

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



RECIPIENT: Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station

STATE: TX

PROJECT TITLE: Next Wave: Advancing Undergraduate Education in Marine Renewable Energy

Notice of Funding Opportunity Number
DE-FOA-0003097

Procurement Instrument Number
DE-EE0011694

NEPA Control Number
GFO-0011694-001

CID Number
GO11694

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:

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 funding to Texas A&M to build a Marine Energy curriculum that expands the existing capstone class and would integrate classroom, laboratory, and experiential field learning.

The proposed activities for this award are separated into six Tasks. This NEPA Determination (ND) would apply Tasks 1 – 6, with the exception of select subtasks (2.2.5.3, 2.3.5.3, 2.4.5.3, and 3.10). Activities in Tasks 1 – 6 would include developing the curriculum, offering the class and capstone to students, preparing facilities, identifying sponsors, developing prototypes, laboratory testing prototypes, hosting Marine Energy Summer Camp, and industry engagement. These activities must be completed to obtain sufficient information and finalize design, which would be needed to inform Subtasks 2.2.5.3, 2.3.5.3, 2.4.5.3, and 3.10.

As part of Tasks 1 – 6, different laboratories at Texas A&M (Galveston, TX; College Station, TX) would conduct design, development, fabrication, and laboratory testing, including bench top and water tank activities. All project activities would be carried out in existing facilities that are purpose-built and would require no modifications, such as laboratories and classrooms.

Tasks 1 – 6 would inform Subtasks 2.2.5.3, 2.3.5.3, 2.4.5.3, and 3.10. These subtasks would include developing and deploying a marine energy devices at yet to be determined sites in Galveston Bay, TX and the summer camp site. Once these sites are identified, further NEPA Review would be required.

Potential exposure to hazardous materials includes metals, glasses, and industrial solvents, as well as fabrication and test tools. All such handling would occur in-lab and would follow existing university health and safety policies, including training, proper protective equipment, engineering controls, monitoring, and internal assessments.

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, and found no effects that would be expected to result from the proposed project activities.

For Categorical Exclusion Determinations:

- The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix B to 10 CFR Part 1021 or Appendix B of DOE's NEPA Implementing Procedures (June 30, 2025). To fit within the classes of actions listed in Appendix B to 10CFRPart 1021, or Appendix B of DOE's NEPA Implementing Procedures, a proposal must satisfy the conditions that are integral elements of the classes of actions in Appendix B of both 10 CFR Part 1021 and DOE's NEPA Implementing Procedures.

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

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a conditional NEPA determination.

The NEPA Determination applies to the following Topic Areas, Budget Periods, and/or tasks:

Tasks 1-6

The NEPA Determination does not apply to the following Topic Area, Budget Periods, and/or tasks:

Subtasks 2.2.5.3, 2.3.5.3, 2.4.5.3, and 3.10

Notes:

Water Power Technologies Office
NEPA review completed by Alex Colling on 12/18/2025.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: _____

 Electronically
Signed By: **Nicole Serio**
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 12/18/2025

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: _____