PMC-EF2a

(2.04.02)

# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
## EERE PROJECT MANAGEMENT CENTER
## NEPA DETERMINATION

**RECIPIENT:** NREL

**STATE:** CO

**PROJECT TITLE :** Shuttle Service to South Golden Road RTD Bus Stops

| Funding Opportunity Announcement Number | Procurement Instrument Number | NEPA Control Number | CID Number |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | NREL-11-010 | GO10337 |

**Based on my review of the information concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (authorized under DOE Order 451.1A), I have made the following determination:**

**CX, EA, EIS APPENDIX AND NUMBER:**

Description:

| | |
|---|---|
| **DOE/EA-1440-S-I** | Final Supplement to Final Site-Wide Environmental Assessment of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory's (NREL) South Table Mountain Complex (May 2008) |
| **A7** | Transfer, lease, disposition, or acquisition of interests in personal property (e.g., equipment and materials) or real property (e.g., permanent structures and land), if property use is to remain unchanged; i.e., the type and magnitude of impacts would remain essentially the same. |

Rational for determination:

The proposed project would be for the continuation of a shuttle service to transport employees between RTD bus stop locations in the vicinity of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory's (NREL) South Table Mountain (STM) Complex to the NREL STM Complex, located in the City of Golden, County of Jefferson, and State of Colorado.

The bus service would be provided in the "peak-hours" with shuttles in operation for a 3-hour period in the morning and a 3-hour period in the evening until south access road to NREL is completed (anticipated completion in fall 2012). The service would be timed to meet the GS buses from Boulder at the South Golden Road bus stops. This service is being considered to address parking shortages on the STM campus and promote alternate commuting methods. NREL has implemented a number of shuttle bus options to move staff, workers, and visitors to/from RTD hubs, parking areas, and NREL facilities. This shuttle service would primarily serve RTD stops along a 0.5 mile portion of South Golden Road directly south of STM, and is proposed to address safety issues associated with workers traversing non-maintained roadways and pathways within Jefferson County and Jefferson County Open Space areas. These areas are unlit and snow removal is not provided.

It is estimated that one 20-person shuttle-type bus/van would be used, making approximately 5 round-trips in the AM peak period, and 4 round-trips in the PM peak periods, although this schedule may be expanded or reduced based on participation. The shuttle would primarily operate between the Kilmer St./South Golden Rd. intersection and the central portion of the STM campus, utilizing South Golden Rd., Quaker St., and the STM West Gate Entrance. In the event unanticipated site or local conditions temporarily preclude the use of this primary route, the shuttle would use the less preferable Denver West Pkwy/Denver West Blvd.-Colfax Ave.-Indiana St.-South Golden Rd. route. The primary route is approximately 1.9 miles one-way (1.1 miles from Kilmer St. to STM West Gate, and approximately 0.8 miles from West Gate to campus drop-off points).

Although the proposed shuttle service would add another mobile source of air emissions locally, it is anticipated that this action would encourage greater use of mass transit by NREL employees, and therefore have a positive effect on the regional Denver Metropolitan airshed. The total vehicle mileage anticipated with this shuttle service is approximately 86 miles per day, including miles to and from the contractor's point of operation to STM Complex. Per the 2009 Annual Report of Traffic Congestion in the Denver Region by the Denver Regional Council of Governments, 71.5 million vehicle miles per day occur in the Denver Metropolitan airshed. Therefore this additional mobile source would be de minimis. The Denver Metropolitan area is currently designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a non-attainment area for ozone under the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. This expanded shuttle service is not likely to significantly contribute to this non-attainment status.

The South Golden Road shuttle ridership analysis and Shuttle Service Staff survey results have revealed that the

initial shuttle pilot project was a success and should be extended into the summer months and beyond until the NREL south access road is completed. Survey results indicate and overwhelmingly positive response to the service. Ninety-three percent of survey respondents reported they would use the service if it was offered again next fall (as a seasonal service) and fifty-five percent indicated they would continue to use the service if it was offered year-round. It is likely that single occupant driver trips would increase and use of RTD buses would decrease if this NREL shuttle service was discontinued. This would increase demand on NREL's limited onsite parking and increase peak hour vehicle trips to and from the STM campus.

There is potential for public controversy as the general public may have issues with shuttle vehicles using a residential street (Quaker St.). The additional vehicular trips (20 trips/day) over a six hour period would not cause intersection level-of-service degradations, or exceed the capacity of the roadways of the primary or secondary routes. It is not anticipated that noise impacts would be above state limitations. The shuttles would be operating in an urban and suburban office park environment during normal "business" hours. In addition, it is anticipated that the vehicles used in the shuttle service would be the equivalent of a large vans or small shuttles.

The May 2008 Mitigation Action Plan (MAP) for the Supplement to Final Site-Wide Environmental Assessment (DOE/EA-1440-S-I) and Finding of No Significant Impact for the National Renewable Energy Laboratory's South Table Mountain did not include shuttle service to RTD bus stops as a Traffic Demand Management (TDM) Mitigating Action specified in Section 3.1.1, but the MAP did include expanding shuttle service to regional RTD hubs. While this shuttle service to RTD bus stops was not specifically listed as TDM measure in the MAP, it would promote alternative commuting, help alleviate the parking shortage at the South Table Mountain Complex, reduce traffic flow to both onsite and offsite parking lots, and improve employee safety by avoiding unlit and unplowed sidewalks and trails during the winter. Based on the information above and the assessment provided in EA-1440-S-I, this project's impacts to the human and natural environment can be deemed less than significant, and this project would qualify for Categorical Exclusion A7.

**NEPA PROVISION**

DOE has made a final NEPA determination for this award

Insert the following language in the award:

Note to Specialist :

EF2a prepared by Rob Smith on 1/20/2011 and revised on 4/29/2011

**SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.**

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: Lori Plummer / Lori Plummer Date: 4/29/2011
NEPA Compliance Officer

**FIELD OFFICE MANAGER DETERMINATION**

☐ Field Office Manager review required

**NCO REQUESTS THE FIELD OFFICE MANAGER REVIEW FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON:**

☐ Proposed action fits within a categorical exclusion but involves a high profile or controversial issue that warrants Field Office Manager's attention.
☐ Proposed action falls within an EA or EIS category and therefore requires Field Office Manager's review and determination.

**BASED ON MY REVIEW I CONCUR WITH THE DETERMINATION OF THE NCO :**

Field Office Manager's Signature: _____ Date: _____
Field Office Manager