

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044
1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Energy Commission
715 P Street, MS-48
Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Applicant: National Wind Technology Consortium, Inc. d/b/a National Offshore Wind Research and Development Consortium

Project Title: National Offshore Wind Research and Development Consortium - CEC-NOWRDC Offshore Wind Block Grant Program

Project Location – Specific: PO Box 38019

Project Location – City: Albany 12203 Project Location – County: Albany

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The purpose of this Agreement is to fund the National Offshore Wind Research and Development Consortium (NOWRDC) to establish and manage a collaborative CEC-NOWRDC Offshore Wind Initiative to inform the development of a solicitation that will support California's offshore wind deployment. The Recipient will develop and manage at least one solicitation, co-funded by California, federal, and other state funds, based on the initiative. This Agreement will provide grants for offshore wind technology innovators, researchers, and project developers to advance the technology readiness, lower costs, and support future deployment of offshore wind in California. The Recipient will provide project management as a block grant administrator, providing fiduciary and technical oversight for projects.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: National Wind Technology Consortium, Inc. d/b/a National Offshore Wind Research and Development Consortium

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial Exemption (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(1); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(3); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(4); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number
Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, sect. 15306
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number. Public Resources Code section 15262
- Common Sense Exemption. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15061(b)(3))

Reasons why project is exempt:

Public Resources Code section 15262 provides that a project involving only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions which the agency, board, or commission has not approved, adopted, or funded does not require the preparation of an EIR or negative declaration but does require consideration of environmental factors. This project involves planning studies for possible future solicitations which the Commission has not yet approved, adopted, or funded. Awards funded from this block grant agreement will be also subject to approval at a future Energy Commission business meeting, and CEQA will be addressed on a project by project basis. Therefore, this project is exempt under Public Resources Code section 15262.

Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, sect. 15306 consists of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. These may be strictly for information gathering purposes, or as part of a study leading to an action which a public agency has not yet approved, adopted, or funded. This project involves research of promising new energy concepts and development of solicitations based on that research to fund technologies. This project helps establish the technical merits and commercial potential of promising technologies. NOWRDC will be assessing offshore wind deployment projects for potential future awards that will be considered by the CEC. For these reasons, the proposed project will have no significant effect on the environment and is categorically exempt under section 15306.

This project does not involve impacts on any particularly sensitive environment; any cumulative impacts of successive projects of the same type in the same place that might be considered significant; does not involve unusual circumstances that might have a significant effect on the environment; will not result in damage to scenic resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway; the project site is not included on any list compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5, and the project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Therefore, none of the exceptions to categorical exemptions listed in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 apply to this project and this project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Daphne Molin **Area code/Telephone/Ext:** (916) 776-0807

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: Daphne Molin **Date:** Mar 20, 2023 **Title:** Supervisor

Signed by Responsible Agency

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: _____