

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
FOR THE  
BLAST FURNACE GAS FLARE CAPTURE PROJECT  
AT THE ARCELORMITTAL USA, INC.  
INDIANA HARBOR STEEL MILL, EAST CHICAGO, INDIANA**

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

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

**SUMMARY:** DOE completed the *Final Environmental Assessment for the Blast Furnace Gas Flare Capture Project at the ArcelorMittal USA, Inc. Indiana Harbor Steel Mill, East Chicago, Indiana* (DOE/EA-1745). Based on the analyses in the Environmental Assessment (EA), DOE determined that its proposed action—awarding a federal grant to ArcelorMittal USA, Inc. (ArcelorMittal) to facilitate construction and operation of a boiler system that would convert blast furnace waste gas into electricity—would result in no significant adverse impacts. DOE further determined that the proposed project would have potential beneficial impacts to the nation’s energy efficiency and local air quality. Additionally beneficial local socioeconomic impacts could occur as a result of increased employment opportunities and spending in the project area.

**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 (NETL), on behalf of the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy’s Industrial Technologies Program, is providing up to \$156 million in federal funding for competitively awarded agreements to facilitate the deployment of district energy systems, combined heat and power systems, waste energy recovery systems, and energy-efficient industrial equipment and processes at single or multiple installations and sites.

The federal action of providing funding for these Industrial Technologies Program projects requires compliance with the *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508) and DOE’s NEPA implementing procedures (10 CFR Part 1021). DOE prepared an EA to evaluate the potential environmental consequences of providing a grant for this proposed project under the Industrial Technologies Program.

**PURPOSE AND NEED:** The overall purpose and need for DOE action pursuant to the Industrial Technologies Program and the funding opportunity under the Recovery Act is to establish U.S. industry as the world leader in energy efficiency and productivity. The program’s goal is to facilitate a 25-percent reduction in industrial energy intensity by 2017. The Industrial Technologies Program’s three-part strategy intends to achieve this objective by:

- Sponsoring research, development, and demonstration of industry-specific and crosscutting technologies to reduce energy and carbon intensity;
- Conducting technology delivery activities to help plants access today's technology and management practices; and
- Promoting a culture of energy efficiency and carbon management within industry.

The strategy also calls for an 18-percent reduction in U.S. carbon intensity by 2012. DOE seeks to identify projects and suitable technologies that it can fund to meet this goal. ArcelorMittal's proposed project would also contribute to the nation's economic recovery by creating or helping to retain 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 a grant to partially fund ArcelorMittal's proposed project—construction and operation of a waste energy recovery plant at the Indiana Harbor Steel Mill. The project would include: (1) a 17,000-square-foot addition to the existing boiler house; (2) 620 feet of new 66-inch pipeline to carry the blast furnace gas from the existing 100-inch diameter blast furnace gas main to the new boiler system; (3) a new feed water system, including pumps and de-aerator; and (4) a new 290-foot exhaust stack next to the boiler house addition. DOE would provide a \$31.5-million financial assistance grant in a cost-sharing arrangement in order to facilitate construction and operation of the project. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$63.2 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 the proposed project. For the purposes of the EA, DOE assumed that the project would not proceed without DOE funding. This assumption established a baseline against which the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project were compared.

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES:** DOE evaluated the potential environmental consequences of the proposed project and the No-Action Alternative. DOE considered 14 environmental resource areas in the EA. However, not all areas were evaluated at the same level of detail. For nine of the resource areas, DOE determined there would be no impacts or the potential impacts would be small, temporary or both, and therefore did not carry these areas forward for additional analysis. DOE focused its more detailed analyses on those resources that could require new or amended permits, have the potential for significant impacts or controversy, or interest the public, such as socioeconomics and occupational health and safety.

DOE focused its more detailed analyses of potential impacts on the following resources areas: air quality, water resources, waste, socioeconomics, and occupational health and safety. For these areas, DOE determined that potential environmental impacts would be small, temporary, or both. ArcelorMittal's proposed project would not require amendments to its existing air emission, water use, or wastewater permits. Air emissions from the proposed project would be slightly

higher than current Indiana Harbor Steel Mill emissions. The increase in electricity generation capacity would be about 38 megawatts with no increase in greenhouse gas emissions because the plant would use existing waste gases to generate electricity, unlike conventional electricity generation plants that burn fossil fuels.

DOE also evaluated socioeconomics to determine the potential benefits of the proposed project on the surrounding communities. The project is anticipated to result in small increases in local employment and local spending, potentially providing a minor beneficial economic impact to the local communities.

The other environmental resource areas DOE evaluated for potential impacts were geology and soils; land use; aesthetics and visual resources; noise; biological resources; historic and cultural resources; environmental justice; transportation; and utilities, energy, and materials. DOE determined that there would be no adverse impacts for these resource areas, or that the impacts would be small, temporary, or both. The EA provides more detail on the reasons DOE did not conduct more detailed evaluations of these areas.

Under the No-Action Alternative, DOE assumed the project would either be delayed, as ArcelorMittal sought other funding sources, or abandoned altogether. The potential environmental consequences, if the project were delayed, could be different if the project were modified. If abandoned, the potential environmental consequences would not occur. Furthermore, the potential beneficial impacts would change or not occur.

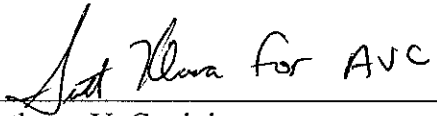
**PUBLIC AVAILABILITY:** DOE issued the Draft EA on June 21, 2010, and advertised its availability in the *Northwest Indiana Times* on June 21, 22, and 23. In addition, DOE sent copies of the Draft EA for public review to the East Chicago and Lake County public libraries. The Department established a 15-day public comment period that began June 21, 2010, and ended July 5, 2010; and announced it would accept comments by mail, email, or facsimile. Copies of the Final EA and this FONSI are available at DOE's National Energy Technology Laboratory website at [www.netl.doe.gov/publications/others/nepa/ea.html](http://www.netl.doe.gov/publications/others/nepa/ea.html).

The Draft EA was distributed to various federal, state, and local agencies with jurisdiction or special expertise. DOE conducted formal consultation by mail with the Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, which concurred with DOE's determination that no historic resources would be affected by the project. The Department also contacted the responsible U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) field office, which confirmed that the project would have no effect on federally listed threatened or endangered species.

**DETERMINATION:** On the basis of the evaluations in the Final EA, DOE determined that its proposed action, to provide a \$31.5-million financial assistance grant, and ArcelorMittal's proposed project, construction and operation of a plant to recover waste energy, would have no significant impact on the human environment. Waste energy recovery operations would comply with and operate within all permit requirements. All other potential environmental impacts DOE

identified and analyzed in the EA would be small, temporary or both. Therefore, preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required, and DOE is issuing this FONSI.

Issued in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, this 9<sup>th</sup> day of August 2010.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Anthony V. Cugini  
Director  
National Energy Technology Laboratory