

RCW 43.21C.530 Clean energy projects. (1) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Alternative energy resource" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 80.50.020.

(b) "Alternative jet fuel" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 43.158.010.

(c) "Associated facilities" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 43.158.010.

(d) "Clean energy product manufacturing facility" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 43.158.010.

(e) "Clean energy project" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 43.158.010.

(f) "Closely related proposals" means proposals that:

(i) Cannot or will not proceed unless the other proposals, or parts of proposals, are implemented simultaneously with them; or

(ii) Are interdependent parts of a larger proposal and depend on the larger proposal as their justification or for their implementation.

(g) "Green electrolytic hydrogen" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 80.50.020.

(h) "Green hydrogen carrier" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 80.50.020.

(i) "Renewable hydrogen" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 80.50.020.

(j) "Renewable natural gas" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 80.50.020.

(k) "Renewable resource" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 80.50.020.

(1) "Storage facility" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 80.50.020.

(2) (a) After the submission of an environmental checklist and prior to issuing a threshold determination that a clean energy project proposal is likely to cause a probable significant adverse environmental impact consistent with RCW 43.21C.033, the lead agency must notify the project applicant and explain in writing the basis for its anticipated determination of significance. Prior to issuing the threshold determination of significance, the lead agency must give the project applicant the option of withdrawing and revising its application and the associated environmental checklist. The lead agency shall make its threshold determination based upon the changed or clarified application and associated environmental checklist. The responsible official has no more than 30 days from the date of the resubmission of a clarified or changed application to make a threshold determination, unless the applicant makes material changes that substantially modify the impact of the proposal, in which case the responsible official must treat the resubmitted clarified or changed application as new, and is subject to the timelines established in RCW 43.21C.033.

(b) The notification required under (a) of this subsection is not an official determination by the lead agency and is not subject to appeal under this chapter.

(c) Nothing in this subsection amends the requirements of RCW 43.21C.033 as they apply to proposals that are not for clean energy projects and nothing in this subsection precludes the lead agency from allowing an applicant for a proposal that is not a clean energy

project to follow application processes similar to or the same as the application processes identified in this subsection.

(3) (a) When an environmental impact statement is required, a lead agency shall prepare a final environmental impact statement for clean energy projects within 24 months of a threshold determination of a probable significant, adverse environmental impact.

(b) A lead agency may work with clean energy project applicants to set or extend a time limit longer than 24 months under (a) of this subsection, provided the:

(i) Applicant agrees to a longer time limit; and

(ii) Responsible official for the lead agency maintains an updated schedule available for public review.

(c) For all clean energy projects that require the preparation of an environmental impact statement, the lead agency shall work collaboratively with applicants and all agencies that will have actions requiring review under this chapter to develop a schedule that shall:

(i) Include a list of, and roles and responsibilities for, all entities that have actions requiring review under this chapter for the project;

(ii) Include a comprehensive schedule of dates by which review under this chapter will be completed, all actions requiring review under this chapter will be taken, and the public will have an opportunity to participate;

(iii) Be completed within 60 days of issuance of a determination of significance;

(iv) Be updated as needed, but no later than 30 days of missing a date on the schedule; and

(v) Be available for public review on the state environmental policy act register.

(d) A lead agency may fulfill its responsibilities under this subsection with a coordinated project plan prepared pursuant to 42 U.S.C. Sec. 4370m-2(c)(1) if it includes all dates identified under (c)(ii) of this subsection.

(e) A failure to comply with the requirements in this subsection is not subject to appeal and does not provide a basis for the invalidation of the review by an agency under this chapter. Nothing in this subsection creates any civil liability for an agency or creates a new cause of action against an agency.

(f) For clean energy projects, the provisions of this subsection are in addition to the requirements of RCW 43.21C.0311.

(4) This subsection provides clarifications on the content of review under this chapter specific to clean energy projects.

(a) In defining the proposal that is the subject of review under this chapter, a lead agency may not combine the evaluation of a clean energy project proposal with other proposals unless the:

(i) Proposals are closely related; or

(ii) Applicant agrees to combining the proposals' evaluation.

(b) An agency with authority to impose mitigation under RCW 43.21C.060 may require mitigation measures for clean energy projects only to address the environmental impacts that are attributable to and caused by a proposal. [2023 c 230 s 301.]

Findings—Intent—2023 c 230: See note following RCW 43.394.010.