U.S. Department of Energy
Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

Submit by E-mail

Proposed Action Title: Kelson Marine Co. -- A Validated Finite Element Modeling Tool for Hydrodynamic Loading and Structural Analysis of Ocean Deployed Macroalgae Farms, Using Open-source Tools

Program or Field Office: Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy

Location(s) (City/County/State): Portland, ME; Austin, TX

Proposed Action Description:

Funding will support the project team's information gathering and analysis efforts to transition the Hydro-FE -- a simulation tool uniquely capable of analyzing the hydro-structural performance of offshore macroalgae farms -- to open source solvers, extend its functionality based on feedback received from the various macroalgae farmers, and conduct outreach to stakeholders and regulators to demonstrate how the open-source Hydro-FE can be used to support the creation of a robust regulatory/classification framework for macroalgae farms. The project team will add key functionality to the tool and develop tutorial cases, publications, and workshops to ensure the tool is circulated throughout the relevant industry stakeholders. If successful, the project team's efforts will maximize the tool's impact, offering macroalge farmers the ability to improve macroalgae farm design across the United States.

The proposed project activities under this award are limited exclusively to intellectual, academic, or analytical activities. The project team will not conduct physical experiments, prototype fabrication, demonstration projects, or similar activities under this award.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

A9 - Information gathering, analysis, and dissemination

For the complete DOE National Environmental Policy Act regulations regarding categorical exclusions, including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see Subpart D of 10 CFR Part 1021.

Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410(b): (See full text in regulation)

☑ The proposal 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 proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

☑ The proposal 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.

Based on my review of the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under DOE Order 451.1B), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class(es) of action, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

NEPA Compliance Officer: GEOFFREY GOODE Digitally signed by GEOFFREY GOODE Date: 2021.11.03 15:29:59 -04'00' Date Determined:

(This form will be locked for editing upon signature)