



Department of Energy

Golden Field Office
1617 Cole Boulevard
Golden, Colorado 80401-3393

March 12, 2009

TO: Distribution List

SUBJECT: Notice of Scoping – Crowder College’s MARET Center Construction Project

The US Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide Congressionally directed Federal funding to Crowder College in Neosho, Missouri, for the construction of the Missouri Alternative & Renewable Energy Technology (MARET) Center. Pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and DOE’s implementing procedures for compliance with NEPA (10 CFR Part 1021), DOE is preparing a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to:

- identify any adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided should this proposed action be implemented;
- evaluate viable alternatives to the proposed action, including a no action alternative;
- describe the relationship between local short-term uses of the environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity; and
- characterize any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources that would be involved should this proposed action be implemented.

Project Description

DOE’s Proposed Action is to provide \$1,948,000 (out of a total project cost of approximately \$9 million) in financial assistance to Crowder College in support of the construction of Phase I of the MARET Center. Phase II is not currently funded, but will be analyzed in this EA.

Proposed elements for Phase I of the project would include approximately 9,000 square feet of classroom space for the school’s construction technology program; an incubation center for new sustainable energy oriented business start-ups; living laboratories or workshops for the college’s alternative and renewable energy program; and office space. Phase I will also include an energy courtyard surrounded on three sides by a “living wall”. Phase I will also include:

- all earthmoving activities (including grading and demolition);
- installation of geothermal wells;
- installation of a “solar roof” system;
- closure of Chouteau Street between Laclede Avenue and National Guard Road;



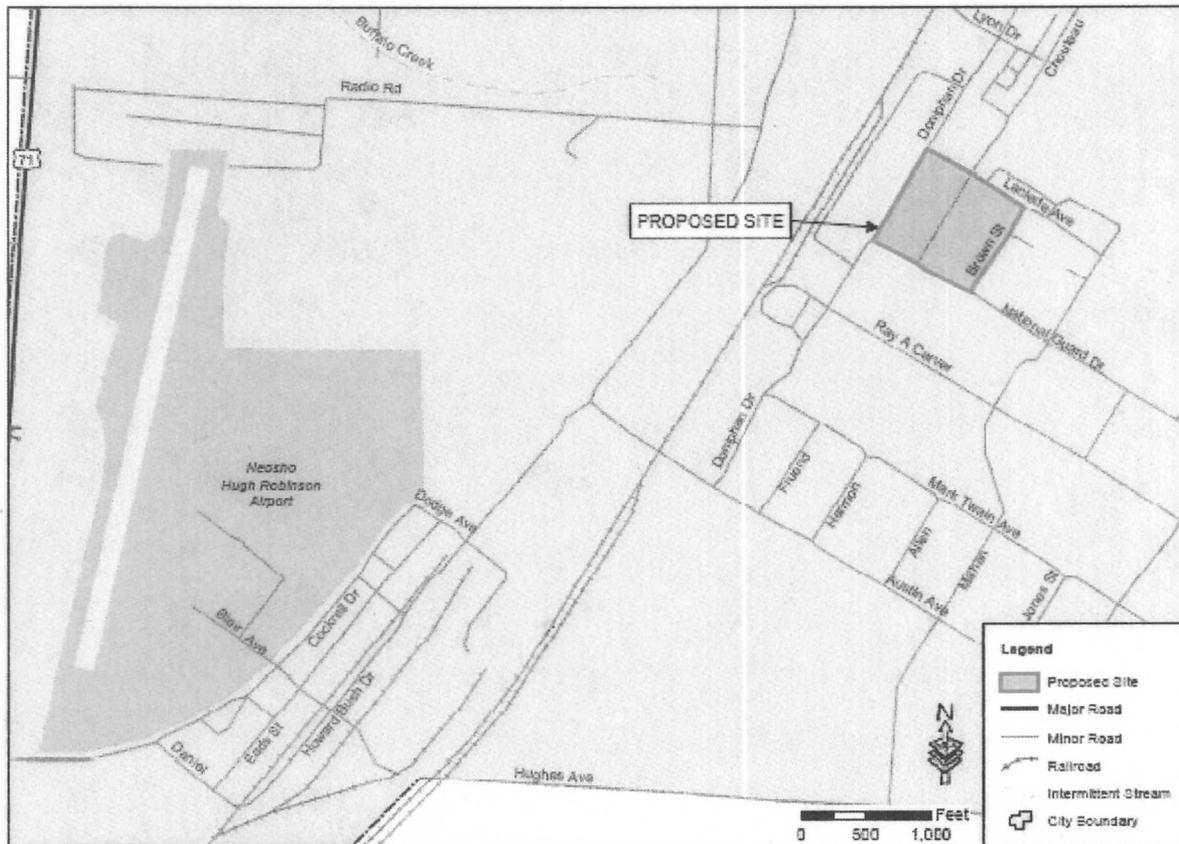
- a parking lot (constructed with porous unit paver material);
- construction of two stormwater ponds;
- installation of all necessary utility lines;
- trellis fencing/landscaping (using native plants)
- sidewalks and paths; and
- installation of bicycle racks.

The proposed building would utilize sustainable and recycled building materials to the extent practicable. It would also utilize solar panels, the existing wind turbine on the site, and geothermal energy to ensure the MARET Center is a net-zero energy (from the grid) building. Excess energy produced by the MARET Center would be used to power other buildings on campus and/or sold to the utility company.

Phase II of the project would include the addition of a 21,000 square foot conference center to the portion of the MARET Center constructed during Phase I. While Phase II would not be funding under DOE's Proposed Action, this planned construction is a connected action that would be analyzed in the Environmental Assessment. All the site work (grading, utilities, parking lots, paths, and landscaping) conducted under Phase I would be designed to accommodate Phase II of the project. This conference center would allow Crowder College to host sustainable building technology and renewable energy conferences, seminars and classes, sponsored by both academia and industry. The addition of a conference center would allow Crowder College to further showcase the MARET Center as an example of sustainable building technology.

Project Location

The project would be located on Crowder College's Neosho campus at the corner of Doniphan Drive and Laclede Avenue in Neosho, Missouri, and would be constructed entirely on previously disturbed, vacant land.



Site Location Map

Probable Environmental Effects/Issues Scoped for the EA

The EA will describe all potential impacts on the environment caused by the project and will identify possible mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate those impacts. The EA will describe the potentially affected environment and the impacts that may result to:

- Geology and Soils;
- Water Resources;
- Biological Resources;
- Air Quality;
- Noise;
- Hazardous Materials and Waste Management;
- Land Use;
- Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice;
- Human Health and Safety;
- Visual Quality/Aesthetics;
- Cultural Resources; and
- Infrastructure.

Development of a Reasonable Range of Alternatives

DOE is required to consider a reasonable range of alternatives to the Proposed Action during the environmental review. The definition of alternatives is governed by the "rule of reason." An EA must consider a reasonable range of options that could accomplish the agency's purpose and need and reduce environmental effects. Reasonable alternatives are those that may be feasibly carried out based on environmental, technical, and economic factors.

The No Action Alternative will be addressed. The need for project redesign, or a project alternative, will be determined during the course of environmental review.

Public Scoping

This letter will be available to all interested Federal, state, and local agencies to supply input on issues to be discussed in the EA. Agencies should identify the issues, within their statutory responsibilities, that should be considered in the EA. The general public is also invited to submit comments on the scope of the EA on or before April 12, 2009. No formal public scoping meeting is currently planned for this project. Please send your comments regarding the scope and content of the EA, along with the name and address of an appropriate contact person to:

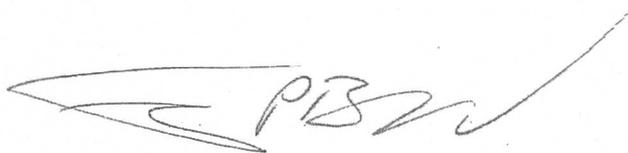
Robin W. Griffin

Potomac-Hudson Engineering, Inc.
7830 Old Georgetown Road, Suite 220
Bethesda, MD 20814
Main: 301-907-9078
robin.griffin@phe.com

This letter and the Draft EA, when available, will be posted to the Golden Field Office electronic reading room: http://www.eere.energy.gov/golden/reading_room.aspx.

Thank you for your participation in the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Blazek", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Steve Blazek
NEPA Compliance Officer