PMC-EF2a

(2.04.02)

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

RECIPIENT: Snohomish County PUD **STATE:** WA

PROJECT TITLE: Development of Post-Installation Monitoring Capabilities

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
N/A - CDP	DE-EE0000301	GFO-0000301-002	EE301

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:

A9 Information gathering (including, but not limited to, literature surveys, inventories, audits), data analysis (including computer modeling), document preparation (such as conceptual design or feasibility studies, analytical energy supply and demand studies), and dissemination (including, but not limited to, document mailings, publication, and distribution; and classroom training and informational programs), but not including site characterization or environmental monitoring.

Rational for determination:

Snohomish Public Utility District (SnoPUD) is proposing to use Congressionally Directed Federal funding through DOE to develop and verify monitoring capabilities which would be implemented as post-installation environmental monitoring for their proposed Puget Sound Pilot Tidal Energy Project in the State of Washington. The primary focus for the project would be the development of near-field monitoring capabilities to observe interactions in the immediate vicinity of turbine rotors, in order to address concerns about the risk of post-installation blade strike. Additionally, equipment suitable for post-installation passive acoustic monitoring would be tested and the potential for cross-talk between different active acoustic instruments would be evaluated.

The project activities would be lead by SnoPUD's subawardee's, the Northwest National Marine Renewable Energy Center (NNMREC) and the University of Washington.

Project tasks include:

Task 1 – Near-field Monitoring

*Subtask 1.1 – A technical working group would be assembled to develop an effective light and camera configuration.

*Subtask 1.2 – The light and camera configuration developed in subtask 1.1 would be tested to determine the minimum level of artificial light necessary to identify species. The system would be tested in three locations: Lake Washington, a low current velocity area in Admiralty Inlet and at the Tidal Project deployment site in Admiralty Inlet (high current velocity area).

*Subtask 1.3 – The information gathered in subtasks 1.1 and 1.2 would be combined to determine the optimal configuration for the lighted video system. Equipment specifications would then be finalized.

*Subtask 1.4 – The working group created in subtask 1.1 would develop a near-field monitoring plan for the District's Tidal Energy Project in collaboration with Snohomish PUD's environmental permitting specialists.

Task 2 – Passive Acoustic Monitoring: capabilities to monitor ambient noise, noise from an operating turbine, and marine mammal presence/absence (as indicated by echolocation activity);

Task 3 - Current Velocity Monitoring: capabilities to monitor inflow conditions for the turbine; the principal concern is the potential for cross-talk with other active acoustics;

Task 4: Component Packaging: the mechanics (hardware and software) of integrating the monitoring capabilities described in Tasks 1-3 (i.e., evaluating the complete package, not just individual components);

Task 5: Monitoring Cost Estimation: evaluate the implementation cost (capital and operating) for each type of monitoring capability; and

Task 6: Project Management and Reporting.

Tasks1.1, 5 and 6 involve pre-monitoring planning, cost-estimates and project management activities.

Tasks 1.2 through 1.4, task 2 task 3, and task 4 involve in-water testing of monitoring components and would require agency consultation with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as required under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA). Consultations have been initiated but are not complete; therefore a final NEPA determination for these tasks cannot be completed at this time.

Based on the above discussion DOE has determined that the impacts related to Tasks 1.1, 5 and 6 are anticipated to have negligible or no affects on the human and natural environment. These specific tasks are consistent with actions outlined in A9 (information gathering/dissemination) and is, therefore, categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

This NEPA determination does not apply to tasks 1.2 through 1.4, task 2 task 3, and task 4. These tasks are unallowable pending completed consultations with NOAA and USFWS and further DOE NEPA analysis.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a conditional NEPA determination for this award, and funding for certain tasks under this award is contingent upon the final NEPA determination.

Insert the following language in the award:

You are restricted from taking any action using federal funds, which would have an adverse affect on the environment or limit the choice of reasonable alternatives prior to DOE/NNSA providing either a NEPA clearance or a final NEPA decision regarding the project.

Prohibited actions include:
Sub tasks: 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4
Task 2 (all subtasks)
Task 3 (all subtasks)
Task 4 (all subtasks)

Deployment and installation of monitoring equipment into a marine or lake system is prohibited pending completion of inter-agency consultations for the ESA and MMPA and a final DOE NEPA determination for those tasks.

This restriction does not preclude you from:

Sub-task 1.1
Task 5 and task 6

If you move forward with activities that are not authorized for federal funding by the DOE Contracting Officer in advance of the final NEPA decision, you are doing so at risk of not receiving federal funding and such costs may not be recognized as allowable cost share.

Note to Specialist :

Review completed by: Laura Margason 4.22.2011

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: _____ Date: 4/22/2011
NEPA Compliance Officer