PMC-EF2a

(2.04.02)

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

RECIPIENT: Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe **STATE:** NV

PROJECT TITLE: Recovery Act: Geothermal Technologies Program

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0000-109	DE-EE0002842	GFO-10-336	GO2842

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.

B3.1 Onsite and offsite site characterization and environmental monitoring, including siting, construction (or modification), operation, and dismantlement or closing (abandonment) of characterization and monitoring devices and siting, construction, and associated operation of a small-scale laboratory building or renovation of a room in an existing building for sample analysis. Activities covered include, but are not limited to, site characterization and environmental monitoring under CERCLA and RCRA. Specific activities include, but are not limited to:

Rational for determination:

Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe (PLPT) would characterize the geothermal reservoir using novel technologies and integrating this information into a numerical model to help determine the viability of future geothermal production at the Astor Pass site within the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation. The project includes exploration, drilling, well testing, and analysis.

The project is divided into three phases with multiple tasks.

Phase 1 – Resource Evaluation

1. Permitting
2. Shallow Temperature Survey – hollow steel rods would be driven 6 feet into the ground and the bottom hole temperature would be measured.
3. Seismic Data Collection and Analysis – 12 miles of 2D seismic data has previously been completed in the area. Six miles of new 2D seismic data would be designed, acquired, and processed.
4. Fracture Stress Modeling and Slip Tendency Analysis – more detailed geologic mapping, analysis of fault geometries and kinematics, and more detailed cross-sections are planned.
5. Phase 1 Reporting

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is the surface management agency for the project. PLPT is the owner of both the surface and the subsurface. Seismic surveys and drilling have previously been done in this area under a BIA CX in 2005 and 2006. Three previous cultural resource surveys were completed in the area in 2005 and 2006. No cultural resources were found during any of the surveys. According to a phone conversation between Roger Knight at the BIA and the DOE NEPA Specialist, the shallow temperature survey and the new seismic data that would be collected would not require any new environmental analysis due to the previous work and analysis completed in that area. Since the locations of the two wells have yet to be determined, Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the project cannot be analyzed at this time. A NEPA determination for Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the project would be too early to determine but would need to be made prior to PLPT beginning any drilling. (Go-no go decision point: Upon completion of Phase 1, a go/no-go determination would be made before proceeding to Phase 2. If the decision is a 'go', PLPT could proceed to Phase 2 upon consent from DOE. If the decision is a 'no-go', no drilling would occur and the Phase 1 Report would serve as the final technical report for DOE purposes.)

Phase 2 – Drilling

6. Drilling
7. Borehole Geophysics
8. Phase 2 Reporting

Phase 3 – Well Testing and Analysis

9. Well Testing and Geochemical Analysis

10. Three-dimensional Geologic Framework Model
11. Three-dimensional Reservoir Model
12. Phase 3 Reporting

Reports and other deliverables would be provided in accordance with the Federal Assistance Reporting Checklist following the instructions included therein.

**NOTE: Prior to this NEPA determination, DOE obligated DOE funds for this project under the blanket CX. However, only $200,000 of DOE funds, along with any associated ratio of recipient cost share, if applicable, was authorized for expenditure by the Recipient.
The following tasks were covered in the blanket CX for the Limited release of Funds modification:
Task 4 - Fracture Stress Modeling and Slip Tendency (fringe, travel, supplies, and equipment only).

Condition of Approval: Allowable – Phase 1 (all tasks); Prohibited – Phase 2 and Phase 3.

Based upon the information provided, Phase 1 (all tasks) is categorically excluded under CX A9 "Information gathering/data analysis/document preparation/dissemination" and CX B3.1 "Site characterization/environmental monitoring."

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:
Phase 2 and Phase 3
This restriction does not preclude you from:
Phase 1 (all tasks)
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 :

None Given.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: _____ Date: 5/5/10
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