

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



**RECIPIENT:** Hopi Utilities Corporation

**STATE:** AZ

**PROJECT TITLE:** Remote Microgrid to Support Side Rock Water Supply Project

| <b>Funding Opportunity Announcement Number</b> | <b>Procurement Instrument Number</b> | <b>NEPA Control Number</b> | <b>CID Number</b> |
|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| DE-FOA-0002771                                 | DE-IE0000185                         | GFO-0000185-001            | GO185             |

**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.)
- B5.16 Solar photovoltaic systems** The installation, modification, operation, and removal of commercially available solar photovoltaic systems located on a building or other structure (such as rooftop, parking lot or facility, and mounted to signage, lighting, gates, or fences), or if located on land, generally comprising less than 10 acres within a previously disturbed or developed area. Covered actions would be in accordance with applicable requirements (such as local land use and zoning requirements) in the proposed project area and would incorporate appropriate control technologies and best management practices.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide funding to the Hopi Utilities Corporation (Hopi) to construct an advanced microgrid equipped with 250 kilowatts (kW) of solar photovoltaic (PV), 250 kW/1,200 kWh of battery energy storage (BESS), and approximately 1.5 miles of electric distribution line to provide power to two (2) remote well pumps. The remote water infrastructure, including PV, BESS and electric distributions line, is part of the Side Rock Water Supply Project that would deliver water to the Hopi Villages of Upper Moenkopi and Lower Moenkopi. Water wells for the Slide Rock Water Supply Project have been drilled and installed. This NEPA Determination, however, is for the PV, BESS, and electric distribution line only.

The PV and BESS systems and associated distribution equipment would be installed on parcels of land south of Tonalea, AZ on tribal trust lands of the Hopi Reservation. The PV and BESS system would be installed at a water well site, and an electric distribution line would be installed along an existing access road between two water wells. Total land coverage of the PV and BESS systems would be approximately 1 acre and co-located at the well number 3 parcel of land, which was disturbed when the well was drilled and installed. There would be an additional disturbance from the electric distribution line of approximately 3.5 acres. The PV and BESS systems would be installed at the water well number 3 parcel only and would supply power to water well number 2 through the electric distribution line.

The Hopi Tribe completed cultural surveys for the project area. No cultural resources were identified in Hopi Cultural Preservation Office (HCPO) field surveys. The HCPO has given clearance for the project.

A biological opinion was completed by the Hopi Wildlife and Ecosystem Management Program (WEMP). Potential species identified in a search of the Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) website include the California Condor, Yellow-billed cuckoo, Northern Mexican garter snake, and the Monarch butterfly. WEMP determined there are no threatened or endangered species found in the project area and therefore no effects to species or critical habitat.

Minimal air emissions may result from the use of vehicles and equipment during construction of the system. However, significant air impacts are not anticipated as emissions would be temporary and intermittent.

Project activities would involve hazards associated with working with electricity. Any risks working with hazards would be mitigated through established safety and construction protocols. Hopi Utilities Corporation would observe all applicable health, safety, and environmental regulations.

DOE has considered the scale, duration, and nature of the proposed activities to determine potential impacts on

sensitive resources, including those of an ecological, historical, cultural, and socioeconomic nature, and found no effects that would be expected to result from the proposed project activities.

## NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Include the following condition in the financial assistance agreement:

In the event of unanticipated discovery (“discovery” means the encounter of any previously unidentified or incorrectly identified cultural resource including, but not limited to, archaeological deposits, human remains, or places reported to be associated with Native American religion beliefs and practices), all operations in the area of discovery would cease and the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office contacted at (928) 734-3614.

Notes:

Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs (IE)  
This NEPA Determination requires legal review of the tailored NEPA provision.  
NEPA review completed by Dustin Hill, 7/29/2024

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_

  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 7/29/2024

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_