

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



RECIPIENT: Habersham County

STATE: GA

PROJECT TITLE : Solar Resiliency for Critical Facilities

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
2021	DE-EE0009477	GFO-0009477-001	

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 Habersham County to fund the installation of a 83 kW roof-top photovoltaic (PV) solar array and a 39 kWh battery bank storage system at the Ruby Fulbright Aquatic and Recreation Center in the city of Clarksville, Georgia.

Award activities would include engineering and design tasks, and installation of approximately 208 PV solar panels, two inverters, electrical wiring, conduit, racks and ballasts, and a lithium ion battery bank storage system. All solar panels would be installed on the roof of the existing recreation center building. The battery storage system would be installed on a concrete pad adjacent to the building. All activities would occur on previously developed land and would not be visible from the public right of way.

Wetlands and floodplains are not known to occur at the project site. Therefore, no impacts to these resources are anticipated.

The State of Georgia has a Programmatic Agreement with their State Historic Preservation Office. This Programmatic Agreement exempts roof-mounted PV solar panel installation from Section 106 review when not visible from the public right of way and not requiring building reinforcement. Due to the existing developed nature of the proposed battery storage system location, and the lack of historic properties within ground level sight of the location, DOE determined the proposed battery storage system would have no potential to effect historic properties.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) website identifies one candidate (Monarch Butterfly), two threatened (Small Whorled Pogonia and White Fringeless Orchid) and one endangered (Smooth Coneflower) species that may occur in the proposed project area. Due to the lack of potential habitat for any the species at the project site, lack of critical habitat in the vicinity of the site and the previously disturbed and developed condition of the site; DOE has determined the proposed project would have no effect to threatened, endangered or candidate species in the area.

Minimal air emissions may result from the use of diesel powered vehicles and equipment during installation of the system. However, significant air impacts are not anticipated. Installation and operation of the proposed project may involve the use of heavy equipment, electrical equipment, and lithium batteries. Potential hazards would be mitigated through adherence to established institutional health and safety policies and procedures. Habersham County would adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local health, safety, and environmental regulations.

Any changes to the project activities or locations 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.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Notes:

Weatherization and Intergovernmental Programs Office - State Energy Program
NEPA review completed by Amy Lukens, 3/17/2022

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: 3/22/2022

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: _____