



National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Determination

Categorical Exclusion

Recipient: National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC)

State: Multiple

Project Title: Solar and Storage Microgrids for Rural Community Health Centers – Budget Period 1

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number: DE-FOA-0002970

Award Number: DE-CD0000071

OCED NEPA Control Number: OCED-00071-001-CX

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:

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION APPENDIX, NUMBER, AND DESCRIPTION: B4.14 Construction and Operation of Electrochemical-Battery or Flywheel Energy Storage Systems: Construction, operation, upgrade, or decommissioning of an electrochemical-battery or flywheel energy storage system within a previously disturbed or developed area or within a small (as discussed at 10 CFR 1021.410(g)(2)) area contiguous to a previously disturbed or developed area. Covered actions would be in accordance with applicable requirements (such as land use and zoning requirements) in the proposed project area and the integral elements listed at the start of appendix B of this part, and would incorporate appropriate safety standards (including the current National Fire Protection Association 855, Standard for the Installation of Stationary Energy Storage Systems), design and construction standards, control technologies, and best management practices. **B5.16 Solar Photovoltaic Systems:** a) The installation, modification, operation, or decommissioning of commercially available solar photovoltaic systems: (1) Located on a building or other structure (such as rooftop, parking lot or facility, or mounted to signage, lighting, gates, or fences); or (2) Located within a previously disturbed or developed area. (b) Covered actions would be in accordance with applicable requirements (such as land use and zoning requirements) in the proposed project area and the integral elements listed at the start of appendix B of this part, and would be consistent with applicable plans for the management of wildlife and habitat, including plans to maintain habitat connectivity, and incorporate appropriate control technologies and best management practices.

Rationale for Determination:

DOE's Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations (OCED) is proposing to provide funding to National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) in support of their project to install microgrid for rural community health centers.

At this time, DOE is proposing to provide funding in support of NACHC installation of one microgrid at the Tunica, Mississippi site only; those activities are described below. The activities completed in this budget period (BP) would inform additional DOE NEPA review and a go/no-go decision prior to authorizing federal funding in support of subsequent project phases.

In this BP, NACHC would complete

- Final design, engineering, and construction plans;
- Installation of a rooftop solar PV system;
- Installation of an interior or exterior battery storage system;
- Installation of associated hardware (inverter, switchgear, wiring, etc.); and,
- Minimal trenching (no more than 200 sq-ft).

Minimal ground disturbance or other activities that will have an environmental impact are anticipated at this time for BP 1. The project may involve physical modification of facilities to install rooftop solar PV systems, battery storage systems, and related hardware. Modifications may involve alteration to existing buildings and paved areas and possible ground disturbance, such as minimal trenching of no more than 200 square-feet.

DOE does not anticipate adverse impacts to sensitive resources as a result of the proposed activities.

Consultations (Section 106 NHPA, Section 7 ESA, etc.): DOE determined that the project would have no effect to threatened and endangered species under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and would not trigger Section 106 consultation under the National Historic Preservation Act as the existing building is less than 50 years old.

☒ 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 1501.9(e)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.1(g)(3)) 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.

☐ DOE has determined that work to be carried out outside of the United States, its territories and possessions is exempt from further review pursuant to Section 5.1.1 of the DOE Final Guidelines for Implementation of Executive Order 12114; "Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions."

☒ The proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

☐ A portion of the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

Notes: This categorical exclusion applies to those activities listed above for battery energy storage and solar photovoltaic. Any changes to the project activities or location are subject to additional NEPA review by DOE and are not authorized for federal funding unless and until the Contracting Officer provides written authorization on those additions or modifications.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

OCED NEPA Compliance Officer Signature:

Date: