

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
FOR  
GENERAL MOTORS, LLC  
ELECTRIC DRIVE VEHICLE BATTERY AND COMPONENT  
MANUFACTURING INITIATIVE APPLICATION  
WHITE MARSH, MARYLAND**

**RESPONSIBLE AGENCY:** U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)

**ACTION:** Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

**SUMMARY:** DOE completed the *Final Supplemental Environmental Assessment for Electric Drive Vehicle Battery and Component Manufacturing Initiative Application, White Marsh, Maryland* (DOE/EA-1723S). Based on the analyses in the Environmental Assessment (EA), DOE determined that its proposed action -- awarding a federal grant to General Motors, LLC (GM) to establish an electric motor components manufacturing and electric drive units assembling facility -- would result in no significant adverse impacts. In addition, beneficial local socioeconomic impacts would occur from increased employment opportunities and spending in the affected community.

**BACKGROUND:** As part of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* (Recovery Act; Public Law 111-5, 123 Stat. 115), DOE's National Energy Technology Laboratory, on behalf of the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy's Vehicle Technologies Program, is providing up to \$2 billion in federal funding for competitively awarded agreements to facilitate the construction (including increase in production capacity at existing plants) of U.S. manufacturing plants to produce advanced batteries and electric drive components.

The federal action of providing funding for these projects, known as the Electric Drive Vehicle Battery and Component Manufacturing Initiative, requires compliance with the *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508), and DOE's NEPA implementing procedures (10 CFR Part 1021).

This project was analyzed in an EA which resulted in a FONSI in April 2010. GM subsequently proposed several project changes, including a three-fold increase in building size, a new parking lot, the widening of a truck dock area, and associated infrastructure (solar panels, a fire access road, sewage lines, etc.). The proposed changes necessitated a supplement to the April 2010 EA to analyze any additional potential impacts. DOE prepared a supplemental EA to evaluate the potential environmental consequences of providing a grant for this proposed project. The initial EA analyzed potential impacts at two locations: White Marsh, Maryland and Wixom, Michigan. Since no changes were proposed at the Wixom, Michigan site, the supplemental EA only analyzed the White Marsh site.

**PURPOSE AND NEED:** The overall purpose and need for DOE action pursuant to the Vehicle Technologies Program and the funding opportunity under the Recovery Act are to accelerate the development and production of various electric drive vehicle systems by building or increasing domestic manufacturing capacity for advanced automotive batteries, their components, recycling



facilities, and electric drive vehicle components in addition to stimulating the U.S. economy. This and the other selected projects are needed to reduce the U.S. petroleum consumption by investing in alternative vehicle technologies. The proposed project will also meaningfully assist with the nation's economic recovery by creating manufacturing jobs in the United States in accordance with the objectives of the Recovery Act.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION:** DOE's proposed action is to provide funds under a cost-sharing arrangement for GM's proposed project--the production of electric motor components and assembly of electric drive units for electric and hybrid vehicles. The proposed project would include constructing and equipping a new 104,000 square foot building and retrofitting an existing building at the White Marsh, Maryland site. Additionally, GM would pave an area of approximately 120,000 square feet for a parking lot, widen a truck dock area with some outside equipment, install a sidewalk without a curb to connect the new parking lot and the new building, construct a 20-foot wide fire road representing approximately 8,000 square feet of pavement or gravel, and perform various other supporting infrastructure tasks. DOE would provide \$105.4 million in financial assistance in a cost-sharing arrangement in order to facilitate the construction and operation of the electric motor components manufacturing and electric drive units assembling facility. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$283.9 million.

**ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:** In addition to the proposed action, DOE considered the no-action alternative as required under NEPA. Under the no-action alternative, DOE would not provide funds for GM's proposed project. For the purposes of the EA, DOE assumed that the project would not proceed without DOE funding. This assumption establishes a baseline against which the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project are compared.

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES:** DOE evaluated the potential environmental consequences of the proposed project, including the activities necessary to implement the proposed project that would be funded solely by GM, as well as reasonably foreseeable future projects and the no-action alternative.

DOE considered thirteen environmental resource areas in the preparation of the EA. However, not all areas were evaluated at the same level of detail. DOE focused more detailed analysis on areas that would require new or revised permits, have the potential for significant adverse environmental impacts, or have the potential for controversy. The areas DOE evaluated in more detail included air quality; water resources; noise; waste management; and human health and safety. For these areas, DOE determined there would be minimal potential adverse environmental impacts. Air and water emissions may require minor modifications to existing permits or new permits, but these would be minor and not trigger major delays or controversy.

DOE also evaluated socioeconomic factors to determine the potential positive benefits of the proposed project on the affected communities. The proposed project is anticipated to result in small increases in local employment opportunities and local spending, potentially providing a minor beneficial impact to the local community.

The other environmental areas DOE evaluated for potential impacts were geology and soils; wetlands and floodplains; terrestrial vegetation; wildlife; threatened and endangered species;



infrastructure/utilities; and sustainability. DOE determined that there would be no potential for adverse impacts for these resource areas, or that the impacts would be minimal, temporary, or both.

Under the no-action alternative, the project would either be delayed, as GM sought other funding sources, or abandoned altogether. The potential environmental consequences of a delayed project would likely be the same as the current project. If abandoned, the potential environmental consequences would not occur, and the potential beneficial impacts would change or not occur.

**PUBLIC AVAILABILITY:** DOE issued the Draft Supplemental EA on May 22, 2011, and advertised its release in Baltimore's The Baltimore Sun on May 22, 23, and 24. In addition, DOE sent a copy for public review to White Marsh Branch Library in White Marsh, Maryland. DOE established a 15-day public comment period that began on May 22, 2011 and ended June 6, 2011. DOE announced it would accept comments by mail and e-mail.

DOE issued a revised Draft Supplemental EA due to additional project changes on August 14, 2011, and advertised its release in Baltimore's The Baltimore Sun on August 14, 15, and 16. In addition, the Department sent a copy for public review to White Marsh Branch Library in White Marsh, Maryland. The Department established a 15-day public comment period that began on August 14, 2011 and ended August 29, 2011. The Department announced it would accept comments by mail and e-mail.

Both Draft Supplemental EAs were distributed to various agencies. DOE conducted formal consultations by mail, phone, and e-mail with the responsible U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service field office, State Historic Preservation Office, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Baltimore County's Department of Public Works, Maryland's Department of Natural Resources, Maryland's Department of the Environment, and Bureau of Indian Affairs. DOE received correspondence supporting a determination of no potential impacts to threatened or endangered species, no potential impacts to properties listed on or eligible for inclusion to the *National Register of Historic Places*, and no impact to floodplains.

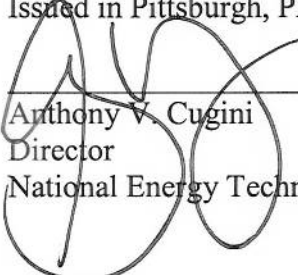
Copies of the Final EA and this FONSI are available at DOE's National Energy Technology Laboratory web site at <http://www.netl.doe.gov/publications/others/nepa/ea.html> or by sending a request to:

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**DETERMINATION:** On the basis of the evaluations in the Final EA, DOE determined that its proposed action-- to provide a \$105.4 million in cost shared funding-- for GM's proposed project-- to establish an electric motor components manufacturing and electric drive units assembling facility utilizing a new building and retrofitting an existing facility in White Marsh,

Maryland-- would have no significant impact on the human environment. All potential environmental impacts identified and analyzed in the EA would be less than significant. Therefore, preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required, and DOE is issuing this Finding of No Significant Impact.

Issued in Pittsburgh, PA, this 29 day of September 2011.

  
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Anthony V. Cugini  
Director  
National Energy Technology Laboratory

9.29.11