



National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Determination

Categorical Exclusion

Recipient: Native Renewables, Inc.

State: Arizona and New Mexico

Project Title: Energizing Rural Hopi and Navajo with Solar Powered Battery-Based Systems – Budget Period 1

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number: DE-FOA-0002970

Award Number: DE-CD0000061

OCED NEPA Control Number: OCED-00061-001-CX

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:

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION APPENDIX, NUMBER, AND 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:

DOE's Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations (OCED) is proposing to provide funding to Native Renewables (NRI) in support of their project to install residential off-grid solar photovoltaic ground-based systems with battery storage at the homes of Hopi and Navajo tribal members that live without electricity.

At this time, DOE is proposing to provide funding in support of NRI planning and design activities only; those activities are described below. The planning and design activities completed in this budget period (BP) would inform additional DOE NEPA review and a go/no-go decision prior to authorizing federal funding in support of subsequent project phases.

In this BP, NRI would:

- Necessary activities and documents for NEPA, the PMP, RMP, SOHP.
- Host a virtual kick off meeting.

- Hold planning meetings.
- Start geographic strategy and site selection for the off-grid solar units.

DOE does not anticipate adverse impacts to sensitive resources as a result of the proposed activities.

Consultations (Section 106 NHPA, Section 7 ESA, etc.): None required for the activities included in this CX Determination.

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 1501.9(e)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.1(g)(3)) 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.

DOE has determined that work to be carried out outside of the United States, its territories and possessions is exempt from further review pursuant to Section 5.1.1 of the DOE Final Guidelines for Implementation of Executive Order 12114; "Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions."

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

A portion of the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

Notes: This categorical exclusion applies to those activities listed above for information gathering, analysis and dissemination. Any changes to the project activities or location are subject to additional NEPA review by DOE and are not authorized for federal funding unless and until the Contracting Officer provides written authorization on those additions or modifications.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

OCED NEPA Compliance Officer Signature:

Date: