

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



RECIPIENT: Pacific Ocean Energy Trust

STATE: OR

PROJECT TITLE: Network Director for the TEAMER Program

Notice of Funding Opportunity Number

Procurement Instrument Number
DE-EE0008895

NEPA Control Number
GFO-0008895-055

CID Number
G08895

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:

**B3.16
Research
activities in
aquatic
environments**

Small-scale, temporary surveying, site characterization, and research activities in aquatic environments, limited to: (a) Acquisition of rights-of-way, easements, and temporary use permits; (b) Installation, operation, and removal of passive scientific measurement devices, including, but not limited to, antennae, tide gauges, flow testing equipment for existing wells, weighted hydrophones, salinity measurement devices, and water quality measurement devices; (c) Natural resource inventories, data and sample collection, environmental monitoring, and basic and applied research, excluding (1) large-scale vibratory coring techniques and (2) seismic activities other than passive techniques; and (d) Surveying and mapping. These activities would be conducted in accordance with, where applicable, an approved spill prevention, control, and response plan and would incorporate appropriate control technologies and best management practices. None of the activities listed above would occur within the boundary of an established marine sanctuary or wildlife refuge, a governmentally proposed marine sanctuary or wildlife refuge, or a governmentally recognized area of high biological sensitivity, unless authorized by the agency responsible for such refuge, sanctuary, or area (or after consultation with the responsible agency, if no authorization is required). If the proposed activities would occur outside such refuge, sanctuary, or area and if the activities would have the potential to cause impacts within such refuge, sanctuary, or area, then the responsible agency shall be consulted in order to determine whether authorization is required and whether such activities would have the potential to cause significant impacts on such refuge, sanctuary, or area. Areas of high biological sensitivity include, but are not limited to, areas of known ecological importance, whale and marine mammal mating and calving/pupping areas, and fish and invertebrate spawning and nursery areas recognized as being limited or unique and vulnerable to perturbation; these areas can occur in bays, estuaries, near shore, and far offshore, and may vary seasonally. No permanent facilities or devices would be constructed or installed. Covered actions do not include drilling of resource exploration or extraction wells.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide federal funding to the Pacific Ocean Energy Trust (POET) to administer the Testing and Access for Marine Energy Research (TEAMER) program. POET would collaborate with a Technical Board (TB) which would include representatives from DOE, DOE National Laboratories, and National Marine Renewable Energy Centers. The primary objective of TEAMER is to provide marine energy (ME) technology developers access to a network of facilities within the U.S. which provide testing and modeling assistance for ME technologies. Developers would apply for assistance through a competitive process.

DOE previously completed NEPA reviews which apply to all tasks. Considering the dynamic nature of TEAMER, however, POET conducts periodic reviews of facilities that request to join the TEAMER facility network. Any facility that requests to join the network or modify their existing support capabilities is subject to additional NEPA review in addition to a separate review conducted by POET and the TB.

For this review, the facility identified by POET is:

1. Eastern Long Island Sound (ELIS) adjacent to Orient, NY and Greenport West, NY. Activities in ELIS would be carried out by At-Sea Development Inc. (At-Sea; Falls Church, VA) and would include deployment and open water testing of two seabed landers to measure current velocities and underwater sound, deployment of a water column mooring system to measure turbulence, and shipboard-transect measurements of hydrodynamic currents. Integral Consulting Inc. (Santa Cruz, CA) would assist with preparation, testing, and laboratory analysis.

Activities would involve the deployment of equipment into ocean waters where Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species may be present. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and Department of Energy Offshore Wind Site Assessment and Site Characterization Activities Programmatic Consultation (date June 29, 2021)

addresses the types of activities proposed in this project and in New England waters, allowing for certain activities to occur provided that they fit the categories of “multiple similar, frequently occurring, or routine actions expected to be implemented in particular geographic areas”. The activities considered in this award are “geophysical and geotechnical surveys and the deployment, operation, and retrieval of environmental data collection buoys”, and as such fall under the purview of the Programmatic Consultation.

On May 12, 2026, DOE sought concurrence from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) that project activities are covered under this programmatic consultation. On May 26, 2026, NMFS concurred with DOE’s conclusion that the proposed action is not likely to adversely affect any ESA-listed species or designated critical habitat under the jurisdiction of NMFS provided that implementation of relevant Project Design Criteria (PDCs) and their associated Best Management Practices (BMPs) in the programmatic consultation (noted in conditions) would be required to be implemented to minimize impacts to the marine environment and listed species.

DOE determined that the proposed project activities would have no effect to ESA-listed species under U.S. Fish & Wildlife jurisdiction (Piping Plover, Roseate Tern, Rufa Red Knot).

Individuals working on this project could be exposed to physical hazards. Existing corporate health and safety policies and procedures would be followed including employee training, proper protective equipment, engineering controls, and monitoring. Additional policies and procedures would be implemented as necessary if new health and safety risks are identified.

If additional facilities are identified beyond those reviewed in this or previous determinations, or if the type of assistance offered by an approved facility is modified, additional NEPA review will be required.

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 conditional NEPA determination.

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

All tasks are approved; however, selection of additional facilities, scope of work, and Technical Support Recipients (TSRs) are subject to additional NEPA review.

The following facility is approved to join the TEAMER facility network and provide technical support as described in this NEPA Determination:

1. Eastern Long Island Sound (ELIS) adjacent to Orient, NY and Greenport West, NY

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

All selections of additional facilities, scope of work, activities, and TSRs which this or previous NEPA Determinations do not apply to. Such additions are subject to additional NEPA review.

Include the following condition in the financial assistance agreement:

The relevant Project Design Criteria (PDC) and their associated Best Management Practices (BMPs) described in the BOEM Offshore Wind Site Assessment and Site Characterization Activities Programmatic Consultation would be implemented in the following manners:

PDC 1: Avoid Live Bottom Features

- At-Sea will conduct a bathymetry survey prior to other vessel operations to identify deployment locations away from bed structures. Shallow water operations will minimize the potential for seafloor disturbance via propeller wash.

PDC 3: Marine Trash and Debris Awareness and Prevention

- BMP 2-4: At-Sea Project Lead on the vessel will ensure compliance with BMP 2-4, to include ensuring materials are properly secured to prevent loss overboard, properly marked if there is a reasonable risk of losing the item overboard; prevent trash and debris, and immediately recover any such material, and report any marine trash and debris lost or discarded.

PDC 4: Minimize Interactions with Listed Species during Geophysical Survey Operations

- The acoustic operating frequencies of the ADCPs and multibeam sonar would be outside of the hearing range of marine mammals.
- BMPs 6-10 do not apply as there will be no night survey activities.
- The vessel operator will follow NMFS guidelines 3 for traveling at 10 knots when transiting across the sound to minimize the likelihood of a vessel strike with a whale.

PDC 5: Minimize Vessel Interactions with Listed Species

- Vessel captain and At-Sea Crew Lead will provide a pre-departure briefing to the crew to comply with vigilant watch requirements while at-sea and ensure compliance with BMP 1-6.
- Vessel captain and Protected Species Observer (PSO; if required), will ensure transiting vessel monitoring, maintain separation distances and ensure safe vessel operation to permit detecting and avoiding any animals sighted.
- Before starting at-sea testing, the PSO will brief the Crew on the actions and requirements in the event of at-sea operations being suspended due to PSO detection of species, and the associated Clearance Zone and Shutdown Zone requirements. The PSO will brief the crew on the signal and messages he will provide in the event of detecting a protected species within the minimum separation distance. The Crew will review and be prepared to safely stop survey operations, or take any PSO directed action, or cease all operations and propulsion until PSO authorization is obtained.

PDC 6: Minimize Risk During Buoy Deployment, Operations, and Retrieval

- No mooring or buoy deployment activities are anticipated; however the At-Sea Crew Lead, Vessel Captain and crew will ensure compliance with BMPs 1-6.
- BMP 4: Prior to and during deployment and retrieval, if listed species are observed within 500 m of the vessel the team will take appropriate action to stop/place the survey operations in a safe condition.

PDC 7: Protected Species Observers

- At-Sea will comply and use qualified NMSF-approved 3rd party PSOs, if required, when performing at-sea testing funded under this project and will comply with BMPs 1-6.

PDCs 8: Reporting Requirements

- DOE is the action agency and will perform any reporting resulting from at-sea testing through the NEPA Specialist supporting the project. Any additional reporting should be sent to DOE (action agency) and DOE will then notify NMFS GARFO.

Notes:

Water Power Technologies Office (WPTO)
NEPA review completed by Alex Colling on 5/27/2026.

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 10CFR 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.

A portion of the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review. The NEPA Provision identifies Topic Areas, Budget Periods, tasks, and/or subtasks that are subject to additional NEPA review.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature:

 Electronically Signed By: Kristin Kerwin

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 6/1/2026

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: _____