

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



RECIPIENT: Utah Office of Energy Development

STATE: UT

PROJECT TITLE: Hydrogen Electrolyzer Performance Research

Notice of Funding Opportunity Number
CDP

Procurement Instrument Number
DE-EE0010692

NEPA Control Number
GFO-0010692-001

CID Number

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.)

B1.31 Installation or relocation of machinery and equipment

Installation or relocation and operation of machinery and equipment (including, but not limited to, laboratory equipment, electronic hardware, manufacturing machinery, maintenance equipment, and health and safety equipment), provided that uses of the installed or relocated items are consistent with the general missions of the receiving structure. Covered actions include modifications to an existing building, within or contiguous to a previously disturbed or developed area, that are necessary for equipment installation and relocation. Such modifications would not appreciably increase the footprint or height of the existing building or have the potential to cause significant changes to the type and magnitude of environmental impacts.

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.

B5.2 Modifications to pumps and piping

Modifications to existing pump and piping configurations (including, but not limited to, manifolds, metering systems, and other instrumentation on such configurations conveying materials such as air, brine, carbon dioxide, geothermal system fluids, hydrogen gas, natural gas, nitrogen gas, oil, produced water, steam, and water). Covered modifications would not have the potential to cause significant changes to design process flow rates or permitted air emissions.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to administer Congressionally Directed Spending to the Utah Office of Energy Development for research involving electrolysis, desalination, and heat exchange. Project activities would consist of the development, fabrication, and testing of an electrolysis cell unit used for hydrogen production; modification of a coal furnace; and research and testing of desalination units.

Fabrication and laboratory testing of the electrolyzer would occur at OxEon Energy in North Salt Lake, UT. Desalination and electrolysis research and testing would occur at the Utah San Rafael Energy Lab (USREL) in Orangeville, UT.

A coal furnace, located at USREL, would be modified by installing a heat exchanger as part of the carbon dioxide heat circulation piping. A cement pad and small structure about 6 ft by 6 ft by 6 ft would possibly be constructed to house the heat exchanger, which would be used in desalination applications. All modifications would occur within the footprint of the original facility. Operation of the coal furnace would not result in any additional emissions, as it is currently used for generation of grid electricity.

All project activities would be completed in existing, purpose-built facilities. Desalination activities would produce concentrated brines. Discharge and/or disposal of brine must comply with all local, state, and federal regulations.

Project activities would involve the use and handling of various hazardous materials, including molten lead, carbon dioxide, steam, and high temperatures and pressures. All such handling would occur in laboratory settings. The project would adhere to established health and safety policies and procedures when performing project work, and would observe all applicable federal, state, and local health, safety, and environmental regulations.

DOE has considered the scale, duration, and nature of proposed activities to determine potential impacts on resources, including those of an ecological, historical, cultural, and socioeconomic nature. DOE does not anticipate impacts on these resources which would be considered significant or require DOE to consult with other agencies or stakeholders.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Notes:

Hydrogen and Fuel Technologies Office

NEPA review completed by Andrew McClellan, 8 March 2024. Updated on 3/4/2025

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:



Andrew Montano

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date:

3/4/2025

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: