

PMC-ND
(1.08.09.13)

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



RECIPIENT: Vaisala Inc

STATE: CO

PROJECT TITLE : Forecast Improvement in Complex Terrain near the Columbia River Gorge

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0000984	DE-EE0006898	GFO-0006898-001	

Based on my review of the information concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (authorized under DOE Order 451.1A), 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.)

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide federal funding to Vaisala, Inc. to participate in the Wind Forecasting Improvement Project (WFIP2). The objective of Vaisala's research would be to conduct to improve wind forecasting in complex terrain near the Columbia River Gorge. The project would include design and implementation of a field campaign to collect and analyze weather data. This would include collection of data from existing wind facilities, installation of temporary (12-18 months) instrumentation in the field and collection of data from those instruments, and analysis of all data collected. Specific sites for installation of temporary data collection instruments have not yet been identified. Therefore some tasks cannot be analyzed at this time. Vaisala would perform 13 tasks. The thirteen tasks would include:

- Task 1 - Development of a plan for instrumentation layout
- Task 2 - Make logistical arrangements for field study sites
- Task 3 - Deploy instruments
- Task 4 - Manage field study
- Tasks 5 - 13 Include collecting and analyzing data, and reporting

Tasks 1 and 2 would be limited to information gathering and analysis. This NEPA determination applies to Tasks 1 and 2.

Task 3 would include deployment of instruments in the field. Instruments would include various meteorological instruments such as Lidar, wind profilers, and temporary towers. Deployment would require both electrical and communication connections. Field test sites have not yet been identified. Since specific field test sites, which meteorological instruments would be placed on which sites, and any necessary ground disturbance at those sites has not yet been identified, this task cannot be analyzed at this time. Task 3 is prohibited and subject to additional NEPA review once specific sites have been identified. Further NEPA review would need to analyze each site as well as which instruments would be placed at each specific site, and the necessary extent of the disturbance at each specific site.

Task 4 would include managing the field study and relocating instruments throughout the study area. As with Task 3, specific sites upon which to relocate the instruments have not been identified. As such, Task 4 cannot be analyzed at this time. Task 4 is prohibited and subject to additional NEPA review once specific relocation sites have been identified. Further NEPA review would need to analyze each site as well as which instruments would be placed at each specific site, and the necessary extent of the disturbance at each specific site.

Tasks 5-13 would be limited to information gathering, analysis, and dissemination. This NEPA determination applies to

tasks 5 - 13.

Based on review of the project information and the above analysis, DOE has determined that Tasks 1, 2, and 5 - 13, would not have a significant individual or cumulative impact to human health and/or environment. DOE has determined that the above identified tasks are consistent with actions contained in DOE categorical exclusion A9 "information gathering, data analysis and computer modeling," and are categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a conditional NEPA determination for this award, and funding for certain tasks under this award is contingent upon the final NEPA determination.

Insert the following language in the award:

You are restricted from taking any action using federal funds, which would have an adverse affect on the environment or limit the choice of reasonable alternatives prior to DOE/NNSA providing either a NEPA clearance or a final NEPA decision regarding the project.

Prohibited actions include:

Task 3 – Deploy instruments. This Task is prohibited in its entirety pending further NEPA review.

Task 4 – Manage field study. This Task is prohibited in its entirety pending further NEPA review.

This restriction does not preclude you from:

Task 1 – Develop a plan for instrumentation layout

Task 2 – Make logistical arrangements for field study sites

Task 5 – Model development

Task 6 – Model validation and improvement

Task 7 – Analyze observational data sets

Task 8 – Selection of improved model physical suite

Task 9 – Evaluation of model improvements within HRRR

Task 10 – Wind power forecast generation

Task 11 - Forecast verification

Task 12 – Decision support tool development

Task 13 – Final project report

If you move forward with activities that are not authorized for federal funding by the DOE Contracting Officer in advance of the final NEPA decision, you are doing so at risk of not receiving federal funding and such costs may not be recognized as allowable cost share.

Note to Specialist :

Wind Program

This NEPA determination requires a tailored NEPA provision.

NEPA review completed by Roak Parker on 12/17/14

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: _____

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: _____

12/23/2014

FIELD OFFICE MANAGER DETERMINATION

☐ Field Office Manager review required

NCO REQUESTS THE FIELD OFFICE MANAGER REVIEW FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON:

- ☐ Proposed action fits within a categorical exclusion but involves a high profile or controversial issue that warrants Field Office Manager's attention.
- ☐ Proposed action falls within an EA or EIS category and therefore requires Field Office Manager's review and determination.

BASED ON MY REVIEW I CONCUR WITH THE DETERMINATION OF THE NCO :

Field Office Manager's Signature: _____

Field Office Manager

Date: _____