



National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Determination Categorical Exclusion

Recipient: Pacific Northwest Cooperative (PNGC Power)

State: Montana

Project Title: Ravalli Electric Community Storage Project

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number: DE-FOA-0003045

Award Number: DE-CD0000125

OCED NEPA Control Number: OCED-0000125-CX-001

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:

A8 Awards of certain contracts - Awards of contracts for technical support services, management and operation of a government-owned facility, and personal services.

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.)

Rationale for Determination: DOE's Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations (OCED) is proposing to provide funding to Pacific Northwest Cooperative (PNGC Power) in support of the Ravalli Electric Community Storage Project. The proposed activities would include planning, design, permitting, procurement, securing contractors, training, and community outreach for a proposed 1-megawatt Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) for an existing community solar project located at an existing Ravalli Electric Cooperative (REC) substation in Victor, Montana.

Currently, DOE is proposing to provide funding in support of administrative work only for this project, such as document preparation, permit application, outreach, material procurement, and contracting. These activities would be limited to information gathering, analysis, and dissemination work only and would not include any construction, installation, or ground disturbance. Any materials procured in

advance would be stored in a previously disturbed location, and no additional site preparation or ground disturbing activities would be required.

The planning, design, permitting, procurement, contracting, training, and outreach activities completed in this budget release would inform additional DOE NEPA review prior to authorizing federal funding in support of subsequent project phases.

Consultations (Section 106 NHPA, Section 7 ESA, etc.): None required for the activities included in this CX Determination.

☒ 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 the administrative activities described above. 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: