PMC-EF2a

(2/4/02)

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

RECIPIENT: Montana DEQ **STATE:** MT

PROJECT TITLE : Earl Fisher Biofuels

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0000052	DE-EE-0000138	GFO-0000138-007	EE0

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:

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality is proposing to provide $25,000 of SEP ARRA funds to Earl Fisher Biofuels, LLC (EFB) for the purchase and installation of two Kern Kraft KK40 oil seed crushers at their existing biodiesel production facility located in Chester's industrial park west of Chester, Montana. The purpose of the proposed project is to increase oil seed crushing capacity and biodiesel production by 40% and support a self sustaining industry by creating a market for oilseed crops that can be grown locally, converted to fuel locally, and consumed locally.

EFB first began producing biodiesel in 2007. Their existing facility has three crushers that operate five days a week, 24 hours per day but due to long start-up and shut-down times, they are effectively operating four days per week. Under the proposed project, they would be able to operate 24 hours per day, 7 days per week and 350 days per year. EFB expects to create an additional 1 to 3 jobs.

Local farmers grow and harvest the oilseed and transport the feedstock from their farm to existing cone-bottom silos located about 2/3-mile from the EFB plant. Once every two to three weeks, EFB uses a tandem truck to transport the oil seed from the storage silos to the biodiesel plant for processing. The current production rate is 1.5 to 2 tons per day, depending on the type of seed (typically canola or camelina). With the proposed two additional crushers they will be able to process 2 to 4 tons per day. EFB anticipates they would produce approximately 182 to 365 gallons of biodiesel per week from crushing. The plant has 3 existing storage tanks with a total capacity of 12,000 of finished fuel. The tanks are rarely full to capacity and no new fuel storage is needed.

The co-products in the crushing plant are oil and meal. The oil is used for biodiesel and the meal is used for animal feed and fertilizer on the Earl Fisher farm and other local farms. Over the next year, EFB would partner with Opportunity Link (DOE project NEPA Control No. GFO-0000138.006) to supply BNSF with 24,000 gallons of biodiesel—roughly 2,000 gallons per month to conduct laboratory study to test the performance a of switch train running on a B20 blend in extreme weather conditions. Opportunity Link will be responsible for the transport of the biodiesel from EFB to Havre, MT for the study at the Montana State University Bio-Energy Center.

The two new crushers would be installed in an existing facility. No new buildings will be constructed and no modifications to the existing plant, feedstock silos or storage tanks are needed. There would be no impacts to biological resources including threatened and endangered species, wildlife, sensitive habitat, wetlands or floodplains. Since there would not be any construction or modifications to existing facilities, the project would not disturb any historic, archeological, or cultural sites.

The KernKraft crushers have 5 hp to 7.5 hp motors. They are located inside a building 0.5 miles from town. The

county shop is the nearest structure and is about 0.25 miles from the EFB plant. Therefore, noise impacts will be minimal.

No new water supply is needed and no waste water would be generated. No hazardous wastes would be generated. Solid waste would consist of seed meal that would be used for animal feed or fertilizer the Earl Fisher farm and other local farmers. The DEQ Solid Waste Section has determined that a solid waste license is not required for the EFB facility.

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Air Resources Management Bureau, determined that the potential to emit (PTE) for the new generators at the EFB facility would remain less than 25 tons per year of any regulated airborne pollutant and Pursuant to the Administrative Rules for Montana 17.8.743(e). EFB does not need to obtain a permit for the facility.

Under the authority of the Administrative Rules of Montana 17.30.1116, the DEQ, Water Protection Bureau determined that the Earl Fisher Bio-Fuels facility is an "Industrial No-Exposure" activity and no storm water discharge permit is needed.

Based on the above information, this project is Categorically Excluded from further NEPA review under CX 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:

Note to Specialist :

This EF2a was prepared by Chris Paulsen

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: _____ Date: 12/14/10

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