

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



RECIPIENT: Noria Energy Holdings LLC

STATE: CA

PROJECT TITLE : Tracking and Positioning System for Floating Solar

Notice of Funding Opportunity Number
DE-FOA-0003057

Procurement Instrument Number
DE-EE0011411

NEPA Control Number
GFO-0011411-003

CID Number
GO11411

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:

B1.15 Support buildings

Siting, construction or modification, and operation of support buildings and support structures (including, but not limited to, trailers and prefabricated and modular buildings) within or contiguous to an already developed area (where active utilities and currently used roads are readily accessible). Covered support buildings and structures include, but are not limited to, those for office purposes; parking; cafeteria services; education and training; visitor reception; computer and data processing services; health services or recreation activities; routine maintenance activities; storage of supplies and equipment for administrative services and routine maintenance activities; security (such as security posts); fire protection; small-scale fabrication (such as machine shop activities), assembly, and testing of non-nuclear equipment or components; and similar support purposes, but exclude facilities for nuclear weapons activities and waste storage activities, such as activities covered in B1.10, B1.29, B1.35, B2.6, B6.2, B6.4, B6.5, B6.6, and B6.10 of this appendix.

B5.25 Small-scale renewable energy research and development and pilot projects in aquatic environments

Small-scale renewable energy research and development projects and small-scale pilot projects located in aquatic environments. Activities would be in accordance with, where applicable, an approved spill prevention, control, and response plan, and would incorporate appropriate control technologies and best management practices. Covered actions would not occur (1) within areas of hazardous natural bottom conditions or (2) 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, use of large-scale vibratory coring techniques, or seismic activities other than passive techniques.

Rationale for determination:

The United States Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide federal funding to Noria Energy Holdings, LLC (Noria), to design, develop, and test a floating solar photovoltaics (FPV) tracking and positioning system that increases annual energy production of FPV, lowers levelized cost of energy for FPV, and leverages U.S. contract supply chain and manufacturing. The project would be completed over two Budget Periods (BPs).

DOE previously completed two NEPA Determinations (NDs) for BP 1 Tasks 0 through 7.2 activities (GFO-0011411-001: exclusions A9, B3.16, and B5.15, signed 8 August 2024; and GFO-0011411-002: exclusions A9, B3.6, and B5.15, signed 17 December 2024). This ND applies to BP 1 Tasks 7.3 through 9.1 and all BP 2 activities, i.e., all remaining Tasks.

Remaining project activities involve dissemination of information, model development, and complete system development, installation, testing, and demonstration. The FPV array would be installed at Welton Reservoir in Arvada, Colorado (39.854685, -105.180752), an artificial pretreated water source filled via underground pipes that is lined and sealed at the bottom. The Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in Richland, Washington, would assist with implementation of the tracking system.

Installed components would consist of photovoltaic panels, cabling, and tracking hardware. The panels would be mounted on floating pontoons that would be anchored, using helical screws, to the reservoir bottom. Cabling would float on the surface and connect to inverters, a transformer, and other electrical equipment at the shoreline. On shore, the cabling would be trenched for roughly 300 linear feet at an approximate depth of one to two feet. The electrical equipment would be placed on a concrete pad measuring 2000 square feet in dimension. All ground disturbance would occur in previously disturbed areas.

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation website identifies eight species of concern (piping plover, whooping crane, pallid sturgeon, Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee, western regal fritillary, monarch butterfly, Ute ladies'-tresses, and western prairie fringed orchid) that may occur in the proposed project area. There is no critical habitat in the project area. Welton Reservoir, by design, is not a natural habitat for wildlife. No fish inhabit the reservoir, and any other fauna are unlikely to be present. The shoreline is a disturbed area that sees fluctuating water levels, therefore the two plant species, Ute ladies'-tresses and western prairie fringed orchid, are unlikely to be present. DOE has determined no effect on special status species or on critical habitats.

All necessary permits and licenses would be obtained prior to commencing work. The project would involve working with electricity and working in water. Award recipients would adhere to established health and safety policies and procedures when performing project work, and would observe all applicable federal, state, and local health, safety, and environmental regulations.

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.

Any work proposed to be conducted at a federal facility may be subject to additional NEPA review by the cognizant federal official and must meet the applicable health and safety requirements of the facility.

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 Technologies Office
NEPA review completed by Andrew McClellan, 17 July 2026

FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATIONS

The proposed action (or the part of the proposal defined in the ‘Rationale for Determination’ above) 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.

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 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 Appendix B to 10 CFR Part 1021; (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 Appendix B to 10 CFR Part 1021.

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, is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts and is not precluded by applicable regulations or procedures concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further 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: 8/3/2026

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: _____