

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



RECIPIENT: Red Feather Development Group

STATE: AZ

PROJECT TITLE : Resilience in Coal Impacted Navajo Communities

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number Procurement Instrument Number NEPA Control Number CID Number  
Buildings Upgrade Prize GFO-BuildingsUp3-007

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.)

**B5.1 Actions to conserve energy or water** (a) Actions to conserve energy or water, demonstrate potential energy or water conservation, and promote energy efficiency that would not have the potential to cause significant changes in the indoor or outdoor concentrations of potentially harmful substances. These actions may involve financial and technical assistance to individuals (such as builders, owners, consultants, manufacturers, and designers), organizations (such as utilities), and governments (such as state, local, and tribal). Covered actions include, but are not limited to weatherization (such as insulation and replacing windows and doors); programmed lowering of thermostat settings; placement of timers on hot water heaters; installation or replacement of energy efficient lighting, low-flow plumbing fixtures (such as faucets, toilets, and showerheads), heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, and appliances; installation of drip-irrigation systems; improvements in generator efficiency and appliance efficiency ratings; efficiency improvements for vehicles and transportation (such as fleet changeout); power storage (such as flywheels and batteries, generally less than 10 megawatt equivalent); transportation management systems (such as traffic signal control systems, car navigation, speed cameras, and automatic plate number recognition); development of energy-efficient manufacturing, industrial, or building practices; and small-scale energy efficiency and conservation research and development and small-scale pilot projects. Covered actions include building renovations or new structures, provided that they occur in a previously disturbed or developed area. Covered actions could involve commercial, residential, agricultural, academic, institutional, or industrial sectors. Covered actions do not include rulemakings, standard-settings, or proposed DOE legislation, except for those actions listed in B5.1(b) of this appendix. (b) Covered actions include rulemakings that establish energy conservation standards for consumer products and industrial equipment, provided that the actions would not: (1) have the potential to cause a significant change in manufacturing infrastructure (such as construction of new manufacturing plants with considerable associated ground disturbance); (2) involve significant unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (such as rare or limited raw materials); (3) have the potential to result in a significant increase in the disposal of materials posing significant risks to human health and the environment (such as RCRA hazardous wastes); or (4) have the potential to cause a significant increase in energy consumption in a state or region.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to authorize the administration of a four-phase prize competition, known as the "National Buildings Upgrade Prize." As part of the third phase of this competition, federal funding would be provided to the Red Feather Development Group (Red Feather) for weatherization and energy efficiency upgrades in single family homes in indigenous communities.

DOE previously completed two NEPA Determinations (ND) for the initial administration of this prize (GFO-National Building Upgrade Prize-001; CX A9; 11/23/2022, and GFO-National Building Upgrade Prize-002; CX A9; 06/12/2023). Those NDs covered the development of concept plans (phases 1s and 1) and further development of concept and implementation plans (phase 2) of the prize. DOE subsequently completed a third ND which covered certain activities solicited under phase 3 of this prize regardless of location, but restricted other types of activities pending further NEPA review of proposed work to be conducted by individual teams (GFO-BuildingsUP3-001; CXs A9, B5.1; 07/10/2024).

This ND reviews all Red Feather's proposed phase 3 activities. Future phases of the prize would be dependent on the

outcome of phase 3 and would require additional NEPA review.

Red Feather has selected five single family homes located in the Navajo Nation in Arizona to receive energy efficiency upgrades. Activities would include energy audits, sealing leaks, roofing repairs, replacement of doors and windows, electrical panel upgrades, and installation of insulation and appliances, such as air-source heat pumps and water heaters. No ground disturbance would occur, and project activities would not modify the look or character of any existing structure or area.

Potential hazards include working with power tools, machinery, and electricity, and exposure to mold, lead-based paint, and asbestos. Employee training, proper protective equipment, and internal safety reviews and assessments would be utilized to mitigate hazards. Red Feather and their subcontractors would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local health, safety, and environmental regulations.

DOE has considered the scale, duration, and nature of proposed activities to determine potential impacts on resources, including those of an ecological, historical, cultural, and socioeconomic nature. DOE does not anticipate impacts on these resources which would be considered significant or require DOE to consult with other agencies or stakeholders.

## NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a conditional NEPA determination.

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

[Phase 3 of the National Building Upgrade Prize.](#)

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

[Phase 4 of the National Building Upgrade Prize.](#)

Notes:

[Building Technologies Office](#)  
[NEPA review completed by Andrew McClellan, 9/20/2024](#)

## 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.

A portion of the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review. The NEPA Provision identifies Topic Areas, Budget Periods, tasks, and/or subtasks that are subject to additional NEPA review.

**SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.**

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature:  Electronically Signed By: Whitney Donoghue  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 10/7/2024

**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: \_\_\_\_\_