

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



RECIPIENT: Bonneville Environmental Foundation

STATE: OR

PROJECT TITLE : Canal-Mounted Rural Solar, Bonneville Environmental Foundation

Notice of Funding Opportunity Number

Procurement Instrument Number
DE-EE0011434

NEPA Control Number
GFO-0011434-001

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:

**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:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide Congressionally Directed Spending to the Bonneville Environmental Foundation for the installation of a 1.25MW solar photovoltaic (PV) array in Klamath County, Oregon.

PV panels would be installed on a canopy that would be built over the Klamath Drainage District's (KDD) North Canal, an irrigation canal serving primarily agricultural land. The panels would be installed in 30 feet by 100 feet sections and span approximately one-third of a mile of the canal's length, starting at (42.042830, -121.735046) on the north end and ending at (42.039475, -121.732782) on the south end. The canopy support structure would span the width of the canal, with footings embedded in the canal bank. An electrical shed, measuring 10 feet by 10 feet, would be installed at the south end of the canopy structure, in a parking area adjacent to an existing solar array and utility infrastructure.

All project activities, including equipment staging areas and canopy and shed installation, would occur on previously disturbed ground and would be confined to KDD's existing easements, which include the North Canal and adjacent maintenance road.

Impacts Analysis

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) website identifies four threatened or endangered species (Gray Wolf, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Lost River Sucker, and Shortnose Sucker) which may occur in the proposed project area. There is no critical habitat for any of these species within the proposed project area and project activities would occur in a rural, previously disturbed area where there is ongoing human activity.

Due to the agricultural use of the area and lack of food resources, it is unlikely the Gray Wolf would encounter the project area. The Yellow-billed Cuckoo live in wooded habitat with dense cover; the area is open land with no dense cover; as such, it is unlikely that this species would encounter the project area.

The Lost River Sucker and Shortnose Sucker both prefer to live in lakes and spawn in tributaries, neither of which exist at the proposed project location because it is an irrigation canal. Additionally, project activities would occur on land and would not involve modifying or impacting the canal.

Bald and Golden Eagles are identified by IPaC to potentially be present in the project area. However, the canal is surrounded on all sides by agricultural land, and there are no trees within, and very few trees within 400 feet of, the project area. Both species nest in trees; therefore, the likelihood of a nest occurring near the project area is extremely low. Project activities would adhere to the USFWS National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines and USFWS Nationwide Avoidance & Minimization Measures for Birds to the extent possible to minimize any potential disturbance to these or other migratory bird species that may encounter the project.

Based on the above analysis, DOE has determined that there would be no effect on federally listed threatened or endangered species or critical habitat. Further, DOE does not anticipate adverse impacts to migratory bird species.

WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS

Per Federal Emergency Management Agency Map Panel number 41035C3075C, effective 7 November 2024, no floodplains exist in the project area.

The USFWS National Wetlands Inventory identifies a freshwater emergent wetland adjacent to the canal about 100 feet north of the proposed project area. No project activities would occur in this area and no impacts to wetlands are anticipated as a result of this project.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

In accordance with Oregon Department of Environmental Quality guidelines, KDD contacted Oregon's Legislative Commission on Indian Services to determine which tribal nations should be notified. KDD contacted three Native American Tribes on 3 October 2024 and followed up via phone call; no responses were received. The Tribes contacted were the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, and Klamath Tribes.

The North Canal is a contributing feature of the KDD Irrigation System Historic District and consultation with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (OSHPO) was initiated on October 2, 2025. OSHPO concurred with a finding of No Adverse Effect to historic resources on October 3, 2025.

OTHER IMPACTS

Project activities would involve typical hazards associated with construction as well as mechanical and electrical work. Proper safety and environmental policies and procedures, including the use of personal protective equipment, would be implemented on-site. All activities would comply with existing federal, state, and local laws and regulations. All required permits, licenses, and/or authorizations would be obtained prior to construction activities.

DOE has considered the scale, duration, and nature of the 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.

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 and C of DOE's NEPA Implementing Procedures (June 30, 2025). To fit within the classes of actions listed in Appendix B to 10 CFR Part 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 final NEPA determination.

Include the following condition in the financial assistance agreement:

Should archaeological materials be observed during project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity shall stop, and the area shall be secured. The appropriate State and/or Tribal Historic Preservation Office and the DOE Project Officer shall be contacted immediately in order to help assess the situation and determine how to preserve the resource(s). Compliance with all applicable laws pertaining to archaeological resources is required.

Notes:

Solar Energy Technology Program
NEPA review completed by Andrew McClellan, 29 December 2025

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature:  Electronically Signed By: Nicole Serio Date: 12/30/2025
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: _____ Date: _____
Field Office Manager