

DOCKETED

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CERRI "How-to" Workshop: NEPA & CEQA

Community Energy Reliability and Resilience Investment (CERRI) Program Round 2 Solicitation

Energy Research and Development Division, California Energy Commission

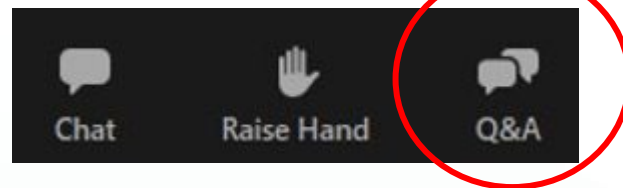
Presenter: Tanner Kural

Date: July 2, 2025



Housekeeping

- This workshop will be recorded and posted to the CEC website.
- Attendees will be muted during the presentation. Please submit your question using the Q&A window.



- Workshop slides and recording will be posted at the event page for today's workshop:
<https://www.energy.ca.gov/event/funding-workshop/2025-06/cerri-program-how-workshops-gfo-23-312r2-projectapplicant>.



Agenda

Time	Item
10:00 a.m.	Introduction & Survey
10:05 a.m.	Background • CERRI Program • Solicitation Overview • Eligibility Recap
10:20 a.m.	NEPA - NEPA Overview - NEPA Process - Relevant Categorical Exclusions - NEPA Questionnaire
11:10 a.m.	Q&A
11:15 a.m.	CEQA - CEQA Overview - CEQA Process - Relevant Categorical Exemptions - CEQA Compliance Form
11:45 a.m.	Q&A
11:50 a.m.	Adjourn



Commitment to Diversity

The CEC adopted a resolution strengthening its commitment to diversity in our funding programs. The CEC continues to encourage disadvantaged and underrepresented businesses and communities to engage in and benefit from our many programs.

To meet this commitment, CEC staff conducts outreach efforts and activities to:

- Engage with disadvantaged and underrepresented groups throughout the state.
- Notify potential new applicants about the CEC's funding opportunities.
- Assist applicants in understanding how to apply for funding from the CEC's programs.
- Survey participants to measure progress in diversity outreach efforts.



We Want to Hear From You!

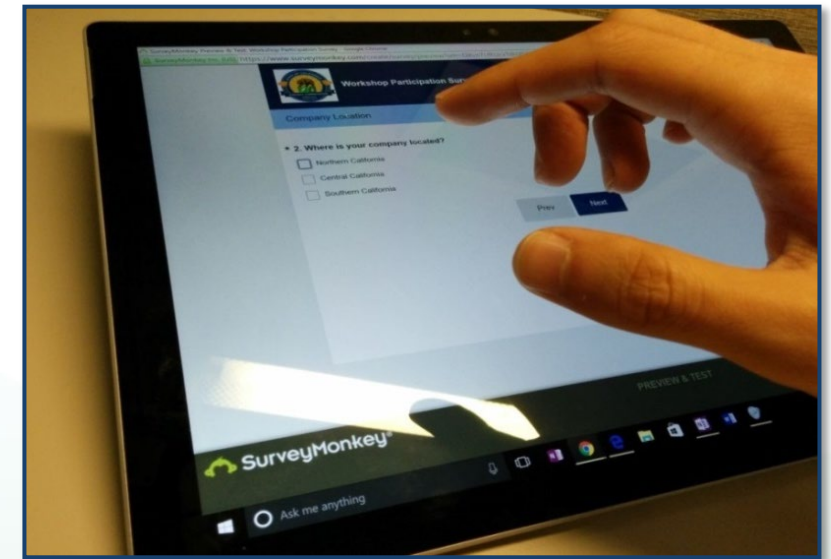
Participation Survey

Survey responses will be summarized anonymously to track attendance of underrepresented groups in our workshops for public reporting purposes.

- Online participants, please use this link:

<https://forms.office.com/g/6PtpMRVRwU>

Thanks!





Background



Program Background



- Funded by **Grid Resilience Formula Grants** (section 40101(d) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)), which funds projects that:
 - Improve resilience
 - Generate community benefit
 - Advance equity priorities
 - Invest in America's workforce



Purpose of Solicitation

The CERRI Program will fund projects across California that align with its objectives:



**Increase Energy Reliability
& Resilience**



**Provide Community
Benefits & Equity**



**Advance State Energy and
Resilience Goals**



Create Quality Jobs

Competitive Grant Funding Opportunity



Applicant Groups

IIJA Section 40101d requires a representative percentage of funds be set aside for entities that sell 4,000 GWh/year or less, which is ~20% in CA.

Group 1 = Entities that sell more than 4,000 GWh/year

Group 2 = Entities that sell 4,000 GWh or less/year



Round 2 Project Funding & Match Requirements

Project Group	Available Funding ¹	Project Minimum	Project Maximum	Match Requirement	Anticipated # of Awards
Group 1: Large Entities (sells ≥4,000 GWh)	\$41,493,611	\$13,831,203	\$20,746,805	115% ²	2-3
Group 2: Small Entities (sells <4,000 GWh)	\$10,373,402	\$5,186,701	\$10,373,402	33.33%	1-2

1. Reflects the remainder of funding from CERRI R1 and Year 3 funding with program admin. costs (5%) deducted.
2. Year 3 State Match Requirement (15%) passed onto large entities.



Key Dates

Activity	Date **
Start of Grant Funding Opportunity Application Period	May 8, 2025
How-To Workshop #1: Project & Applicant Eligibility, Project Narrative, Project Metrics	June 18, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.
How-To Workshop #2: Budget Forms, Site and Match Commitment Letter, Vendor Quotes	June 25, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.
How-To Workshop #3: CEQA/NEPA	July 2, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.
Deadline to Submit Applications	August 29, 2025, <u>11:59 p.m.</u>
Anticipated Notice of Letter of Intent (NOLOI) to Fund Posting	Week of September 29, 2025
CEC Recommends Awards to DOE for Approval	Week of October 27, 2025
Anticipated Notice of Proposed Award Posting	Q1, 2026
Anticipated Energy Commission Business Meeting	Q1, 2026
Anticipated Agreement Start Date	Q1, 2026
Anticipated Agreement End Date	April 30, 2032

** Pacific Standard Time or Pacific Daylight Time, whichever is being observed.



Recap | Application Requirements



- Submission of all 10 required attachments
 - All relevant CEQA & NEPA documentation
- BABA waiver requests (if applicable)
- Foreign worker documentation (if applicable)
- Vendor quotes for work totaling more than \$250k
- Equipment quotes for values exceeding \$50k
- Separate set of budget forms for Subcontractors requesting more than \$100k of CERRI funds or more than 25% of total requested funds



Application Attachments

Each applicant must complete and include the following:

1. Application Form (Attachment 01)	7. NEPA Environmental Questionnaire (Attachment 07)
2. Project Narrative (Attachment 02)	8. Commitment and Support Letter Form (Attachment 08)
3. Scope of Work Template (Attachment 03)	9. Project Metrics (Attachment 09)
4. Project Schedule (Attachment 04)	10. Applicant Declaration (Attachment 10)
5. Budget Forms (Attachment 05)	11. Foreign National Participation (Attachment 11)*
6. CEQA Compliance Form (Attachment 06)	12. Request for Unclassified Foreign National Access (Attachment 12)*

*Applicant Submittal Checklist (Attachment A) is an optional attachment and is **not** required to be submitted.*

**Must be completed for all foreign nationals (any person who is not a U.S. citizen by birth or naturalization) participating in the grant award.*



Recap | Eligible Activities

- weatherization technologies and equipment (for grid hardening purposes)
- fire-resistant technologies and fire prevention systems
- monitoring and control technologies
- undergrounding of electrical equipment
- utility pole management
- relocation of power lines or the reconductoring of power lines with low-sag, advanced conductors
- vegetation and fuel-load management
- adaptive protection technologies
- advanced modeling technologies
- hardening of power lines, facilities, substations, and other systems
- replacement of old overhead conductors and underground cables
- use or construction of distributed energy resources for enhancing system adaptive capacity during disruptive events, including:
 - Microgrid subcomponents
 - Battery storage
- workforce development and community engagement activities that are directly related to the eligible activities listed above

Slide content pulled from CERRI How-To Workshop #1.



Examples of Eligible Activities

- Distribution Line Projects:
 - Pole Replacement
 - Reconductoring
 - Smart Metering Infrastructure
 - Monitors and Sensors with Situational Awareness Capabilities
 - Protective Devices
 - Undergrounding
- Hardening of **Existing** Generation, such as:
 - Upgrading solar PV racking to defend against strong winds or flooding
 - Energy Storage to provide system reliability during outages or offset load during high grid strain events (e.g., high heat)

See: https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2024-02/46060_DOE_GDO_Low_Cost_Grid_Resilience_Projects_RELEASE_508.pdf



Recap | Microgrid Eligibility

CERRI funding may be used to purchase and/or fund installation of:

- Batteries that will be used to supply electricity during disruptive events
- Equipment or management systems required to integrate existing generation sources and/or a battery into a microgrid (i.e., an inverter)
- Microgrid controller (includes the equipment required to balance the system and connect/disconnect from the main electric grid)
- Electric cables (to connect multiple buildings within the microgrid)
- Distribution equipment (protective devices, transformers, etc.) required to distribute power throughout the microgrid

More information can be found here: [US Department of Energy Microgrid Overview](#)



Recap | Ineligible Activities

- Any activity not listed within the eligible activities list is considered “ineligible”.
- Ineligible activities may be included in overall projects but cannot be funded with CERRI or match funds.
 - Ineligible activities should **not** be included in the application’s Budget Forms (Attachment 05) but may be included in the application’s Scope of Work (Attachment 03).
- Ineligible activities included in an overall project will be subject to DOE’s Terms and Conditions, including compliance with Build America, Buy America (BABA), the Davis-Bacon Act, and the necessary reviews, such as National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).



Recap | Ineligible Activity Examples

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Construction of a new electric generating facility, including the purchase or installation of an emergency generator
- New energy infrastructure or expansion of the electric grid
- Solar photovoltaic (PV) generation and all other new energy generation
- Residential and/or commercial building electrification and weatherization
- Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers
- Light-Emitting Diode (LED) lighting or solar carport lighting
- Manufacturing
- Construction of new transmission lines
- Cybersecurity
- Acquisition of land or easements

Contact CERRI@energy.ca.gov for any further questions about eligibility.



Environmental Review and Planning



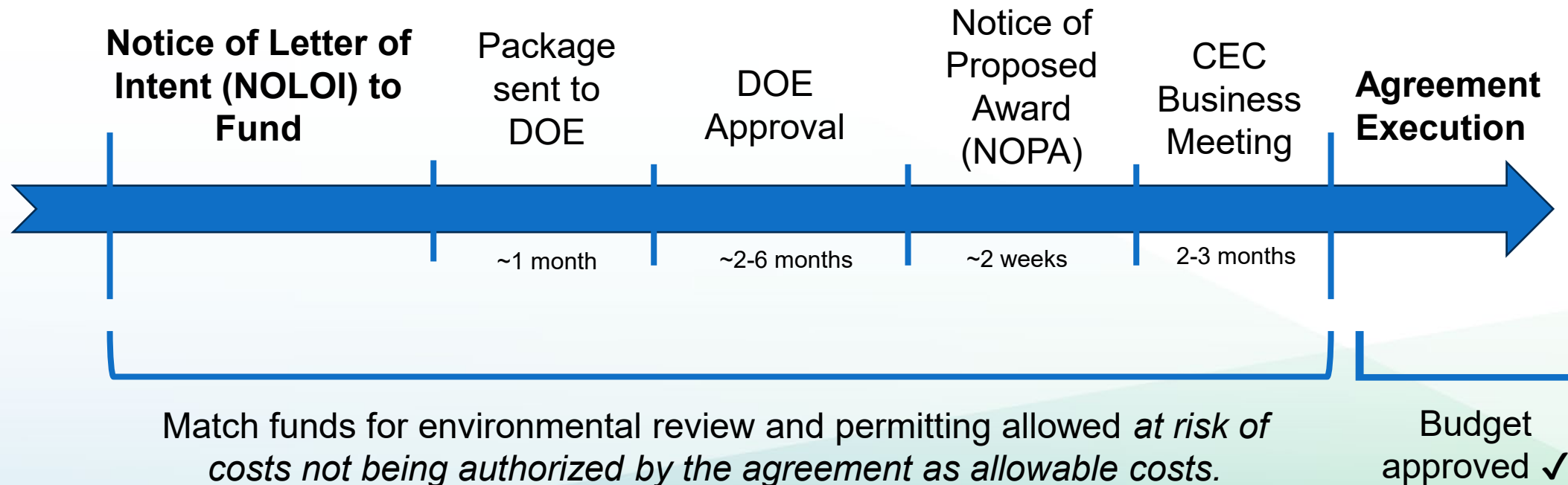
Key Points

- *NEPA Environmental Questionnaire (Attachment 07) and CEQA Compliance Form (Attachment 06)* assist application scorers in assessing project readiness.
- Projects further along in their environmental review process will be considered more “shovel ready.”
- Match funds may be spent on environmental review and permitting after Notice of Letter of Intent is posted.
- If the project is not CEQA exempt, CEC cannot guarantee resources to conduct an involved CEQA Review for this program.
- CEC may cancel a proposed award if it deems that NEPA and CEQA reviews are not likely to be completed in a timely manner.



Match to Cover Environmental Review and Permitting

- Match funds may be spent on environmental review and permitting activities before agreement execution, after the Notice of Letter of Intent has been posted.
 - At grant recipient's own risk.





NEPA/CEQA Review and Cancellation Rights

- CEC may cancel a proposed award and award funds to the next highest scoring applicant if NEPA and CEQA reviews are not likely to be completed in a timely manner.
- If building on a prior initial study or programmatic environmental impact report, ensure that the scope is relevant.
- Projects that are exempt or have already received CEQA determination are considered more “shovel-ready.”

Examples, not limited to:

- If producing initial study is drawn-out or faces delays.
- If a lengthy environmental impact report is required.
- If proposed work is part of a larger project that is facing its own environmental review delays.



National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)



National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

- Applies to any major project that involves federal funding.
- Requires federal agencies to evaluate potential environmental impacts before deciding to proceed with any major federal action.
- Until the NEPA process has been completed, a project may not perform any actions that would:
 - Limit DOE's ability to decide whether to proceed with the project's scope
 - Impact the environment



President Nixon signing NEPA into law (source: National Archives, 1970).



NEPA | Grantee Responsibility

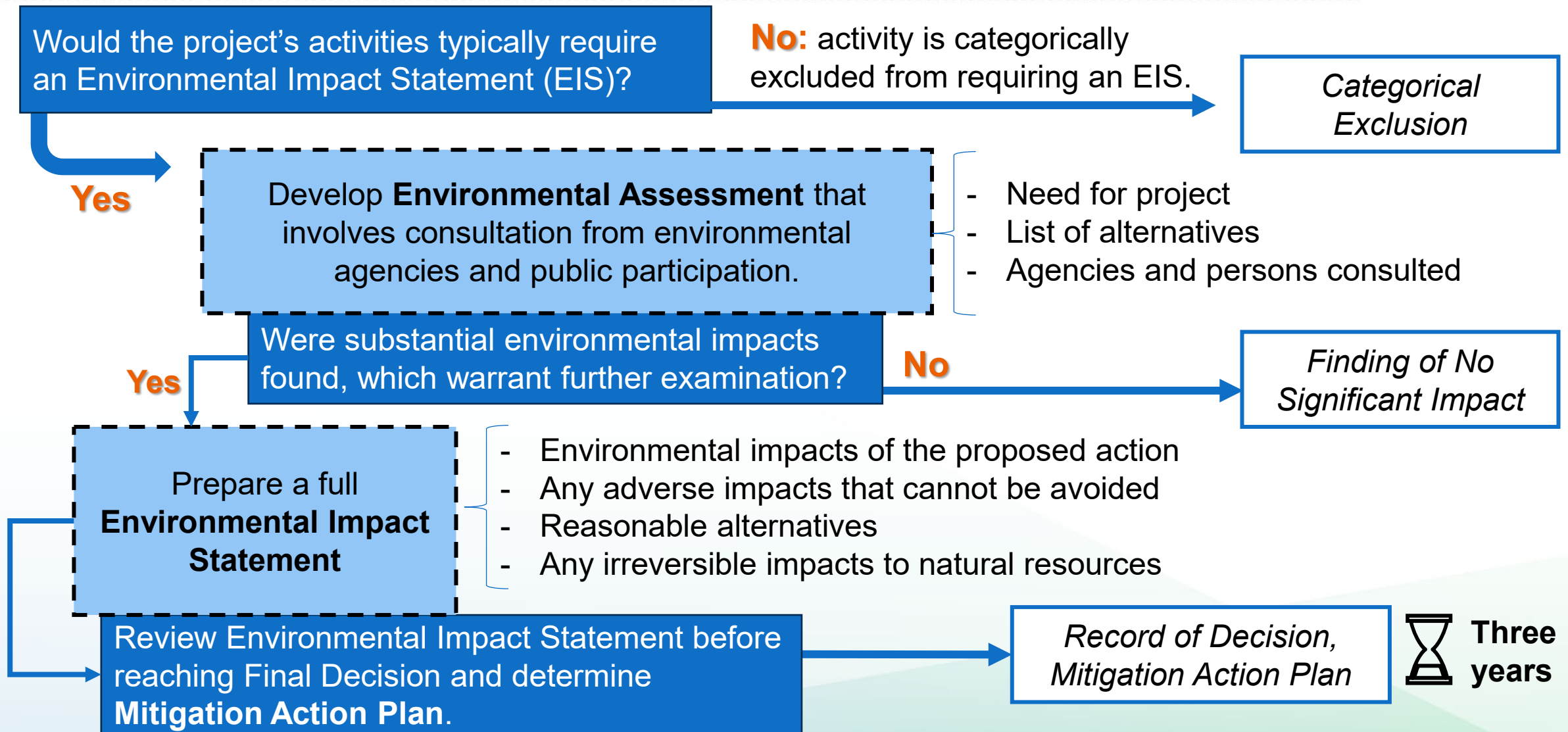
- DOE will conduct environmental review for NEPA requirements.
 - Requires upfront work from the applicant to *thoroughly* complete the Environmental Questionnaire.
- If further NEPA review is required, proposed grant recipients will be required to provide DOE with timely and thorough responses.



The Forrestal Building, U.S. Dept of Energy headquarters, Washington D.C.



NEPA Determination Process





NEPA Environmental Questionnaire (Attachment 07)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY NATIONAL ENERGY TECHNOLOGY LABORATORY
ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE

NETL F 451.1-1-3 P.1
Revised: 08.27.2024
Reviewed: 08.27.2024
(previous editions obsolete)

This Environmental Questionnaire is subject to public disclosure and review upon request. Proprietary or business-sensitive information should NOT be included in any response within this Environmental Questionnaire. The disclosure of proprietary or business-sensitive information should be discussed with the DOE Project Manager and the NEPA Compliance Officer.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE

A. PROJECT SUMMARY

1. Solicitation Number: _____ Prime Recipient: _____

2. This Environmental Questionnaire pertains to a : ☐ Prime Recipient ☐ Subrecipient or Subcontractor
Name of Prime or Subrecipient: _____

3. Project Title: _____

4. Principal Investigator: _____ Telephone Number: _____

5. Expected Project Duration: _____

6. Location of Activities covered by this Environmental Questionnaire: (City/Township, County, State):

7. Provide a summary and full scope of activities planned only for the location that is the subject of this Environmental Questionnaire. Describe physical activities, not overall goals and objectives.

8. List all other locations where work would be performed by the prime recipient of the project and/or subrecipient(s). All locations noted below must have an Environmental Questionnaire specific to each location. If more space is needed, please provide an attachment to this Environmental Questionnaire.

Additional Prime Recipient location(s), or subrecipient/ subcontractor location(s)	Location of activities

9. Identify and select the checkbox with the predominant project work activities under Group A, B, or C

Group A

☐ Routine administrative, procurement, training, and personnel actions. Contract activities/awards for management support, financial assistance, and technical services in support of agency business, programs, projects, and goals. Literature searches and information gathering; material inventories; property surveys; data analysis; computer modeling; analytical reviews; technical summary, conceptual design, feasibility studies, document preparation, data dissemination, and paper studies. Technical assistance including financial planning, assistance, classroom training, public meetings, management training, survey participation, academic contribution, technical consultation, and stakeholders' surveys. Workshop and conference planning, preparation, and implementation which may involve promoting energy efficiency, renewable energy, and energy conservation.

STOP! If all work activities related to this project can be classified and described within categories under Group A, proceed directly to CERTIFICATION BY PROPOSER located on page 14. No additional information is required.
If project work activities are described in either Group(s) B or C; then continue filling out questionnaire.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY | NATIONAL ENERGY TECHNOLOGY LABORATORY

- Questions are written to address the many environmental laws that DOE must consider before authorizing a project:
 - Land Use
 - Construction Activities
 - Biological Resources
 - Socioeconomic and Infrastructure Conditions
 - Historical and Cultural Resources
 - Air Quality
 - Water Resources and Wastewater Mgmt.
 - Solid and Hazardous Wastes
 - Public Health and Workplace Safety
 - Environmental Monitoring and Restoration



NEPA Environmental Questionnaire

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY NATIONAL ENERGY TECHNOLOGY LABORATORY
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NETL F 451.1-1-3 P 1
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Additional Prime Recipient location(s), or subrecipient/ subcontractor location(s)	Location of activities

9. Identify and select the checkbox with the predominant project work activities under Group A, B, or C

Group A

☐ Routine administrative, procurement, training, and personnel actions. Contract activities/awards for management support, financial assistance, and technical services in support of agency business, programs, projects, and goals. Literature searches and information gathering, material inventories, property surveys; data analysis, computer modeling, analytical reviews, technical summary, conceptual design, feasibility studies, document preparation, data dissemination, and paper studies. Technical assistance including financial planning, assistance, classroom training, public meetings, management training, survey participation, academic contribution, technical consultation, and stakeholders' surveys. Workshop and conference planning, preparation, and implementation which may involve promoting energy efficiency, renewable energy, and energy conservation.

STOP! If all work activities related to this project can be classified and described within categories under Group A, proceed directly to CERTIFICATION BY PROPOSER located on page 14. No additional information is required.
If project work activities are described in either Group(s) B or C, then continue filling out questionnaire.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY | NETL NATIONAL ENERGY TECHNOLOGY LABORATORY

- Responses to the questionnaire helps DOE screen for activities that may require further environmental review.
- Answering any question with “Yes” does not inherently mean that the activity is ineligible for a categorical exemption.
- All “Yes” responses must include a description of the activities to occur.
 - Be as specific as reasonably possible to help DOE assess potential impact.
 - DOE will ask for additional clarification on vague descriptions.



NEPA Questionnaire: Historical/Cultural Resources

- National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 consultation is required when there is potential to affect historic or prehistoric resources:
 - Buildings/artifacts 50+ years old
 - Evidence of Native American settlements
- Coordinate with appropriate offices to determine impacts on historical and prehistoric resources before submitting NEPA documentation.

Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) website:

<https://ohp.parks.ca.gov>

List of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers:

https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=27626

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY NATIONAL ENERGY TECHNOLOGY LABORATORY
ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE

NETL F 451.1-1-3 P.6
Revised: 08.27.2024
Reviewed: 08.27.2024
(previous editions obsolete)

c. Would the proposed project require new transportation access (roads, rail, etc.)? Describe location, impacts, costs.
☐ No ☐ Yes (describe)

d. Would the proposed project create a significant increase in local energy usage?
☐ No ☐ Yes (describe)

5. Historical/Cultural Resources

a. Describe any historical, archaeological, or cultural sites in the vicinity of the proposed project; note any sites included on the [National Register of Historic Places](#).
☐ None

b. Would construction or operational activities planned under the proposed project disturb any historical, archaeological, or cultural sites?
☐ No planned construction ☐ No habitats ☐ None ☐ Impact (describe)

c. Has the State Historic Preservation Office been contacted with regard to this project?
☐ No ☐ Yes (describe)

d. Would the proposed project interfere with visual resources (e.g., eliminate scenic views) or alter the present landscape?
☐ No ☐ Yes (describe)

e. Would the proposed project be located on or adjacent to tribal lands, lands considered to be sacred, or lands used for traditional purposes? Describe any known tribal sensitivities for the proposed project area.

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NEPA Questionnaire: Biological Resources

- Where there is a potential to adversely affect threatened and endangered species and critical habitats, consultation with your local CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife office is required.
 - Tool for identifying sensitive species in a given region:
<https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/location/index>.
- For more information, visit
<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Environmental-Review>.

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ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE

NETL F 451.1-1-3 P.5
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Reviewed: 08.27.2024
(previous editions obsolete)

3. Biological Resources

a. Identify any State or Federally listed endangered or threatened plant or animal species potentially affected by the proposed project.
☐ None

b. Would any designated critical habitat be affected by the proposed project?
☐ No ☐ Yes (describe)

c. Describe any impacts that construction would have on any other types of sensitive or unique habitats.
☐ No planned construction ☐ No habitats ☐ None ☐ Impact (describe)

d. Would any foreign substances/materials be introduced into ground or surface waters, soil, or other earth/geologic resource because of project activities? How would these foreign substances/materials affect the water, soil, biota, and geologic resources?
☐ No ☐ Yes (describe)

e. Would any migratory animal corridors be impacted or disrupted by the proposed project?
☐ No ☐ Yes (describe)

4. Socioeconomic and Infrastructure Conditions

a. Would local socio-economic changes result from the proposed project?
☐ No ☐ Yes (describe)

b. Would the proposed project generate increased traffic use of roads through local neighborhoods, urban or rural areas?
☐ No ☐ Yes (describe)

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Environmental Questionnaire Best Practices

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Group A

☐ Routine administrative, procurement, training, and personnel actions. Contract activities/awards for management support, financial assistance, and technical services in support of agency business, programs, projects, and goals. Literature searches and information gathering, material inventories, property surveys; data analysis, computer modeling, analytical reviews, technical summary, conceptual design, feasibility studies, document preparation, data dissemination, and paper studies. Technical assistance including financial planning, assistance, classroom training, public meetings, management training, survey participation, academic contribution, technical consultation, and stakeholders' surveys. Workshop and conference planning, preparation, and implementation which may involve promoting energy efficiency, renewable energy, and energy conservation.

STOP! If all work activities related to this project can be classified and described within categories under Group A, proceed directly to CERTIFICATION BY PROPOSER located on page 14. No additional information is required.
If project work activities are described in either Group(s) B or C; then continue filling out questionnaire.

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- Fill out all fields, even under “No” responses.
- If any fields answered “Yes,” describe how impact or disruptions would be minimized.
- Each subproject location needs to have its own Environmental Questionnaire.
- Enter all locations in the table of question 8.
- Describe decommissioning plan for equipment replacement and disposal at end-of-life.
- Describe extent of workplace safety protocols.
- Attach all relevant supporting documentation listed on next slide.



NEPA | Supporting Documentation

Include detailed site layout maps that indicate specific locations for installations and modifications, existing and new equipment, etc.

Recommendation: attach satellite maps that show project locations (e.g., Google Earth).

As applicable, attach:

- Documentation from any relevant EA, EIS, or NEPA determinations.
- Estimated timelines for completion of any required EA or EIS.
- Any notes or letters from project-relevant consultations with California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) or Federally-recognized Native American Tribal Nations.

See Section VI.B.7 of the solicitation manual (pgs. 27–28) for more information.



Categorical Exclusions



Code of Federal Regulations

A point in time eCFR system



Code of Federal Regulations Title 10, Chapter X, Part 1021

Procedures that the Dept. of Energy uses to comply with NEPA.

Subpart D identifies the levels of NEPA review for DOE actions.

§ 1021.410 Application of categorical exclusions (classes of actions that normally do not require EAs or EISs).

(a) The actions listed in appendices A and B to this subpart D are classes of actions that DOE has determined do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment (categorical exclusions).



Categorical Exclusions (CatEx)

- To find that a proposal is categorically excluded:
 - Must fit within a listed Categorical Exclusion (CatEx) – Appendices A and B.
 - **No extraordinary circumstances** related to the proposal may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal, such as scientific controversy about environmental effects.
 - **Scope has not been segmented** to meet definition of a CatEx, where the full project would have potentially significant impacts.
 - Must not have the potential to cause significant impacts on **environmentally sensitive resources**.





Categorical Exclusions | Sensitive Species

- If sensitive resources are present, the action should not have the potential to cause significant impacts.
- Environmentally sensitive resources include:
 - Property of historic, archeological, or architectural significance.
 - Federally-listed threatened or endangered species or their habitat. Includes proposed and candidate sensitive species and state-listed or –proposed sensitive species.
 - Floodplains and wetlands.
 - Areas of special designation, such as federally- and state-designated wilderness areas, national parks, national natural landmarks, etc.
 - Prime or unique farmland.



Categorical Exclusions Relevant to 40101d

- **B1. Categorical Exclusions Applicable to Facility Operation**
 - B1.3 Routine Maintenance
 - B1.31 Installation or relocation of machinery and equipment
- **B4. Categorical Exclusions Applicable to Electric Power and Transmission**
 - B4.6 Additions and Modification to Transmission Facilities
 - B4.9 Multiple Use of Powerline Rights-of-Way
 - B4.11 Electric Power Substations and Interconnection Facilities
 - B4.13 Upgrading and Rebuilding Existing Powerlines
 - B4.14 Construction and Operation of Electrochemical Battery or Flywheel Energy Storage Systems



Categorical Exclusions Relevant to 40101d | *Parameters*

Carefully review specific parameters of each CatEx.

- **B4.6 Additions and Modifications To Transmission Facilities –** Additions or modifications to electric power transmission facilities within a **previously disturbed or developed facility area**.

“Previously disturbed or developed” refers to land that has been changed such that its functioning ecological processes have been and remain altered by human activity. Areas that have been transformed from natural cover to nonnative species or a managed state (e.g., utility and electric power transmission corridors and rights-of-way). *10 CFR 1021.410(g)(1)*



Categorical Exclusions Relevant to 40101d | *Examples*

Each description can have examples of covered activities:

- **B4.6 Additions and Modifications To Transmission Facilities –**
[...] Covered activities **include, but are not limited to,** switchyard rock grounding upgrades, secondary containment projects, paving projects, seismic upgrading, tower modifications, load shaping projects (such as reducing energy use during periods of peak demand), changing insulators, and replacement of poles, circuit breakers, conductors, transformers, and crossarms.



NEPA | Questions & Answers

- **Use the raise hand feature in Zoom:**

- Zoom phone controls:

- *6 – Toggle mute/unmute
 - *9 – Raise hand



- Introduce yourself by stating your name and affiliation
 - Keep questions under 3 minutes to allow time for others

- **Type questions in the Q&A Box in Zoom:**

- Please provide name and affiliation
- Please keep questions related to application attachment presented in workshop



California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)



California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

- Applies to all projects receiving any form of state or local approval, permit, or oversight.
- Requires lead agency to mitigate *all* significant adverse environmental impacts to the “maximum extent possible.”
- Allows for Environmental Impact Report and EIS to act as one document.



Governor Reagan signs California Environmental Quality Act into law (1970).



CEQA Definitions

- *Notice of Exemption*: Project is exempt from CEQA under an exemption identified in the CEQA statutes or regulations.
- *Initial Study*: Project may have a significant effect on the environment.
- *Negative Declaration*: Initial Study showed that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment.
- *Mitigated Negative Declaration*: Any significant effects identified by the Initial Study can be avoided or mitigated to a level of insignificance.
- *Environmental Impact Report (EIR)*: There is substantial evidence that the project will have significant effects. Fully quantifies these impacts.



CEQA Lead Agency

- **Lead Agency:** Public agency that has the greatest responsibility for carrying out, supervising, or approving a project, and for preparing environmental review documents under CEQA (e.g., initial study, environmental impact report).
 - Can be a state agency or local jurisdiction.
 - Where the award recipient is a public agency, the Lead Agency is typically the recipient.
 - Where the award recipient is a private entity, the Lead Agency is the public agency that has the greatest responsibility for supervising or approving the project as a whole.



CEQA Responsible Agency

- **Responsible Agency:** Files its own CEQA determinations based on review of the funded activities and any environmental documents.
 - CEC typically acts as the Responsible Agency under CEQA.
 - If CEC is the only public agency involved, then it must act as the lead agency.
 - CEC is not currently conducting involved CEQA review such as Initial Studies, Mitigated Negative Declarations, or EIRs for this program.



California Natural Resources Agency building, California Energy Commission headquarters, Sacramento, CA.



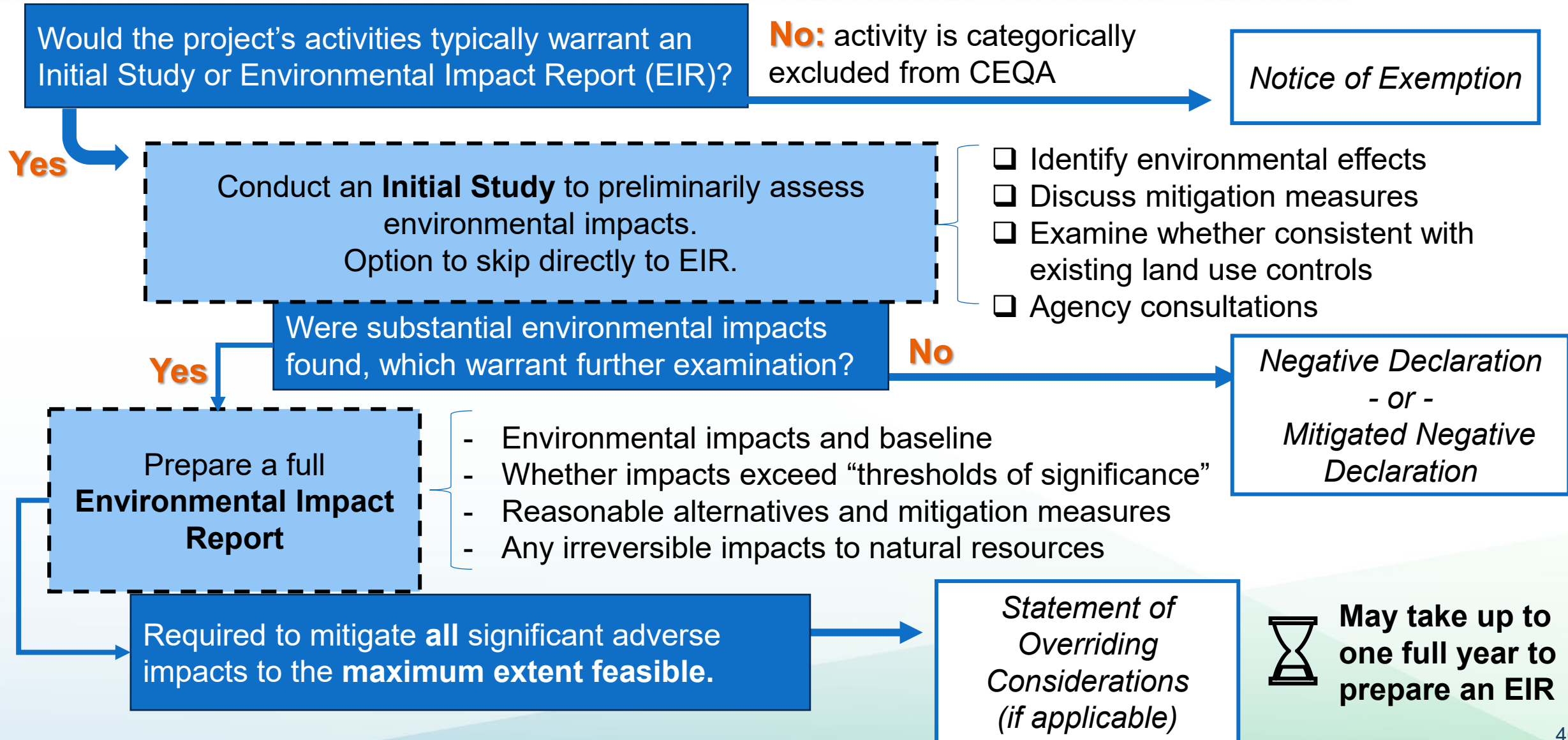
CEQA | Grantee Responsibility

- For meeting CEQA environmental review requirements, grant recipients are expected to take the lead in conducting any initial study or detailed environmental analysis that may be required, or partner with a lead CEQA agency that is not CEC to conduct this analysis.





CEQA Process





CEQA Compliance Form (Attachment 06)

- Assists CEC in determining:
 - What type of CEQA review is necessary before the proposal can be approved at a Business Meeting, and
 - Which agency will perform any required environmental review as Lead Agency.

ATTACHMENT 06 CEQA Compliance Form				
2. What are the physical aspects of the proposed activities? (Check all that apply and provide a brief description of work, including the size or dimensions of the project).				
Type of Project	Yes	No	Project Description	
Construction (including grading, paving, etc.)	☐	☐		
Trenching	☐	☐		
New or replaced pipelines	☐	☐		
Modification or conversion of a facility	☐	☐		
New or modified operation of a facility or equipment	☐	☐		
On-road demonstration	☐	☐		
Paper study (including analyses on economics, feedstock availability, workforce availability, etc.)	☐	☐		
Laboratory research	☐	☐		
Temporary or mobile structures (skid-mounted)	☐	☐		
Design/Planning	☐	☐		
Other (describe and attach sheets as necessary)	☐	☐		
3. Where are the proposed activities located or where will they be located? (Attach additional sheets as necessary.)				
Street Address	City/County	Type of Work to Be Completed at Site		
4. Will the proposed activities potentially have environmental impacts that trigger CEQA review? (Check a box and explain for each question).				
Question	Yes	No	Unsure	Explanation
Is the proposed activity site environmentally sensitive?	☐	☐	☐	
Is the site located on agricultural land?	☐	☐	☐	
Are the activities part of a larger project?	☐	☐	☐	



CEQA Compliance Form: Questions 5-8

5. Will the proposed activities require discretionary permits or determinations, as listed below?

Permit Type	No.	Modified (M) or New (N)	Approving Public Agency	Reason for Permit, Summary of Process, and Anticipated Issuance Date
Air Quality		M ☐ N ☐		
Water Quality		M ☐ N ☐		
Conditional Use or Variance		M ☐ N ☐		
Building Expansion		M ☐ N ☐		
Hazardous Waste		M ☐ N ☐		
Rezoning		M ☐ N ☐		
Authority to Construct		M ☐ N ☐		
Other (List types):		M ☐ N ☐		

6. Has any agency listed in #5 indicated that it will be the lead CEQA agency for the project?

☐ No.

☐ Yes. Provide the name of and contact information for the lead agency (contact person, phone number, and email address):

7. Has any agency listed in #5 prepared or indicated that it will prepare environmental documents (e.g., Notice of Exemption, Initial Study/ Negative Declaration/ Mitigated Negative Declaration, Environmental Impact Report) under CEQA for the proposed project?

☐ No.

☐ Yes. Provide the information and complete the chart below for each agency. **Cut and paste** the chart if more than one agency has prepared environmental documents. **Attach** any document identified below to this form.

Name of Agency:
Contact person:
Phone number:
Email:

- Do not leave these fields blank.
- The responses here are vitally important for CEC to assess a project's level of readiness when it comes to permitting.
- Identify all necessary permits, especially for construction and installation activities.
- Lead agency contact helps CEC staff coordinate CEQA determination with sister agencies.
- Award is contingent on timely compliance with CEQA.



CEQA Compliance Form | Table

- Indicate what prior environmental assessment work has been completed.
 - Initial Study
 - Programmatic Environmental Impact Reports
 - Programmatic Environmental Impact Statements
- All CERRI projects are expected to be considered projects under CEQA.

CEQA Determination/Type of Document	Title of Document (Attach document to this form)	State Clearinghouse Number	Completion Date	Planned Completion Date (must be prior to CEC encumbrance deadline)
Not a project ☐ Email ☐ Letter ☐ Resolution ☐ Other:		N/A		N/A
Exempt ☐ Notice of Exemption ☐ Resolution ☐ Agenda item approving exemption		N/A		
Initial Study				
Negative Declaration				
Mitigated Negative Declaration				
Notice of Preparation				
Environmental Impact Report				
Master Environmental Impact Report				
Notice of Determination				
NEPA Document ⁸ (Environmental Assessment, Finding of No Significant Impact, and/or Environmental Impact Statement)				

See Section VI.B.6 of the solicitation manual (pg. 27) for more information



Common Categorical Exemptions Relevant to 40101d (1/3)

CCR Title 14, Section 15301: Existing Facilities

Project must meet all of the following criteria:

- 1) Consist of operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration
- 2) of *existing* structure, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features,
- 3) which involves *negligible or no expansion of use* beyond that existing at the time of lead agency's CEQA determination.

Example: Interior or exterior building alterations that involve minor electrical installations.



Common Categorical Exemptions Relevant to 40101d (2/3)

CCR Title 14, Section 15302: Replacement or Reconstruction

Project must meet **all** of the following criteria:

- 1) Consist of replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities, where
- 2) the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced, and
- 3) the new structure will have the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced.

Example: Replacement or reconstruction of an entire existing utility system that does not expand system capacity.



Common Categorical Exemptions Relevant to 40101d (3/3)

CCR Title 14, Section 15303: New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures

Project must meet any one of the following:

- 1) Construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; or
- 2) Installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; or
- 3) Conversion of small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure.

Example: a new accessory structure such as a containerized energy storage external and adjacent to the main existing building.



CEQA | Questions & Answers

- **Use the raise hand feature in Zoom:**

- Zoom phone controls:

- *6 – Toggle mute/unmute
 - *9 – Raise hand



- Introduce yourself by stating your name and affiliation
 - Keep questions under 3 minutes to allow time for others

- **Type questions in the Q&A Box in Zoom:**

- Please provide name and affiliation
- Please keep questions related to application attachment presented in workshop



Application Support & Resources



Application Technical Assistance

‘Soft’ Technical Assistance (TA): Review of proposed project activities, application submission completeness and compliance, and opportunities to ask questions on a first-come, first-served basis.

Support Provided:

- Review application for completeness and compliance with project requirements
- Review eligibility of proposed project activities
- Provide clarification on whether proposed project costs can be funded by CERRI or match funds
- Assisting applicants in identifying necessary federal forms, waivers, and documents

How to Request Assistance:

- Contact CERRI@energy.ca.gov during application period
- Include the name of a primary contact and a brief description of the assistance required



Key Dates for Application Support

Activity	Date
Distribution of Q&A Set 1	June 20, 2025
Deadline to Submit Questions for 2nd Q&A Period	July 18, 2025
Anticipated Distribution of Q&A Set 2	Week of July 28, 2025
Deadline for Technical Assistance Requests	August 1, 2025 5:00 p.m. Pacific
Deadlines for Administrative Support & ECAMS Support Requests	August 29, 2025 5:00 p.m. Pacific
Deadline to Submit Applications	August 29, 2025 11:59 p.m. Pacific



General Questions & Answers

- **Use the raise hand feature in Zoom:**

- Zoom phone controls:

- *6 – Toggle mute/unmute
 - *9 – Raise hand



- Introduce yourself by stating your name and affiliation
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- **Type questions in the Q&A Box in Zoom:**

- Please provide name and affiliation
- Please keep questions related to application attachment presented in workshop



Application Support & Resources

Application Submission Support:

- Questions only related to submission of applications in the ECAMS system may be submitted to ECAMS.SalesforceSupport@energy.ca.gov before August 29, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. PT.
- ECAMS Resources Webpage: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/funding-resources/ecams-resources>

Administrative Support

- For administrative questions not related to the ECAMS system, please contact the Commission Agreement Officer (CAO) Laura Williams at: laura.williams@energy.ca.gov

CERRI Program

- Webpage: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/community-energy-reliability-and-resilience-investment-cerri-program>
- GFO Webpage: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/solicitations/2025-05/gfo-23-312r2-round-2-community-energy-reliability-and-resilience-investment>.
- Docket: 22-ERDD-01 <https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/Lists/DocketLog.aspx?docketnumber=22-ERDD-01>



Stay Up to Date!

- Visit the CERRI Program webpage at:
<https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/community-energy-reliability-and-resilience-investment-cerri-program>
- Please subscribe to the “Community Energy Reliability and Resilience Investment (CERRI) Program” subscription list to keep up to date!
- Important updates are distributed via email and posted to the CERRI Program docket (22-ERDD-01).

Community Energy Reliability and Resilience Investment (CERRI) Program

Community Energy Reliability and Resilience Investment (CERRI) program will fund projects across California that increase community energy resilience and reliability, advance state energy and climate goals, improve energy justice and equity, and create good-paying jobs.

CONTACT

Community Energy Reliability and Resilience Investment (CERRI) Program
CERRI@Energy.ca.gov

3/20/24, 4:19 PM California Natural Resources Agency

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- ☐ Electric Program Investment Charge (EPIC) Program
- ☐ Energy Research and Development
- ☐ Food Production Investment Program
- ☐ Industrial Decarbonization and Improvement of Grid Operations (INDIGO)
- ☐ Long Duration Energy Storage (LDES)
- ☐ PIER Pgm. - Residential and Commercial Bldgs. Program Area

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Workshop Feedback Survey



[Take our Survey!](#)



Thank You!

Contact CERRI@energy.ca.gov for any questions related to the CERRI Program.