

PMC-ND

(1.08.09.13)

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

**RECIPIENT:**SafeConnect Solar**STATE:** HI**PROJECT TITLE** Reducing Soft Costs Through Hardware Innovation - Phase II

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0001225	DE-EE0007199	GFO-0007199-002	GO7199

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.)
- B3.6 Small-scale research and development, laboratory operations, and pilot projects** Siting, construction, modification, operation, and decommissioning of facilities for smallscale research and development projects; conventional laboratory operations (such as preparation of chemical standards and sample analysis); and small-scale pilot projects (generally less than 2 years) frequently conducted to verify a concept before demonstration actions, provided that construction or modification would be within or contiguous to a previously disturbed or developed area (where active utilities and currently used roads are readily accessible). Not included in this category are demonstration actions, meaning actions that are undertaken at a scale to show whether a technology would be viable on a larger scale and suitable for commercial deployment.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide federal funding to SafeConnect Solar to develop their SmartBox; a two-part hardware/software system that engineers safety compliance into the PV system.

SafeConnect Solar received a conditioned NEPA determination (GFO-0007199-001, CX A9, 9/11/15) after review of Task 1 and Subtasks 2.1 and 2.2 as described in the Statement of Project Objectives (SOPO). This review applies to remaining Subtasks 2.3-2.7 and Tasks 3-8 as described in the SOPO.

Proposed activities associated with the above tasks include fabrication, in-lab testing and field testing of SafeConnect's SmartBox and the associated cabling and connectors. The proposed activities would also include working with Underwriters Laboratory (UL) for project certification; working with Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) to determine and define permitting requirements for the SmartBox; and developing and testing an online software marketing and system design platform to assist with sales of the SmartBox.

Fabrication activities would be undertaken at one of three possible locations: Source Two, Inc. in Bondsville, MA; Worthington Assembly in South Deerfield, MA; or Ectron Corporation in San Diego, CA. All three of these potential sites are purpose-built for the type of activities being proposed; therefore, no adverse impacts to sensitive resources are expected as a result of the proposed project. No change in the use, mission or operation of any of these existing facilities would arise out of this effort. Furthermore, the potential facilities all have the requisite permits in place, and would not need additional permits for the proposed activities. Product certification would take place at UL (Underwriters Lab) in Northbrook, IL. In-lab testing would occur at SafeConnect Solar's laboratory space in Wilbraham, MA and at UL in Northbrook, IL. Any needed field testing would be conducted at the National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL) in Golden, CO and would involve simply connecting the SmartBox device to existing solar devices for verification of functionality. Working with AHJs would involve visits to the relevant jurisdictions and in-office consultations with contractors, building code consultants, AHJ personnel and other stakeholders. Development of marketing and design platforms would be completed at SafeConnect Solar's lab facility in Wilbraham, MA.

This project would not require the use or handling of any hazardous materials nor would it produce any hazardous

waste that would require special handling. Potential waste would be limited to excess cabling, wiring, racking materials and would be recycled when possible, and disposed of through ordinary municipal waste streams if not recyclable. No siting, construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions/facilities would be required. Any work proposed to be conducted at a DOE laboratory may be subject to additional NEPA review by the cognizant DOE NEPA Compliance Officer for the specific DOE laboratory prior to initiating such work. Further, any work conducted at a DOE laboratory must meet the laboratory's health and safety requirements.

Based on review of the project information and the above analysis, DOE has determined the proposed project would not have a significant individual or cumulative impact to human health and/or environment. DOE has determined that this project is consistent with actions outlined in DOE categorical exclusions A9 "Information gathering, analysis, and dissemination", B3.6 "small-scale research and development, laboratory operations, and pilot projects" and B2.4 "Equipment qualification" and is therefore categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination for this award

Insert the following language in the award:

If you intend to make changes to the scope or objective of your project you are required to contact the Project Officer identified in Block 11 of the Notice of Financial Assistance Award before proceeding. You must receive notification of approval from the DOE Contracting Officer prior to commencing with work beyond that currently approved.

Insert the following language in the award:

You are required to:

Any work proposed to be conducted at a DOE laboratory may be subject to additional NEPA review by the cognizant DOE NEPA Compliance Officer for the specific DOE laboratory prior to initiating such work. Further, any work conducted at a DOE laboratory must meet the laboratory's health and safety requirements.

Note to Specialist :

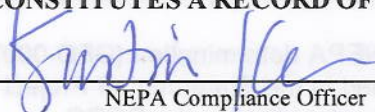
Solar Energy Technologies Office

This NEPA determination requires a tailored NEPA provision.

Review completed by Rebecca McCord 10/13/2015.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: _____


NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: _____

10/19/2015

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: _____