PMC-ND

(1.08.09.13)

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



RECIPIENT: AIChE

STATE: NY

PROJECT TITLE : H2CIRC: Circular Recycling for the Hydrogen Economy

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0002922	DE-EE0011338	GFO-0011338-001	GO11338

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.)
B3.15 Small-scale indoor research and development projects using nanoscale materials	Siting, construction, modification, operation, and decommissioning of facilities for indoor small-scale research and development projects and small-scale pilot projects using nanoscale materials in accordance with applicable requirements (such as engineering, worker safety, procedural, and administrative regulations) necessary to ensure the containment of any hazardous materials. Construction and modification activities would be within or contiguous to a previously disturbed or developed area (where active utilities and currently used roads are readily accessible).
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 the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) to design, develop, and fabricate processes to recover and recycle catalysts, membranes, ionomers, carbon, and other components of low-temperature proton exchange membrane fuel cells and electrolyzers.

AIChE would lead a consortium that includes leading fuel cell, electrolyzer, catalyst, and ionomer analysis industry partners, national laboratories, and universities. Award activities would be conducted at AIChE in New York, NY; Chemours Discovery Hub in Newark, DE; Cummins Electrified in Columbus, IN: Delaware State University in Dover, DE; General Motors Pontiac Engineering Center in Pontiac, MI; Heraeus Precious Metals in Santa Fe Springs, CA; Johnson Matthey Inc. in Paulsboro, NJ; Nel Hydrogen in Wallingford, CT; Plug Power Inc. in Concord, MA, West Henrietta, NY, and Slingerlands, NY; Strategic Analysis Inc. in Arlington, VA; multiple facilities at the University of Delaware in Newark, DE; University of Houston in Houston, TX; Worchester Polytechnic Institute in Worchester, MA; Lawrence Berkely National Laboratory in Berkely, CA; National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden, CO; and Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Knoxville, TN.

The proposed award activities would occur over five budget periods (BPs), with Go/No Go decision points between the BPs. Project activities include mechanical/robotic stack disassembly, MEA disassembly and recycling, technoeconomic and lifecycle analysis, development of a digital material passport (DMP), development of a community benefits plan, and consortium management.

Award activities would occur entirely within existing research and development facilities that are purpose-built for the type and scale of activities being proposed. No change in the use, mission, or operation of existing facilities would arise out of this effort. Necessary permits have been obtained by the recipient.

Award activities would involve handling and use of various hazardous materials including small particle catalysts,

metals, industrial solvents, highly corrosive acids and bases, other chemicals, and nanoparticles. Project activities involving hazardous materials pose no risk to the public. Hazardous materials would be utilized, managed, stored, and disposed of in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local environmental regulation. Existing laboratory and governmental health and safety policies and procedures would be followed, including employee training, proper protective equipment, engineering controls, monitoring, and internal assessments. All nanoscale materials would be handled using proper engineering controls until adhered to surface materials or dissolved in solvents.

DOE has considered the scale, duration, and nature of the proposed activities to determine potential impacts on sensitive resources, including those of an ecological, historical, cultural, and socioeconomic nature. DOE found no effects that would be expected to result from the proposed project activities.

Any work proposed to be conducted at a federal facility may be subject to additional NEPA review by the cognizant federal official and must meet the applicable health and safety requirements of the facility.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Notes:

Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technologies Office (HFTO) NEPA review completed by Dustin Hill, 6/14/2024

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: Melissa Parker

Date: 6/24/2024

NEPA Compliance Officer

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