



**United States Department of Agriculture  
Rural Development**

July 2014

**SUBJECT:** Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)  
Borrower Silicon Valley Bank  
Cool Planet Project Genesis (Cool Planet)  
Proposed Woody Biomass Biorefinery  
In Alexandria, Louisiana

DESCRIPTION OF ACTION

The USDA, Rural Business-Cooperative Service is considering an application for loan guarantee pursuant to Section 9003 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 received from Silicon Valley Bank, for Cool Planet Project Genesis (Cool Planet) to construct and operate a Woody Biomass Biorefinery to be located in Alexandria, Louisiana. The proposal would include the construction of the biorefinery and its related infrastructure to be located on approximately 27.2 acres of land. The biorefinery proposes the use of woody biomass for production of a non-ethanol, drop-in renewable high octane fuel blendstocks for gasoline, jet and diesel that will contribute to meeting the requirements of the federal Renewable Fuel Standard requirements. The environmental analysis of this proposed action is contained in an Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared by RBS.

The biorefinery will have anticipated annual production of up to 10 million gallons per year (10 MMgy) of non-ethanol, drop-in renewable high octane fuel blendstocks for gasoline, jet and diesel from the conversion of approximately 350,000 metric tons of biomass per year of woody biomass. The intent of the proposal is to generate renewable fuels while contributing to the overall reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the U.S.

This proposal, construction and operation of the biorefinery, would have minor adverse effects to air quality, water quality, and local flora and fauna. Further floodplain management studies are being conducted to remove the property from the 100-year floodplain. Mitigation measures are proposed for this FONSI in order to ensure protection of the Chicot Sole Source Aquifer. RBS has determined that the proposal does not pose significant adverse effects to the natural or human environment if implemented according to the mitigated FONSI conditions.

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## BASIS FOR FINDINGS

As required by the National Environmental Policy Act and agency regulations, RBS has assessed the potential environmental effects of the proposal. After consideration of the applicant's proposal, comments from Federal and State environmental regulatory and natural resource agencies, the agency has determined that the proposal will not have a significant adverse effect on the natural or human environment. Therefore, RBS will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for this proposal.

## MITIGATION

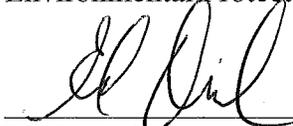
- 1) In accordance with 7 CFR 1806 Subpart B requirements for Floodplain Management, RBS agrees to issue a Mitigated FONSI with the condition that the applicant/borrower obtain a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) from FEMA which removes the 27.2 acre site from the 100-year floodplain by issuance FIRM with a BFE at or below 92 feet for the project site, prior to the issuance of the Loan Note Guarantee. A Loan Note Guarantee will not be issued by RBS for the construction of the facility until after the LOMR is issued removing the site from the 100-year floodplain. The LOMR must be based on fill existing on the site as the date of this EA, and not based on additional fill placement at the site. Should the LOMR not be issued prior to initiation of the loan note guarantee, or not remove the site from the 100 year floodplain, the EA and FONSI would no longer be valid and the loan note guarantee would not be issued until an EA and FONSI could be completed.
- 2) In accordance with 7 CFR 1940 Subpart B requirements for critical facilities, RBS agrees to issue a Mitigated FONSI with the condition that the applicant/borrower ensure that all hydrocarbon fuel and distillate products storage and road access to these systems which would operate during a flood, will be constructed above the 500 year floodplain, which is estimated to be 2 feet above the BFE, at an elevation of 94 feet. This elevation is subject to change following issuance of LOMR. Should the LOMR not be issued prior to initiation of the loan note guarantee, or the site plan fail to site the critical facilities above the 500 year floodplain, the EA and FONSI would no longer be valid and the loan note guarantee would not be issued until an EA and FONSI could be completed.
- 3) In accordance with 7 CFR 1940 Subpart B requirements for Sole Source Aquifers, RBS agrees to issue a Mitigated FONSI with the condition that the applicant/borrower ensure that all hydrocarbon fuel and distillate products storage tanks will be constructed with primary and secondary containment systems as approved by USEPA.
- 4) The applicant/borrower must obtain and comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local permits and approvals required for construction and operation of the biorefinery, and this requirement shall be incorporated and enforceable through the Agency's Conditional Commitment for Guarantee.

FINDINGS

The attached environmental assessment for the subject proposal has been prepared and reviewed by the appropriate Rural Business-Cooperative Service officials. After reviewing the assessment and the supporting materials attached to it, I find that the subject proposal will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, the preparation of an environmental impact statement is not necessary.

I also find that the assessment properly documents the proposal's status of compliance with the environmental laws and requirements listed therein.

Prepared by:  July 7, 2014  
Date  
JULIET C. BOCHICCHIO  
Environmental Protection Specialist, Program Support Staff

Recommended:  7-7-14  
Date  
ED DUVAL  
Acting Director, Program Support Staff

Recommended:  07-24-14  
Date  
MARK BRODSINSKI  
Director, Energy Division, Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Approved:  9/24/14  
Date  
LILLIAN SALERNO  
Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service