PMC-EF2a

(2.04.02)

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

RECIPIENT: Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund **STATE:** VT

PROJECT TITLE : Vermont Biofuels Initiative: Ekolott Farm

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
	DE-FG36-08GO88182	GFO-GO88182-033	GO88182

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:

B5.1 Actions to conserve energy, demonstrate potential energy conservation, and promote energy-efficiency that do not increase the indoor concentrations of potentially harmful substances. These actions may involve financial and technical assistance to individuals (such as builders, owners, consultants, designers), organizations (such as utilities), and state and local governments. Covered actions include, but are not limited to: programmed lowering of thermostat settings, placement of timers on hot water heaters, installation of solar hot water systems, installation of efficient lighting, improvements in generator efficiency and appliance efficiency ratings, development of energy-efficient manufacturing or industrial practices, and small-scale conservation and renewable energy research and development and pilot projects. The actions could involve building renovations or new structures in commercial, residential, agricultural, or industrial sectors. These actions do not include rulemakings, standard-settings, or proposed DOE legislation.

Rational for determination:

DOE is proposing to provide federal funding to the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, sub-recipient Ekolott Farm, to expand sunflower production at the existing farm in order to gather comparative data on organic and conventional methods of oilseed crop production and processing. Ekolott Farm is located at 179 Scott Road, Newbury, Vermont 05051 (44.065564, -72.061129).

This NEPA review is a continuation of a previous award (GFO-09-057e). Under the original determination (2009), Ekolott Farms conducted growing trials for crops of sunflowers. The project collected data on the trials and analyzed the results of growing crops under slightly different conditions. The project also examined different methods for handling and processing the oilseed crop.

The proposed project would consist of planting twenty acres of sunflowers, in addition to the forty acres planted in 2010. Ekolott Farms would evaluate the economics, techniques and crop yield in order to determine the suitability of converting these crops into biodiesel and/or vegetable oil.

In addition, Ekolott Farm is proposing to purchase equipment, which would allow for expansion of the farm's oilseed crop storage. Ekolott Farm would purchase a 275 gallon poly tote (48 ft X 48 ft X 48 ft) oil container, which would be stored inside the existing building, adjacent to the oil press. A concrete containment berm would be constructed around the new container. The storage container would hold raw vegetable oil after mechanical pressing. According to the manufacturer, "Tanks are manufactured utilizing FDA compliant resins and are NSF approved. Tanks are in full compliance with current FDA standards for polyethylene tanks.

Per the recipient, Ekolott Farm has been in agricultural cultivation for 250 years. The Scott family has been cropping the field where sunflowers are planted since 1980. The sunflowers would be sprayed with 1 quart of ProwlTM herbicide diluted with ten gallons of water per acre. The crops would be sprayed pre-emergence. The owner of Ekolott Farm has a private applicators license and has done the spraying on the farm since 1980.

The proposed project location is not in a historic district, wetland or floodplain, nor are threatened and endangered species known to occur in the area.

Based on this information, DOE has determined that the work outlined is consistent with activities identified in Categorical Exclusion B5.1 (actions to conserve energy).

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination for this award

Insert the following language in the award:

If you intend to make changes to the scope or objective of your project you are required to contact the Project Officer identified in Block 11 of the Notice of Financial Assistance Award before proceeding. You must receive notification of approval from the DOE Contracting Officer prior to commencing with work beyond that currently approved.

Note to Specialist :

Cristina Tyler 8.25.2011

DOE Funding: $30,000
Cost Share: $7,500
Total Project Cost: $37,500

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: _____ Date: 8/29/2011
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