

PMC-ND  
(1.08.09.13)

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



**RECIPIENT:** San Pasqual Band of Indians

**STATE:** CA

**PROJECT TITLE:** San Pasqual Community Solar

|  |                                      |                            |                   |
|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Funding Opportunity Announcement Number</b> | <b>Procurement Instrument Number</b> | <b>NEPA Control Number</b> | <b>CID Number</b> |
| DE-FOA-0002317                                 | DE-IE0000149                         | GFO-0000149-001            | GO149             |

**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 San Pasqual Band of Indians (San Pasqual) to design and install a 223kW elevated carport solar photovoltaic (PV) system at an existing parking lot adjacent to the San Pasqual Park and Baseball Fields in Valley Center, CA. The system would be connected to an existing electrical grid and would serve to increase the ratio of renewable energy being delivered to residential and public localities.

Proposed project activities would include conceptual design work, installation planning/permitting, equipment procurement, contractor selection, solar PV deployment/carport construction, interconnection, and system commissioning. San Pasqual would coordinate all project activities and perform administrative functions, including financial management, reporting, and stakeholder engagement. A qualified third-party installation service provider would be contracted to perform installation and interconnection work activities. Contractor selection would occur as part of the project, after the project has initiated.

Construction of the carport structure would require excavation work and pouring a concrete foundation. The structure itself would be mounted on pre-formed concrete bases. All ground disturbance would occur in a previously disturbed dirt lot, which has been cleared of vegetation and graded in the recent past. The carport solar PV system would include approximately 5 smart inverters and 572 photovoltaic panels, which would be mounted on 2 elevated carport structures. Auxiliary equipment, including a meter switchgear and remote monitoring system, would also be installed. Commercial-off-the-shelf components would be utilized for all equipment installations. Once installed, the solar PV system would be interconnected to the existing electrical grid at a point of interconnection adjacent to the project site. Minor trenching may be performed to establish the connection. All interconnection activities would be performed in coordination with the existing utility provider, San Diego Gas & Electric (SDGE).

It is anticipated that a number of local permits and authorizations would be required to connect the solar PV system to the existing electrical grid. San Pasqual would coordinate with SDGE and any other relevant entities, to obtain these permits prior to performing applicable work activities.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) database indicates that there are several Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species with the potential to be present in the project area. These include the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat, several bird species, and a toad species. IPaC data shows that the project area is outside of the critical habitat of the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat. Due to the nature of the project activities – i.e., small-scale construction activities and the installation of equipment in a previously disturbed area currently utilized for human recreational activities – DOE has determined that there would be no effect to ESA listed species or critical

habitats.

The project site where installation activities would be performed is not near any listed historical buildings or landmarks, or any properties that are eligible for listing. Consequently, there would be no potential to cause effects to any historic properties. Although no historic resources are known to occur near the project locations, DOE will require the following as part of best management practices for the project: If during project activities the recipient or their staff encounters any cultural material (i.e., historic or prehistoric), all activities must cease in the vicinity of the discovery immediately. The recipient must inform the San Pasqual Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) and the DOE Project Officer of the discovery so that an evaluation of the discovery can be completed prior to continuing work.

DOE also conducted a review of potential issues relating to other resources of concern and found that no effects would be expected to result from the project.

Installation activities would involve the use and handling of powered equipment and machinery. All such work activities would be performed in adherence to established institutional health and safety policies and procedures. All personnel involved in installation activities would receive applicable health and safety training and would be required to utilize personal protective equipment appropriate for the tasks to be performed. Installed systems would be inspected by a certified electrical inspector and code inspector prior to commissioning. Any waste materials generated would be disposed of properly in accordance with local waste management requirements. San Pasqual and its project partners would observe all applicable Federal, state, and local health, safety, and environmental regulations.

## NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Include the following condition in the financial assistance agreement:

If during project activities the Recipient or their staff encounters any cultural material (i.e., historic or prehistoric), all activities must cease in the vicinity of the discovery immediately. The Recipient must inform the San Pasqual Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) and the DOE Project Officer of the discovery so that an evaluation of the discovery can be completed prior to continuing work.

Notes:

Office of Indian Energy Policy and Program  
This NEPA determination requires a tailored NEPA Provision.  
NEPA review completed by Jonathan Hartman, 08/18/2021

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_



Signed By:

Casey Strickland

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 8/18/2021

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