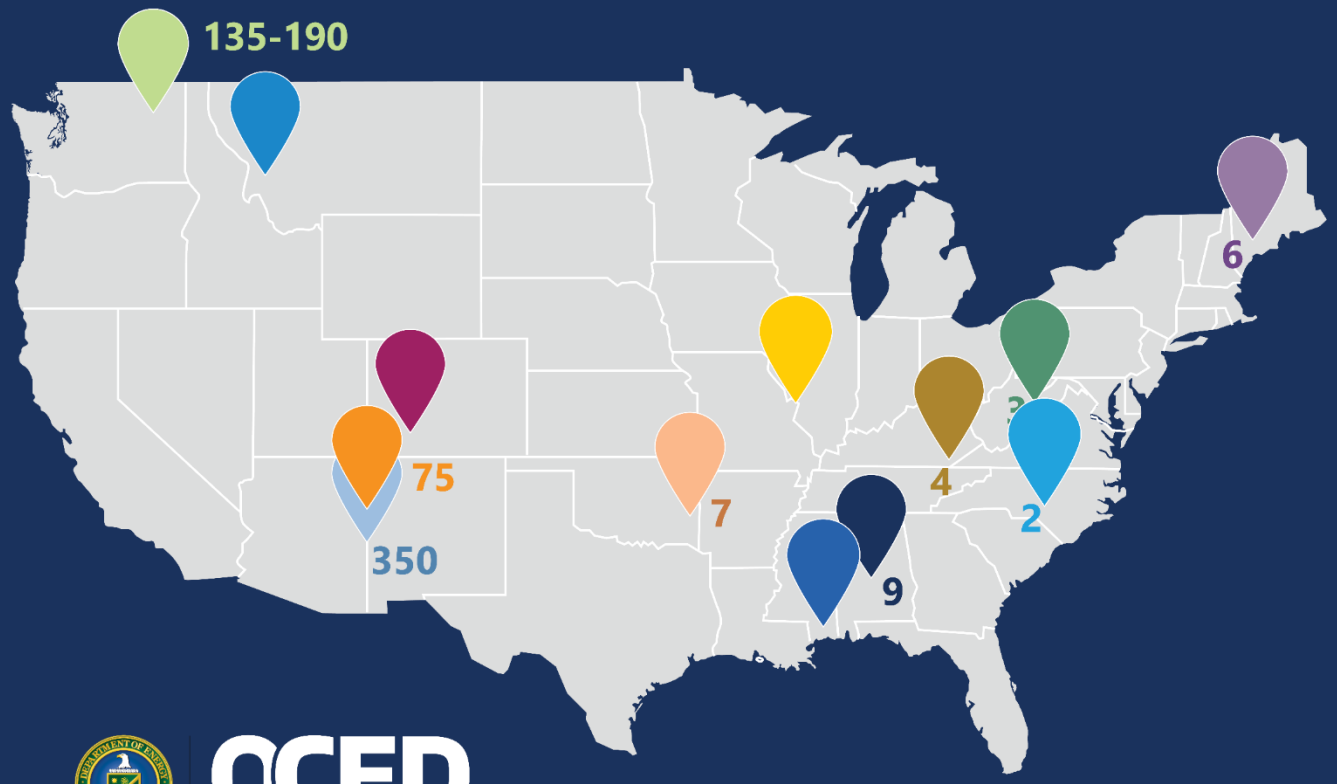
- ✓ Simplified application process
- ✓ Removed cost-share requirement
- ✓ Offered technical assistance
- ✓ Reduced financial reporting requirements

Status to Date

ERA Projects Address Unique Challenges by Deploying a Range of Technologies

Solar Photovoltaics (PV)	Solar photovoltaics (PV) is one of fastest growing and most affordable source of new electricity in America.
Wind Turbines	Turn wind energy into electricity using the aerodynamic force from rotor blades.
Grid Improvements	Modernize the flexibility and resilience of the distribution system to create a more resilient electric grid.
Electrical Thermal Storage Heating Units	Reduce household reliance on diesel-powered heating when powered by excess renewable energy.
Microgrid	Operate autonomously from the main electric grid to strengthen grid resilience for an area and mitigate grid disturbances.
Energy Efficiency Upgrades	Promote increased comfort for homeowners and lower operating costs for businesses.
Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)	Store the electricity generated by intermittent sources like solar PV and wind turbines.
Heat Pumps	Offer an energy-efficient alternative to furnaces and air conditioners for all climates by using electricity to move heat from one area to another.

ERA GRANT PROJECT SELECTIONS – LOWER 48



	Grid Access and Resiliency for Unserved Rural and Indigenous People Project
	Ravalli Electric Community Storage Project
	Lake City Area Power and Resiliency Augmentation Enterprise
	Permanent, High-Quality Clean Energy Access for Rural Indigenous Communities
	Navajo Sun Power! Home Solar Project
	Greencare: Empowering Resilience in Poteau
	Adams Electric Cooperative Green Energy Project
	East Central Community College Solar and Lighting Upgrades
	Clean Energy and Efficiency for Dallas County Alabama Schools
	Reliability and Cost Effectiveness in Rural Areas Using Environmentally Sound
	Rural Rebuild and Reconductor
	REMC Transmission Line Rebuild
	Cost-Effective and Equitable Cooperative Community Solar in Western Maine

Notes:

- **Subscripts indicate multi-site projects**

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ERA GRANT PROJECT SELECTIONS – ALASKA

	High Penetration Solar-Battery Project in Ambler, Alaska
	New Stuyahok Solar-Battery
	Kokhanok's Paradigm Shift: Big Battery as our System's Energy Backbone
	Ouzinkie Independent Power Energy Improvement Project
	Tanacross Solar PV and Tok Battery Energy Storage System
	Decarbonizing the Tongass with Tribally Owned Heat Pumps

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Community Benefits Plans

Prioritizing Community Benefits in OCED Projects

OCED **requires** applicants to include a Community Benefits Plan (CBP) to help ensure broadly shared prosperity in the clean energy transition.

By **prioritizing community benefits**, we can ensure the next chapter in America's energy story is marked by greater justice, equity, security, and resilience.

Community & Labor Engagement

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Accessibility

Investing in the American Workforce

Justice40 Initiative

Project Overviews

Adams Electric Cooperative Green Energy Project

Project Overview

Selectee:
Adams Electric Cooperative

Location:
Schuyler County, Illinois

Federal Cost Share:
$5 million*

Technology:
Wind and Solar PV

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts

- Adams Electric Co-op seeks to install a 1 MW wind turbine and 1 MW solar PV to eliminate more than 40,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions each year
- Reduce energy costs by more than $200,000 annually for 7,500 families in former coal mining communities
- Stabilize electricity rates for residents in disadvantaged communities

Community Benefits

- Partner with schools to support renewable energy curriculum
- Provide wind turbine tours to co-op and community members, students and youth organizations

Clean Energy and Efficiency for Dallas County Alabama Schools

Project Overview

Selectee:

Dallas County, Alabama Board of Education

Location:

Dallas County, Alabama

Federal Cost Share:

$5 million*

Technology:

Solar PV and Energy Efficiency Upgrades

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts

- The Dallas County, Alabama Board of Education seeks to retrofit up to nine schools across the district by upgrading HVAC units, lighting systems, and building controls with smart, energy-efficient technologies
- Three schools could receive up to 353 kW of rooftop solar PV, directly generating energy for their facilities

Community Benefits

- Partner with Black Belt Community Foundation to host job fairs, connecting local workers to construction job opportunities associated with the project
- Collaborate with workforce development organizations such as Wallace Community College Selma, AlabamaWorks!, and Tuskegee University to recruit, train and empower the local workforce

Cost-Effective and Equitable Cooperative Community Solar in Western Maine

Project Overview

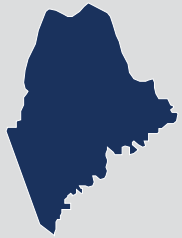
Selectee:
Center for an Ecology-Based Economy

Location:
Western Maine

Federal Cost Share:
$3 million*

Technology:
Solar PV

*Pending negotiations



Key Facts

- The Center for an Ecology-Based Economy seeks to install 150 kW solar PV arrays at six sites across Western Maine to reduce energy costs for consumer- and worker-owned cooperative members
- Reduce annual household electricity costs by 20 - 40%

Community Benefits

- 50% of participating households are low-income
- Create job opportunities for local installers and contractors through a partnership with the Rural Co-operative Development Training Program

Decarbonizing the Tongass with Tribally Owned Heat Pumps

Project Overview

Selectee:

Spruce Root

Location:

Prince of Wales Island, Alaska

Federal Cost Share:

$2.5 million*

Technology:

Air-Source Heat Pumps

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts

- Spruce Root seeks to install highly-efficient, air-source heat pumps in approximately 240 tribal homes and buildings, to help reduce residents' energy reliance on and emissions from fossil fuel use
- Increase the use of local hydroelectricity to power the heat pumps, keeping rates affordable for all residents

Community Benefits

- Create local jobs and workforce development opportunities to empower residents to support the installation and maintenance of heat pumps

East Central Community College Solar and Lighting Upgrades

Project Overview

Selectee:
Path Company

Location:
Decatur, Mississippi

Federal Cost Share:
$2.8 million*

Technology:
Solar PV and Energy Efficiency Upgrades

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts

- East Central Community College aims to install 1 MW of solar PV to provide clean power to 38 campus facilities and upgrade 25 facilities with energy-efficient LED lighting
- Reduce annual energy costs for the college by approximately $170,000—funds that can be invested into the college and students

Community Benefits

- Establish one of the first community-college solar installation and maintenance curricula in Mississippi
- Work with the local K-12 school system, Newton County School District, to highlight the significance of clean energy technology, encourage career opportunities, and foster the study of STEM courses

Greencare: Empowering Resilience in Poteau

Project Overview

Selectee:
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Location:
Poteau, Oklahoma

Federal Cost Share:
$5 million*

Technology:
Battery Energy Storage System, Microgrid, and Energy Efficiency Upgrades

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts

- The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma aims to create a microgrid with 2.1 MWh of battery energy storage systems that will provide backup power during outages for a health clinic, child development center, and food distribution center
- Upgrade seven buildings across the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's Poteau campus with energy efficient equipment
- Reduce reliance on diesel generators by installing a battery energy storage system, providing backup power and reducing greenhouse gas emissions

Community Benefits

- Save $140,000 annually in electricity costs

Grid Access and Resiliency for Unserved Rural and Indigenous People Project

Project Overview

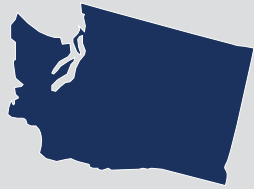
Selectee:
PUD #1 of Ferry County

Location:
Ferry and Okanogan Counties, Washington

Federal Cost Share:
$5 million*

Technology:
Grid Improvements

*Pending negotiations



Key Facts

- PUD #1 of Ferry County seeks to extend 30 miles of underground, electric distribution lines into a rural area in northeast Washington
- When complete, an estimated 135-190 unserved homes will have access to electrical service for the first time

Community Benefits

- Reduce dependence on diesel generators
- Improve air quality and health
- Power modern necessities like heating and cooling, refrigeration, internet, and lighting, which can increase employment and education opportunities

High Penetration Solar-Battery Project in Ambler, Alaska

Project Overview

Selectee:
Northwest Arctic Borough

Location:
Ambler, Alaska

Federal Cost Share:
$2.1 million*

Technology:
Microgrid

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts

- Northwest Arctic Borough aims to upgrade an existing power plant to allow for a 400 kW solar PV system and a 500 kWh battery energy storage system
- Decrease diesel usage by more than 20,000 gallons annually, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, noise pollution, and risk of fuel spills

Community Benefits

- Village plans to own and operate renewable generating assets and produce 22% of the community's electricity, which would allow diesel generators to be turned off for the first time in more than 40 years
- Located 45 miles north of the Arctic circle, 27% of residents live below the poverty line

Kokhanok's Paradigm Shift: Big Battery as our System's Energy Backbone

Project Overview

Selectee:

Kokhanok Village Council

Location:

Kokhanok Village, Alaska

Federal Cost Share:

$5 million*

Technology:

Battery Energy Storage System, Solar PV, Wind, Electrical Thermal Storage Heating Units, and Microgrid

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts

- The Kokhanok Village Council aims to upgrade Kokhanok, Alaska's microgrid with a 943 kWh battery energy storage system, solar PV, wind turbine, and electric thermal storage heating units to help transition to 100% renewable energy
- Displace 70% or more of the village's diesel use within the first two years of the project's operations, with future diesel primarily used to charge the battery storage system

Community Benefits

- Install electric thermal storage heating units into 10 elders' and low-income residents' homes, reducing their annual heating costs and increasing comfort

Lake City Area Power and Resiliency Augmentation Enterprise

Project Overview

Selectee:
Gunnison County Electric Association

Location:
Colorado

Federal Cost Share:
$5 million*

Technology:
Grid Improvements

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts

- Gunnison County Electric Association aims to replace 30 miles of aged, overhead electric distribution lines, mitigating the rising costs of maintaining outdated and unreliable infrastructure
- Increase grid reliability for rural Gunnison County residents who experience frequent power outages

Community Benefits

- Engage and collaborate with community stakeholders—including government officials, health care and emergency services providers, and local farmers and ranchers—to mitigate potential risks to local communities and ecosystems
- Create clean energy jobs

Navajo Sun Power! Home Solar Project

Project Overview

Selectee:

Navajo Transitional Energy Company

Location:

Navajo Nation

Federal Cost Share:

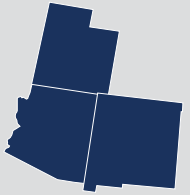
$2.6 million*

Technology:

Solar PV and Battery Energy Storage System

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts



- Navajo Transitional Energy Company plans to install 375 kW of solar PV with battery energy storage systems on approximately 75 off-grid Navajo Nation homes that are located far from the grid and other community structures, which has delayed electric service to these households
- The project's compact systems expect to lower energy burdens, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and deliver essential power to residents

Community Benefits

- Provide the power necessary for homeowners to participate in Navajo Nation and Indian Health Services programs for home improvements such as bathroom additions, indoor plumbing, and cistern pumps at no cost to the homeowners

New Stuyahok Solar-Battery

Project Overview

Selectee:
Alaska Village Electric Cooperative

Location:
New Stuyahok, Alaska

Federal Cost Share:
$4.3 million*

Technology:
Solar PV, Battery Energy Storage System, and Microgrid

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts

- The Alaska Village Electric Cooperative aims to construct a 500 kW solar PV array, a 540 kWh battery energy storage system, and a microgrid controller—leveraging their abundant summer daylight hours to produce energy for two remote indigenous communities
- Increase use of clean energy and storage to decrease electricity rates, emissions, and noise pollution

Community Benefits

- Reduce reliance on imported diesel fuels and integrate clean energy to increase microgrid's resilience
- The Alaska Village Electric Cooperative will form an operational agreement with both the Tribe and the City of New Stuyahok to establish a utility board that would oversee operations and provide community input for the project

Ouzinkie Independent Power Energy Improvement Project

Project Overview

Selectee:
Native Village of Ouzinkie

Location:
Spruce Island, Alaska

Federal Cost Share:
$1.7 million*

Technology:
Solar PV, Battery Energy Storage System, and Microgrid

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts

- The Native Village of Ouzinkie seeks to install 160 kW of solar PV and 210 kWh battery energy storage system for a new microgrid in the remote Alaskan Native village, offering reliable, resilient, back-up power during severe weather outages
- Reduce community dependence on diesel fuel and provide resilient backup power during extreme weather events for Ouzinkie's 128 residents

Community Benefits

- Reduce electricity costs by an estimated 10%
- Partner with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, the state's largest nonprofit, to provide project support including onsite training on operations and maintenance, including involvement of local youth

Permanent, High-Quality Clean Energy Access for Rural Indigenous Communities

Project Overview

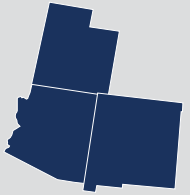
Selectee:
Navajo Power Home (NPHome)

Location:
Navajo Nation

Federal Cost Share:
$5 million*

Technology:
Solar PV and Battery Energy Storage System

*Pending negotiations



Key Facts

- Navajo Power Home (NPHome) plans to install 568 kW of solar PV and 1,769 kWh of battery energy storage systems in up to 350 off-grid homes across Navajo Nation
- Provide approximately 140 economically vulnerable homes with a reduced rate, enabling residents access to high-quality, zero-carbon energy

Community Benefits

- Reduce the use of gas-generators as a main power source, decreasing air and noise pollution

Ravalli Electric Community Storage Project

Project Overview

Selectee:

Pacific Northwest Generating Cooperative Power

Location:

Victor, Montana

Federal Cost Share:

$4.9 million*

Technology:

Battery Energy Storage System

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts

- Pacific Northwest Generating Cooperative Power aims to install a battery energy storage system at the Woodside Substation, which serves two communities that are subject to extreme winter weather and wildfire risks
- The system aims to provide clean backup power during outages to the responding volunteer fire departments, as well a local school used as a community shelter

Community Benefits

- Promote educational, mentoring, job-shadowing opportunities for local, at-risk youth

Reliability and Cost Effectiveness in Rural Areas Using Environmentally Sound Practices

Project Overview

Selectee:
Cumberland Valley Electric

Location:
Kentucky

Federal Cost Share:
$4.9 million*

Technology:
Grid Improvements

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts

- Cumberland Valley Electric aims to improve grid reliability in three counties by addressing two critical issues: inefficient fuses and vegetation management
- Reduce power outages by 80% and reduce outage restoration costs
- Replace inefficient electrical fuses with self-restoring reclosers across 500 miles of distribution lines

Community Benefits

- Create habitats for pollinators and wildlife, while reducing annual right-of-way maintenance costs
- Project partners plan to host workshops and information sessions on environmental conservation, energy efficiency, and career opportunities in the energy sector

REMC Transmission Line Rebuild

Project Overview

Selectee:

Randolph Electric Membership Corporation

Location:

Snow Camp, Staley, Westmoore, and Ether, North Carolina

Federal Cost Share:

$4.4 million*

Technology:

Grid Improvements

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts

- Randolph Electric Membership Corporation aims to replace 21 miles of deteriorating wooden transmission poles with galvanized steel poles, improving infrastructure durability and longevity
- Provide increased energy resilience to combat power outages and damage from extreme weather events in rural North Carolina communities

Community Benefits

- Partner with North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation to create and implement a transmission apprenticeship program

Rural Rebuild and Reconductor

Project Overview

Selectee:
Monongahela Power Company

Location:
West Virginia

Federal Cost Share:
$5 million*

Technology:
Grid Improvements

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts

- The Monongahela Power Company plans to rebuild more than 23 miles of aged power-distribution lines and connect a two-mile tie line with the Petersburg Substation
- Upgrade distribution lines to increase grid reliability for more than 3,000 customers in rural West Virginia
- Restore electric service faster by rerouting customers to an adjacent circuit while making repairs during an outage

Community Benefits

- Engage with community-based organizations, labor unions, and educational institutions to address workforce disparity gaps for historically under-resourced communities

Tanacross Solar PV and Tok Battery Energy Storage System

Project Overview

Selectee:
Tanana Chiefs Conference

Location:
Native Village of Tanacross and Tok, Alaska

Federal Cost Share:
$5 million*

Technology:
Solar PV, Battery Energy Storage System, and Microgrid

*Pending negotiations

Key Facts

- Tanana Chiefs Conference plans to install 1.5 MW of solar PV on the grid at the Alaska Power & Telephone power plant that provides electricity to federally recognized tribes in Tanacross, Tetlin, and Dot Lake
- Paired with a 1.5 MWh battery energy storage system in Tok, Alaska, the project is expected to displace more than 125,000 gallons of expensive diesel fuel per year, improving air quality and reducing noise pollution in local communities

Community Benefits

- Generate $380,000 in annual revenue to cover operations and maintenance costs and establish a reserve and replacement fund

Community Engagement Opportunities & Resources

Get Involved

How could this project impact me?

Learn more about OCED's Community Benefits Plan Framework →

Is there an ERA Grant project near me?

Learn more about the selected projects here →

Project selected

WE ARE HERE

Announcement
Projects have been selected, but awards have not been made

What is an ERA Grant project?

Learn more →

Project awarded

NEPA engagement →

One phase, up to 5 years

Project Development
Community Benefit Commitments Public

Project Planning
Community Benefit Commitments Public

Install, Integrate, Construct
Community Benefit Commitments Public

Ramp-Up & Operate
Community Benefit Commitments Public

Learn more about project milestones →

When are the ERA Grant project-specific briefings?

Learn more and register here →

How do I stay informed?

Sign up for updates →

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DRAFT – FOR REVIEW

Community Benefit Commitments Public
Project Milestones

Next Steps – Virtual ERA Community Briefings

OCED will hold three regional community briefings to share information with the communities hosting ERA projects.

Information and to register: Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas Local Engagement Opportunities | Department of Energy

Alaska Briefing
Thursday, May 16, 2024
2:00-3:30 pm AKT

Eastern Region Briefing
Tuesday, May 21, 2024
6:00-7:30 pm ET

Western Region Briefing
Thursday, May 23, 2024
5:00-6:30 pm PT

National Environmental Policy Act

What is NEPA? NEPA is a federal law that requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions.

Does NEPA Apply? All projects, including any potential connected actions (40 CFR 1501.9(e)(1)), receiving financial assistance from DOE must be reviewed under NEPA. There are three levels of NEPA reviews:

Categorical Exclusion (CX)

- Categories of actions that DOE has determined, by regulation, do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment and for which, therefore, neither an EA nor an EIS normally is required
- **Categorical exclusions do not typically involve public review/comment, but are posted for public review once they are complete**

Environmental Assessment (EA)

- A brief analysis to determine whether an EIS is required
- **Two public review/comment periods (optional):**
  - **Public scoping comment period and meeting**
  - **Comment period and public meeting after the draft EA is released**

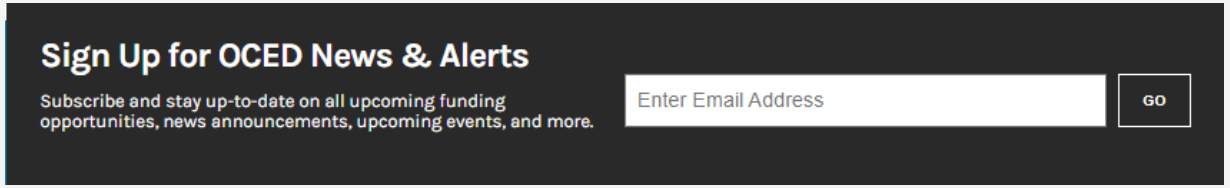
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

- A detailed statement for major federal actions significantly affecting the human environment
- **Two (required) public review/comment periods:**
  - **Comment period and public scoping meeting after the notice of intent to prepare an EIS is released**
  - **Comment period and public hearing after the draft EIS release**

NEPA Resources: https://www.energy.gov/oced/oceds-guide-nepa

For more information

- **For questions regarding ERA projects email EngageERA@hq.doe.gov**
- **OCED Website & Newsletter Sign-up energy.gov/oced**
  Scroll to bottom to sign up here:



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Thank you!

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