

US Patent & Trademark Office

Patent Public Search | Text View

United States Patent	12396209
Kind Code	B2
Date of Patent	August 19, 2025
Inventor(s)	Ma; Shao-Yang et al.

Semiconductor device and method

Abstract

A semiconductor device including a seeding layer in the source/drain region and a method of forming is provided. The semiconductor device may include a plurality of nanostructures over a substrate, a gate structure wrapping around the plurality of nanostructures, a source/drain region adjacent the plurality of nanostructures, and inner spacers between the source/drain region and the gate structure. The source/drain region may include a polycrystalline seeding layer covering sidewalls of the plurality of nanostructures and sidewalls of the inner spacers, and a semiconductor layer over the seeding layer. The semiconductor layer may have a higher dopant concentration than the seeding layer.

Inventors: Ma; Shao-Yang (Tainan, TW), Wen; Cheng-Yen (Taichung, TW), Su; Li-Li (ChuBei, TW), Li; Chii-Horng (Zhubei, TW), Yeo; Yee-Chia (Hsinchu, TW)

Applicant: Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co., Ltd. (Hsinchu, TW)

Family ID: 1000008764075

Assignee: Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co., Ltd. (Hsinchu, TW)

Appl. No.: 17/663165

Filed: May 12, 2022

Prior Publication Data

Document Identifier	Publication Date
US 20230369502 A1	Nov. 16, 2023

Publication Classification

Int. Cl.: H10D30/67 (20250101); H01L21/02 (20060101); H10D30/01 (20250101); H10D62/10 (20250101)

U.S. Cl.:

CPC **H10D30/6713** (20250101); **H01L21/02576** (20130101); **H01L21/02592** (20130101);
 H01L21/02667 (20130101); **H10D30/031** (20250101); **H10D30/6735** (20250101);
 H10D30/6757 (20250101); **H10D62/118** (20250101);

Field of Classification Search

USPC: None

References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

Patent No.	Issued Date	Patentee Name	U.S. Cl.	CPC
9209247	12/2014	Colinge et al.	N/A	N/A
9236267	12/2015	De et al.	N/A	N/A
9412817	12/2015	Yang et al.	N/A	N/A
9412828	12/2015	Ching et al.	N/A	N/A
9472618	12/2015	Oxland	N/A	N/A
9502265	12/2015	Jiang et al.	N/A	N/A
9520482	12/2015	Chang et al.	N/A	N/A
9536738	12/2016	Huang et al.	N/A	N/A
9576814	12/2016	Wu et al.	N/A	N/A
9608116	12/2016	Ching et al.	N/A	N/A
2018/0163130	12/2017	Kim et al.	N/A	N/A
2021/0104616	12/2020	Su	N/A	H01L 29/78696
2021/0375685	12/2020	Xie et al.	N/A	N/A
2022/0037520	12/2021	More et al.	N/A	N/A
2022/0140151	12/2021	Yeong et al.	N/A	N/A
2023/0121210	12/2022	Wang	257/774	H01L 27/092
2023/0317785	12/2022	Yang	257/288	H01L 29/42392
2023/0402509	12/2022	Hsu	N/A	H01L 29/66439
2023/0420525	12/2022	Wang	N/A	H01L 29/0673
2024/0079239	12/2023	Wang	N/A	H01L 21/30625

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

Patent No.	Application Date	Country	CPC
113299628	12/2020	CN	B82Y 40/00
115527890	12/2021	CN	H01L 21/67253
115700921	12/2022	CN	H01L 29/78672
116779680	12/2022	CN	H01L 21/76224

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Changhae Park et al., "Critical Angles for Channeling of Boron Ions Implanted into Single-Crystal Silicon" J. Electrochem. Soc., vol. 138, No. 7, Jul. 1991, pp. 2107-2115. cited by applicant

Primary Examiner: Lebentritt; Michael

Attorney, Agent or Firm: Slater Matsil, LLP

Background/Summary

BACKGROUND

(1) Semiconductor devices are used in a variety of electronic applications, such as, for example, personal computers, cell phones, digital cameras, and other electronic equipment. Semiconductor devices are typically fabricated by sequentially depositing insulating or dielectric layers, conductive layers, and semiconductor layers of material over a semiconductor substrate, and patterning the various material layers using lithography to form circuit components and elements thereon.

(2) The semiconductor industry continues to improve the integration density of various electronic components (e.g., transistors, diodes, resistors, capacitors, etc.) by continual reductions in minimum feature size, which allow more components to be integrated into a given area. However, as the minimum features sizes are reduced, additional problems arise that should be addressed.

Description

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

(1) Aspects of the present disclosure are best understood from the following detailed description when read with the accompanying figures. It is noted that, in accordance with the standard practice in the industry, various features are not drawn to scale. In fact, the dimensions of the various features may be arbitrarily increased or reduced for clarity of discussion.

(2) FIG. 1 illustrates an example of a nanostructure field-effect transistor (nano-FET) in a three-dimensional view, in accordance with some embodiments.

(3) FIGS. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7A, 7B, 8A, 8B, 9A, 9B, 10A, 10B, 11A, 11B, 11C, 12A, 12B, 12C, 13A, 13B, 13C, 13D, 14A, 14B, 14C, 15A, 15B, 16A, 16B, 17A, 17B, 18A, 18B, 19A, 19B, 19C, 20A, 20B, 20C, 21A, 21B, 21C, 21D, and 21E are cross-sectional views of intermediate stages in the manufacturing of nano-FETs, in accordance with some embodiments.

(4) FIGS. 22A, 22B, 23A, 23B, 24A, and 24B are cross-sectional views of intermediate stages in the manufacturing of nano-FETs, in accordance with some embodiments.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

(5) The following disclosure provides many different embodiments, or examples, for implementing different features of the invention. Specific examples of components and arrangements are described below to simplify the present disclosure. These are, of course, merely examples and are not intended to be limiting. For example, the formation of a first feature over or on a second feature in the description that follows may include embodiments in which the first and second features are formed in direct contact, and may also include embodiments in which additional features may be formed between the first and second features, such that the first and second features may not be in direct contact. In addition, the present disclosure may repeat reference numerals and/or letters in

the various examples. This repetition is for the purpose of simplicity and clarity and does not in itself dictate a relationship between the various embodiments and/or configurations discussed.

(6) Further, spatially relative terms, such as “beneath,” “below,” “lower,” “above,” “upper” and the like, may be used herein for ease of description to describe one element or feature's relationship to another element(s) or feature(s) as illustrated in the figures. The spatially relative terms are intended to encompass different orientations of the device in use or operation in addition to the orientation depicted in the figures. The apparatus may be otherwise oriented (rotated 90 degrees or at other orientations) and the spatially relative descriptors used herein may likewise be interpreted accordingly.

(7) Embodiments are described below in a particular context, a die comprising nano-FETs. Various embodiments may be applied, however, to dies comprising other types of transistors (e.g., fin field effect transistors (FinFETs), planar transistors, or the like) in lieu of or in combination with the nano-FETs. In some embodiments, a continuous seeding layer is formed over sidewalls of nanostructures, gate inner spacers, and a substrate, prior to the formation of epitaxial source/drain regions over the seeding layers. By forming the seeding layer, the nucleation sites for the growth of the epitaxial source/drain regions are more abundant and more evenly distributed, which may increase uniformity of the epitaxial source/drain regions and reduce defects, such as voids and stacking faults, thereby improving the overall performance of the nano-FETs.

(8) FIG. 1 illustrates an example of nano-FETs (e.g., nanowire FETs, nanosheet FETs, or the like) in a three-dimensional view, in accordance with some embodiments. The nano-FETs comprise nanostructures **55** (e.g., nanosheets, nanowire, or the like) over fins **66** on a substrate **50** (e.g., a semiconductor substrate), wherein the nanostructures **55** act as channel regions for the nano-FETs. The nanostructure **55** may include p-type nanostructures, n-type nanostructures, or a combination thereof. Shallow trench isolation (STI) regions **68** are disposed between adjacent fins **66**, which may protrude above and from between neighboring STI regions **68**. Although the STI regions **68** are described or illustrated as being separate from the substrate **50**, as used herein, the term “substrate” may refer to the semiconductor substrate alone or a combination of the semiconductor substrate and the isolation regions. Additionally, although a bottom portion of the fins **66** are illustrated as being a single material continuous with the substrate **50**, the bottom portion of the fins **66** and/or the substrate **50** may comprise a single material or a plurality of materials. In this context, the fins **66** refer to the portion extending between the neighboring STI regions **68**.

(9) Gate dielectric layers **100** are over top surfaces of the fins **66** and along top surfaces, sidewalls, and bottom surfaces of the nanostructures **55**. Gate electrodes **102** are over the gate dielectric layers **100**. Epitaxial source/drain regions **92** are disposed on the fins **66** on opposing sides of the gate dielectric layers **100** and the gate electrodes **102**.

(10) FIG. 1 further illustrates reference cross-sections that are used in later figures. Cross-section A-A' is along a longitudinal axis of a gate electrode **102** and in a direction, for example, perpendicular to the direction of current flow between the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** of a nano-FET. Cross-section B-B' is perpendicular to cross-section A-A' and is parallel to a longitudinal axis of a fins **66** of the nano-FET and in a direction of, for example, a current flow between the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** of the nano-FET. Cross-section C-C' is parallel to cross-section A-A' and extends through epitaxial source/drain regions of the nano-FET. Subsequent figures refer to these reference cross-sections for clarity.

(11) Some embodiments discussed herein are discussed in the context of nano-FETs formed using a gate-last process. In other embodiments, a gate-first process may be used. Also, some embodiments contemplate aspects used in planar devices, such as planar FETs or in FinFETs.

(12) FIGS. 2 through 21C are cross-sectional views of intermediate stages in the manufacturing of nano-FETs, in accordance with some embodiments. FIGS. 2 through 5, 6A, 14A, 15A, 16A, 17A, 18A, 19A, 20A, 21A, and 21D illustrate reference cross-section A-A' illustrated in FIG. 1. FIGS. 6B, 7B, 8B, 9B, 10B, 11B, 11C, 12B, 12C, 13B, 13D, 14B, 15B, 16B, 17B, 18B, 19B, 20B, 21B,

21E, 22B, 23B, and 24A illustrate reference cross-section B-B' illustrated in FIG. 1. FIGS. 7A, 8A, 9A, 10A, 11A, 12A, 13A, 13C, 14C, 19C, 20C, 21C, 22A, 23A, and 24B illustrate reference cross-section C-C' illustrated in FIG. 1.

(13) In FIG. 2, a substrate **50** is provided. The substrate **50** may be a semiconductor substrate, such as a bulk semiconductor, a semiconductor-on-insulator (SOI) substrate, or the like, which may be doped (e.g., with a p-type or an n-type dopant) or undoped. The substrate **50** may be a wafer, such as a silicon wafer. Generally, an SOI substrate is a layer of a semiconductor material formed on an insulator layer. The insulator layer may be, for example, a buried oxide (BOX) layer, a silicon oxide layer, or the like. The insulator layer is provided on a substrate, typically a silicon or glass substrate. Other substrates, such as a multi-layered or gradient substrate may also be used. In some embodiments, the semiconductor material of the substrate **50** may include silicon; germanium; a compound semiconductor including silicon carbide, gallium arsenide, gallium phosphide, indium phosphide, indium arsenide, and/or indium antimonide; an alloy semiconductor including silicon-germanium, gallium arsenide phosphide, aluminum indium arsenide, aluminum gallium arsenide, gallium indium arsenide, gallium indium phosphide, and/or gallium indium arsenide phosphide; or combinations thereof.

(14) Further in FIG. 2, a multi-layer stack **64** is formed over the substrate **50**. The multi-layer stack **64** includes alternating layers of first semiconductor layers **51A-C** (collectively referred to as first semiconductor layers **51**) and second semiconductor layers **53A-C** (collectively referred to as second semiconductor layers **53**). The second semiconductor layers **53** will be removed and the first semiconductor layers **51** will be patterned to form channel regions of nano-FETs in the p-type region. Also, the first semiconductor layers **51** will be removed and the second semiconductor layers **53** will be patterned to form channel regions of nano-FETs in the n-type region.

(15) The first semiconductor layers **51** may be removed and the second semiconductor layers **53** may be patterned to form channel regions of nano-FETs in both the n-type region and the p-type region. In other embodiments, the second semiconductor layers **53** may be removed and the first semiconductor layers **51** may be patterned to form channel regions of nano-FETs in both the n-type region and the p-type region. In such embodiments, the channel regions in both the n-type region and the p-type region may have a same material composition (e.g., silicon, or the another semiconductor material) and be formed simultaneously.

(16) The multi-layer stack **64** is illustrated as including three layers of each of the first semiconductor layers **51** and the second semiconductor layers **53** for illustrative purposes. In some embodiments, the multi-layer stack **64** may include any number of the first semiconductor layers **51** and the second semiconductor layers **53**. Each of the layers of the multi-layer stack **64** may be epitaxially grown using a process such as chemical vapor deposition (CVD), atomic layer deposition (ALD), vapor phase epitaxy (VPE), molecular beam epitaxy (MBE), or the like. In various embodiments, one of the first semiconductor layers **51** and the second semiconductor layers **53** may be formed of a first semiconductor material suitable for p-type nano-FETs, such as silicon germanium, or the like, and the other of the first semiconductor layers **51** and the second semiconductor layers **53** may be formed of a second semiconductor material suitable for n-type nano-FETs, such as silicon, silicon carbon, or the like.

(17) The first semiconductor materials and the second semiconductor materials may be materials having a high-etch selectivity to one another. As such, the first semiconductor layers **51** of the first semiconductor material may be removed without significantly removing the second semiconductor layers **53** of the second semiconductor material, thereby allowing the second semiconductor layers **53** to be patterned to form channel regions of, e.g., n-type nano-FETs. Similarly, the second semiconductor layers **53** of the second semiconductor material may be removed without significantly removing the first semiconductor layers **51** of the first semiconductor material in the p-type region, thereby allowing the first semiconductor layers **51** to be patterned to form channel regions of, e.g., p-type nano-FETs. Additionally, in some embodiments, the first semiconductor

layers **51** and the second semiconductor layers **53** may comprise the same materials in the p-type region and the n-type region. In other embodiments, one or both of the first semiconductor layers **51** and the second semiconductor layers **53** may be different materials or formed in a different order in the p-type regions and the n-type regions.

(18) Referring now to FIG. **3**, fins **66** are formed in the substrate **50** and nanostructures **55** are formed in the multi-layer stack **64**. In some embodiments, the nanostructures **55** and the fins **66** may be formed in the multi-layer stack **64** and the substrate **50**, respectively, by etching trenches in the multi-layer stack **64** and the substrate **50**. The etching may be any acceptable etch process, such as a reactive ion etch (RIE), neutral beam etch (NBE), the like, or a combination thereof. The etching may be anisotropic. Forming the nanostructures **55** by etching the multi-layer stack **64** may further define first nanostructures **52A-C** (collectively referred to as the first nanostructures **52**) from the first semiconductor layers **51** and define second nanostructures **54A-C** (collectively referred to as the second nanostructures **54**) from the second semiconductor layers **53**. The first nanostructures **52** and the second nanostructures **54** may further be collectively referred to as nanostructures **55**.

(19) For purposes of illustration, an n-type region with the second nanostructures **54** as channel regions is used as an example for the following discussion. Similar processes may also be applied to the p-type region. FIG. **3** illustrates that two fins are formed, in other embodiments a different number of fins may be formed.

(20) The fins **66** and the nanostructures **55** may be patterned by any suitable method. For example, the fins **66** and the nanostructures **55** may be patterned using one or more photolithography processes, including double-patterning or multi-patterning processes. Generally, double-patterning or multi-patterning processes combine photolithography and self-aligned processes, allowing patterns to be created that have, for example, pitches smaller than what is otherwise obtainable using a single, direct photolithography process. For example, in one embodiment, a sacrificial layer is formed over a substrate and patterned using a photolithography process. Spacers are formed alongside the patterned sacrificial layer using a self-aligned process. The sacrificial layer is then removed, and the remaining spacers may then be used to pattern the fins **66**.

(21) While each of the fins **66** and the nanostructures **55** are illustrated as having a consistent width throughout, in some embodiments, the fins **66** and/or the nanostructures **55** may have tapered sidewalls such that a width of each of the fins **66** and/or the nanostructures **55** continuously increases in a direction towards the substrate **50**. In such embodiments, each of the nanostructures **55** may have a different width and be trapezoidal in shape.

(22) In FIG. **4**, STI regions **68** are formed adjacent the fins **66**. The STI regions **68** may be formed by depositing an insulation material over the substrate **50**, the fins **66**, and nanostructures **55**, and between adjacent fins **66**. The insulation material may be an oxide, such as silicon oxide, a nitride, the like, or a combination thereof, and may be formed by high-density plasma CVD (HDP-CVD), flowable CVD (FCVD), the like, or a combination thereof. Other insulation materials formed by any acceptable process may be used. In the illustrated embodiment, the insulation material is silicon oxide formed by an FCVD process. An annealing process may be performed once the insulation material is formed. In an embodiment, the insulation material is formed such that excess insulation material covers the nanostructures **55**. Although the insulation material is illustrated as a single layer, some embodiments may utilize multiple layers. For example, in some embodiments a liner (not separately illustrated) may first be formed along a surface of the substrate **50**, the fins **66**, and the nanostructures **55**. Thereafter, a fill material, such as those discussed above may be formed over the liner.

(23) A removal process is then applied to the insulation material to remove excess insulation material over the nanostructures **55**. In some embodiments, a planarization process such as a chemical mechanical polish (CMP), an etch-back process, combinations thereof, or the like may be utilized. The planarization process exposes the nanostructures **55** such that top surfaces of the

nanostuctures 55 and the insulation material are level after the planarization process is complete.

(24) The insulation material is then recessed to form the STI regions 68. The insulation material is recessed such that upper portions of fins 66 protrude from between neighboring STI regions 68. Further, the top surfaces of the STI regions 68 may have a flat surface as illustrated, a convex surface, a concave surface (such as dishing), or a combination thereof. The top surfaces of the STI regions 68 may be formed flat, convex, and/or concave by an appropriate etch. The STI regions 68 may be recessed using an acceptable etching process, such as one that is selective to the material of the insulation material (e.g., etches the material of the insulation material at a faster rate than the material of the fins 66 and the nanostructures 55). For example, an oxide removal using, for example, dilute hydrofluoric (dHF) acid may be used.

(25) The process described above with respect to FIGS. 2 through 4 is just one example of how the fins 66 and the nanostructures 55 may be formed. In some embodiments, the fins 66 and/or the nanostructures 55 may be formed using a mask and an epitaxial growth process. For example, a dielectric layer can be formed over a top surface of the substrate 50, and trenches can be etched through the dielectric layer to expose the underlying substrate 50. Epitaxial structures can be epitaxially grown in the trenches, and the dielectric layer can be recessed such that the epitaxial structures protrude from the dielectric layer to form the fins 66 and/or the nanostructures 55. The epitaxial structures may comprise the alternating semiconductor materials discussed above, such as the first semiconductor materials and the second semiconductor materials. In some embodiments where epitaxial structures are epitaxially grown, the epitaxially grown materials may be in situ doped during growth, which may obviate prior and/or subsequent implantations, although in situ and implantation doping may be used together.

(26) Further in FIG. 4, appropriate wells (not separately illustrated) may be formed in the fins 66 and the nanostructures 55. In embodiments with different well types, different implant steps for the n-type region and the p-type region may be achieved using a photoresist or other masks (not separately illustrated). For example, a photoresist may be formed over the fins 66, the nanostructures 55, and the STI regions 68 in the n-type region and the p-type region. The photoresist is patterned to expose the p-type region. The photoresist can be formed by using a spin-on technique and can be patterned using acceptable photolithography techniques. Once the photoresist is patterned, an n-type impurity implant is performed in the p-type region, and the photoresist may act as a mask to substantially prevent n-type impurities from being implanted into the n-type region. The n-type impurities may be phosphorus, arsenic, antimony, or the like implanted in the region to a concentration in a range from about 10^{13} atoms/cm³ to about 10^{14} atoms/cm³. After the implant, the photoresist is removed, such as by an acceptable ashing process.

(27) Following or prior to the implanting of the p-type region, a photoresist or other masks (not separately illustrated) is formed over the fins 66, the nanostructures 55, and the STI regions 68 in the p-type region and the n-type region. The photoresist is patterned to expose the n-type region. The photoresist can be formed by using a spin-on technique and can be patterned using acceptable photolithography techniques. Once the photoresist is patterned, a p-type impurity implant may be performed in the n-type region, and the photoresist may act as a mask to substantially prevent p-type impurities from being implanted into the p-type region. The p-type impurities may be boron, boron fluoride, indium, or the like implanted in the region to a concentration in a range from about 10^{13} atoms/cm³ to about 10^{14} atoms/cm³. After the implant, the photoresist may be removed, such as by an acceptable ashing process.

(28) After the implants of the n-type region and the p-type region, an annealing process may be performed to repair implant damage and to activate the p-type and/or n-type impurities that were implanted. In some embodiments, the grown materials of epitaxial fins may be in situ doped during growth, which may obviate the implantations, although in situ and implantation doping may be used together.

(29) In FIG. 5, a dummy dielectric layer 70 is formed on the fins 66 and/or the nanostructures 55. The dummy dielectric layer 70 may be, for example, silicon oxide, silicon nitride, a combination thereof, or the like, and may be deposited or thermally grown according to acceptable techniques. A dummy gate layer 72 is formed over the dummy dielectric layer 70, and a mask layer 74 is formed over the dummy gate layer 72. The dummy gate layer 72 may be deposited over the dummy dielectric layer 70 and then planarized, such as by a CMP. The mask layer 74 may be deposited over the dummy gate layer 72. The dummy gate layer 72 may be a conductive or non-conductive material and may be selected from a group including amorphous silicon, polycrystalline-silicon (polysilicon), poly-crystalline silicon-germanium (poly-SiGe), metallic nitrides, metallic silicides, metallic oxides, and metals. The dummy gate layer 72 may be deposited by physical vapor deposition (PVD), CVD, sputter deposition, or other techniques for depositing the selected material. The dummy gate layer 72 may be made of other materials that have a high etching selectivity from the etching of isolation regions. The mask layer 74 may include, for example, silicon nitride, silicon oxynitride, or the like. A single dummy gate layer 72 and a single mask layer 74 may be formed across the n-type region and the p-type region. It is noted that the dummy dielectric layer 70 is shown covering only the fins 66 and the nanostructures 55 for illustrative purposes only. In some embodiments, the dummy dielectric layer 70 may be deposited such that the dummy dielectric layer 70 covers the STI regions 68, such that the dummy dielectric layer 70 extends between the dummy gate layer 72 and the STI regions 68.

(30) FIGS. 6A through 24B illustrate various additional steps in the manufacturing of embodiment devices. In FIGS. 6A and 6B, the mask layer 74 (see FIG. 5) may be patterned using acceptable photolithography and etching techniques to form masks 78. The pattern of the masks 78 then may be transferred to the dummy gate layer 72 and to the dummy dielectric layer 70 to form dummy gates 76 and dummy gate dielectrics 71, respectively. The dummy gates 76 cover respective channel regions of the fins 66. The pattern of the masks 78 may be used to physically separate each of the dummy gates 76 from adjacent dummy gates 76. The dummy gates 76 may also have a lengthwise direction substantially perpendicular to the lengthwise direction of respective fins 66.

(31) In FIGS. 7A and 7B, a first spacer layer 80 and a second spacer layer 82 are formed over the structures illustrated in FIGS. 6A and 6B, respectively. The first spacer layer 80 and the second spacer layer 82 will be subsequently patterned to act as spacers for forming self-aligned source/drain regions. In FIGS. 7A and 7B, the first spacer layer 80 is formed on top surfaces of the STI regions 68; top surfaces and sidewalls of the fins 66, the nanostructures 55, and the masks 78; and sidewalls of the dummy gates 76 and the dummy gate dielectric 71. The second spacer layer 82 is deposited over the first spacer layer 80. The first spacer layer 80 may be formed of silicon oxide, silicon nitride, silicon oxynitride, or the like, using techniques such as thermal oxidation or deposited by CVD, ALD, or the like. The second spacer layer 82 may be formed of a material having a different etch rate than the material of the first spacer layer 80, such as silicon oxide, silicon nitride, silicon oxynitride, or the like, and may be deposited by CVD, ALD, or the like.

(32) After the first spacer layer 80 is formed and prior to forming the second spacer layer 82, implants for lightly doped source/drain (LDD) regions (not separately illustrated) may be performed. In embodiments with different device types, similar to the implants discussed above in FIG. 4, a mask, such as a photoresist, may be formed over the n-type region, while exposing the p-type region, and appropriate type (e.g., p-type) impurities may be implanted into the exposed fins 66 and nanostructures 55 in the p-type region. The mask may then be removed. Subsequently, a mask, such as a photoresist, may be formed over the p-type region while exposing the n-type region, and appropriate type impurities (e.g., n-type) may be implanted into the exposed fins 66 and nanostructures 55 in the n-type region. The mask may then be removed. The n-type impurities may be any of the n-type impurities previously discussed, and the p-type impurities may be any of the p-type impurities previously discussed. The lightly doped source/drain regions may have a concentration of impurities in a range from about 1×10^{15} atoms/cm³ to about

1×10^{sup.19} atoms/cm^{sup.3}. An annealing process may be used to repair implant damage and to activate the implanted impurities.

(33) In FIGS. **8A** and **8B**, the first spacer layer **80** and the second spacer layer **82** are etched to form first spacers **81** and second spacers **83**. As will be discussed in greater detail below, the first spacers **81** and the second spacers **83** act to self-aligned subsequently formed source drain regions, as well as to protect sidewalls of the fins **66** and/or nanostructure **55** during subsequent processing. The first spacer layer **80** and the second spacer layer **82** may be etched using a suitable etching process, such as an isotropic etching process (e.g., a wet etching process), an anisotropic etching process (e.g., a dry etching process), or the like. In some embodiments, the material of the second spacer layer **82** has a different etch rate than the material of the first spacer layer **80**, such that the first spacer layer **80** may act as an etch stop layer when patterning the second spacer layer **82** and such that the second spacer layer **82** may act as a mask when patterning the first spacer layer **80**. For example, the second spacer layer **82** may be etched using an anisotropic etch process wherein the first spacer layer **80** acts as an etch stop layer, wherein remaining portions of the second spacer layer **82** form second spacers **83** as illustrated in FIG. **8A**. Thereafter, the second spacers **83** acts as a mask while etching exposed portions of the first spacer layer **80**, thereby forming first spacers **81** as illustrated in FIG. **8A**.

(34) As illustrated in FIG. **8A**, the first spacers **81** and the second spacers **83** are disposed on sidewalls of the fins **66** and/or nanostructures **55**. As illustrated in FIG. **8B**, in some embodiments, the second spacer layer **82** may be removed from over the first spacer layer **80** adjacent the masks **78**, the dummy gates **76**, and the dummy gate dielectrics **71**, and the first spacers **81** are disposed on sidewalls of the masks **78**, the dummy gates **76**, and the dummy dielectric layers **60**. In other embodiments, a portion of the second spacer layer **82** may remain over the first spacer layer **80** adjacent the masks **78**, the dummy gates **76**, and the dummy gate dielectrics **71**.

(35) It is noted that the above disclosure generally describes a process of forming spacers and LDD regions. Other processes and sequences may be used. For example, fewer or additional spacers may be utilized, different sequence of steps may be utilized (e.g., the first spacers **81** may be patterned prior to depositing the second spacer layer **82**), additional spacers may be formed and removed, and/or the like. Furthermore, the n-type and p-type devices may be formed using different structures and steps.

(36) In FIGS. **9A** and **9B**, first recesses **86** are formed in the fins **66**, the nanostructures **55**, and the substrate **50**, in accordance with some embodiments. Epitaxial source/drain regions will be subsequently formed in the first recesses **86**. The first recesses **86** may extend through the first nanostructures **52** and the second nanostructures **54**, and into the substrate **50**. As illustrated in FIG. **9A**, top surfaces of the STI regions **68** may be level with bottom surfaces of the first recesses **86**. In various embodiments, the fins **66** may be etched such that bottom surfaces of the first recesses **86** are disposed below the top surfaces of the STI regions **68**; or the like. The first recesses **86** may be formed by etching the fins **66**, the nanostructures **55**, and the substrate **50** using anisotropic etching processes, such as RIE, NBE, or the like. The first spacers **81**, the second spacers **83**, and the masks **78** mask portions of the fins **66**, the nanostructures **55**, and the substrate **50** during the etching processes used to form the first recesses **86**. A single etch process or multiple etch processes may be used to etch each layer of the nanostructures **55** and/or the fins **66**. Timed etch processes may be used to stop the etching of the first recesses **86** after the first recesses **86** reach a desired depth.

(37) In FIGS. **10A** and **10B**, portions of sidewalls of the layers of the multi-layer stack **64** formed of the first semiconductor materials (e.g., the first nanostructures **52**) exposed by the first recesses **86** are etched to form sidewall recesses **88**. Although sidewalls of the first nanostructures **52** and the second nanostructures **54** in sidewall recesses **88** are illustrated as being straight in FIG. **10B**, the sidewalls may be concave or convex. The sidewalls may be etched using isotropic etching processes, such as wet etching or the like. In an embodiment in which the first nanostructures **52** include, e.g., SiGe, and the second nanostructures **54** include, e.g., Si or SiC, a dry etch process

with tetramethylammonium hydroxide (TMAH), ammonium hydroxide (NH₄OH), or the like may be used to etch sidewalls of the first nanostructures 52.

(38) In FIGS. 11A-11C, first inner spacers 90 are formed in the sidewall recess 88. The first inner spacers 90 may be formed by depositing an inner spacer layer (not separately illustrated) over the structures illustrated in FIGS. 10A and 10B. The first inner spacers 90 act as isolation features between subsequently formed source/drain regions and a gate structure. As will be discussed in greater detail below, source/drain regions will be formed in the first recesses 86, while the first nanostructures 52 will be replaced with corresponding gate structures.

(39) The inner spacer layer may be deposited by a conformal deposition process, such as CVD, ALD, or the like. The inner spacer layer may comprise a material such as silicon nitride or silicon oxynitride, although any suitable material, such as low-dielectric constant (low-k) materials having a k-value less than about 3.5, may be utilized. The inner spacer layer may then be anisotropically etched to form the first inner spacers 90. Although outer sidewalls of the first inner spacers 90 are illustrated as being flush with sidewalls of the second nanostructures 54 in the outer sidewalls of the first inner spacers 90 may extend beyond or be recessed from sidewalls of the second nanostructures 54.

(40) Moreover, although the outer sidewalls of the first inner spacers 90 are illustrated as being straight in FIG. 11B, the outer sidewalls of the first inner spacers 90 may be concave or convex. As an example, FIG. 11C illustrates an embodiment in which sidewalls of the first nanostructures 52 are concave, outer sidewalls of the first inner spacers 90 are concave, and the first inner spacers 90 are recessed from sidewalls of the second nanostructures 54. The inner spacer layer may be etched by an anisotropic etching process, such as RIE, NBE, or the like. The first inner spacers 90 may be used to prevent damage to subsequently formed epitaxial source/drain regions 92, discussed below with respect to FIGS. 13A-13D, by subsequent etching processes, such as etching processes used to form gate structures.

(41) In FIGS. 12A-12C, seeding layers 91 are formed in the first recesses 86. As discussed in greater detail below, epitaxial source/drain regions 92 (shown in FIGS. 13A-13B) will be formed over the seeding layers 91, wherein the seeding layers 91 provide nucleation sites for the epitaxial source/drain regions 92 during the growing process. The seeding layers 91 and the epitaxial source/drain regions 92 may collectively be referred to as source/drain regions 93 (shown in FIGS. 13A-13B). The seeding layers 91 may be formed of any acceptable material. For example, if the second nanostructures 54 are silicon in the n-type region, the seeding layers 91 may include materials exerting a tensile strain on the second nanostructures 54, such as silicon, phosphorus doped silicon, arsenic doped silicon, phosphorus doped silicon carbide, silicon carbide, silicon phosphide, or the like. The seeding layers 91 may be formed using techniques such as CVD or the like, using silane gas and hydrogen gas as precursors to form un-doped silicon. Phosphine gas may be added as a precursor to form phosphorus doped silicon, and arsine gas may be added as a precursor to form arsenic doped silicon. The doping concentration may be greater than zero and less than 5×10^{19} atoms/cm³ in the seeding layers 91 that are doped. The deposition may be performed at a temperature in a range from about 400° C. to about 600° C., such as from about 500° C. to about 600° C., and a pressure in a range from about 1 Torr to about 200 Torr, such as from about 100 Torr to about 200 Torr. The deposition time may be in a range from about 30 seconds to about 100 seconds. Although the embodiments above describe in situ doping during deposition, other doping methods, such as ion implantation, may be used instead of or in combination with in situ doping. In some embodiments, the seeding layers 91 may be an un-doped semiconductor material, such as un-doped silicon.

(42) The seeding layers 91 are formed as an amorphous layer during deposition, and an annealing process may be performed to induce crystallization afterwards. The crystallization of the seeding layers 91 promulgates from the second nanostructures 54 and the substrate 50. The annealing process may be performed in a hydrogen environment at a temperature in range from about 600° C.

to about 700° C. for a duration in range from about 100 s to about 300 s.

(43) The seeding layers **91** may be completely or partially crystallized in the first recesses **86**. As discussed above, the crystallization promulgates from the second nanostructures **54** and the substrate **50**. In embodiments in which the annealing is performed for a sufficient duration, the crystallization may promulgate for the entire thickness of the seeding layer **91** and promulgate over the first inner spacers **90**. Accordingly, the portions of the seeding layers **91** that cover surfaces of the first recesses **86** may become polycrystalline or monocrystalline after annealing, while portions of the seeding layers **91** that are adjacent the first spacers **81** and over the masks **78** may remain amorphous after annealing. An etching process may be performed to remove the amorphous portions of the seeding layers **91** adjacent the first spacers **81** and over the masks **78**, leaving crystallized portions the seeding layers **91** in the first recesses **86**. The etching process may be a wet etching, such as a wet etch using hydrochloric acid at a temperature in a range from about 600° C. to about 700° C.

(44) In some embodiments, as shown in FIG. 12B, the seeding layers **91** may be continuous U-shaped layers, with sidewalls covering sidewalls of the second nanostructures **54** and the sidewalls of the first inner spacers **90**. The seeding layers **91** may have a thickness in a range from about 0.5 nm to about 3 nm. Bottom portions of the seeding layers **91** may be in direct contact with the substrate **50**. In some embodiments, as shown in FIG. 12C, portions of the seeding layers formed on the concave outer sidewalls of the first inner spacers **90** may also be concave.

(45) Forming the seeding layers **91** as, for example, an amorphous material such as amorphous silicon allows the formation of the seeding layers **91** over an entire surface of the substrate, including over the sidewalls of the first inner spacers **90**. The subsequent crystallization provides a more even surface upon which the subsequent epitaxial source/drain regions **92** may be epitaxially grown, thereby reducing voids and stacking faults.

(46) In FIGS. 13A-13C, the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** are formed on the seeding layers **91** in the first recesses **86**. In some embodiments, the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** may exert stress on the second nanostructures **54**, thereby improving performance. As illustrated in FIG. 13B, the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** are formed in the first recesses **86** such that each dummy gate **76** is disposed between respective neighboring pairs of the epitaxial source/drain regions **92**. In some embodiments, the first spacers **81** are used to separate the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** from the dummy gates **76** and the first inner spacers **90** are used to separate the seeding layers **91** as well as the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** from the nanostructures **55** by an appropriate lateral distance so that the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** do not short out with subsequently formed gates of the resulting nano-FETs.

(47) The epitaxial source/drain regions **92** may include any acceptable material appropriate for the epitaxial source/drain regions **92**. For example, if the second nanostructures **54** are silicon for the n-type region, the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** may include materials exerting a tensile strain on the second nanostructures **54**, such as silicon, phosphorus doped silicon, silicon carbide, phosphorus doped silicon carbide, silicon phosphide, or the like. The epitaxial source/drain regions **92** may have surfaces raised from respective upper surfaces of the nanostructures **55** and may have facets.

(48) In some embodiments, the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** may be in situ doped during growth or implanted after. The source/drain regions may have a doping concentration greater than 2×10^{21} atoms/cm³. In some embodiments, the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** may be polycrystalline or monocrystalline after deposition. As discussed previously, by forming the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** over the seeding layers **91**, the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** would have increased uniformity and reduced defects, such as voids and stacking faults, due to the more abundant and more evenly distributed nucleation sites the seeding layers **91** provide during the growth of the epitaxial source/drain regions **92**.

(49) As a result of the epitaxy processes used to form the epitaxial source/drain regions **92**, upper

portions of the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** have facets which expand laterally outward beyond sidewalls of the nanostructures **55**, while the lateral expansion of bottom portions of the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** are restricted by the first spacers **81**. In some embodiments, these facets cause adjacent epitaxial source/drain regions **92** of a same nano-FET to merge as illustrated by FIG. **13A**. In other embodiments, adjacent epitaxial source/drain regions **92** remain separated after the epitaxy process is completed as illustrated by FIG. **13C**. In some other embodiments, the spacer etch used to form the first spacers **81** may be adjusted to remove the spacer material to allow the epitaxially grown regions to extend to the surface of the STI regions **68**.

(50) The epitaxial source/drain regions **92** may comprise one or more semiconductor material layers. For example, the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** may comprise a first semiconductor material layer **92A**, a second semiconductor material layer **92B**, and a third semiconductor material layer **92C**. Any number of semiconductor material layers may be used for the epitaxial source/drain regions **92**. Each of the first semiconductor material layer **92A**, the second semiconductor material layer **92B**, and the third semiconductor material layer **92C** may be formed of different semiconductor materials and may be doped to different dopant concentrations. In some embodiments, the first semiconductor material layer **92A** may have a dopant concentration less than the second semiconductor material layer **92B** and greater than the third semiconductor material layer **92C**. In embodiments in which the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** comprise three semiconductor material layers, the first semiconductor material layer **92A** may be deposited, the second semiconductor material layer **92B** may be deposited over the first semiconductor material layer **92A**, and the third semiconductor material layer **92C** may be deposited over the second semiconductor material layer **92B**.

(51) FIG. **13D** illustrates the formation of the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** on the seeding layers **91** and in the first recesses **86** according to the embodiment described above with respect to FIG. **12C**. The portions of the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** formed over the concave portions of the seeding layers **91** may be convex.

(52) In FIGS. **14A-14C**, a first interlayer dielectric (ILD) **96** is deposited over the structure illustrated in FIGS. **6A**, **13A**, and **13B** (the processes of FIGS. **7A-13D** do not alter the cross-section illustrated in FIGS. **6A**), respectively. The first ILD **96** may be formed of a dielectric material, and may be deposited by any suitable method, such as CVD, plasma-enhanced CVD (PECVD), or FCVD. Dielectric materials may include phospho-silicate glass (PSG), boro-silicate glass (BSG), boron-doped phospho-silicate glass (BPSG), undoped silicate glass (USG), or the like. Other insulation materials formed by any acceptable process may be used. In some embodiments, a contact etch stop layer (CESL) **94** is disposed between the first ILD **96** and the epitaxial source/drain regions **92**, the masks **78**, and the first spacers **81**. The CESL **94** may comprise a dielectric material, such as, silicon nitride, silicon oxide, silicon oxynitride, or the like, having a different etch rate than the material of the overlying first ILD **96**.

(53) In FIGS. **15A-15B**, a planarization process, such as a CMP, may be performed to level the top surface of the first ILD **96** with the top surfaces of the dummy gates **76** or the masks **78**. The planarization process may also remove the masks **78** on the dummy gates **76**, and portions of the first spacers **81** along sidewalls of the masks **78**. After the planarization process, top surfaces of the dummy gates **76**, the first spacers **81**, and the first ILD **96** are level within process variations. Accordingly, the top surfaces of the dummy gates **76** are exposed through the first ILD **96**. In some embodiments, the masks **78** may remain, in which case the planarization process levels the top surface of the first ILD **96** with top surface of the masks **78** and the first spacers **81**.

(54) In FIGS. **16A** and **16B**, the dummy gates **76**, and the masks **78** if present, are removed in one or more etching steps, so that second recesses **98** are formed. Portions of the dummy dielectric layers **60** in the second recesses **98** are also be removed. In some embodiments, the dummy gates **76** and the dummy dielectric layers **60** are removed by an anisotropic dry etch process. For example, the etching process may include a dry etch process using reaction gas(es) that selectively

etch the dummy gates **76** at a faster rate than the first ILD **96** or the first spacers **81**. Each second recess **98** exposes and/or overlies portions of nanostructures **55**, which act as channel regions in subsequently completed nano-FETs. Portions of the nanostructures **55** which act as the channel regions are disposed between neighboring pairs of the epitaxial source/drain regions **92**. During the removal, the dummy dielectric layers **60** may be used as etch stop layers when the dummy gates **76** are etched. The dummy dielectric layers **60** may then be removed after the removal of the dummy gates **76**.

(55) In FIGS. **17A** and **17B**, the first nanostructures **52** are removed extending the second recesses **98**. The first nanostructures **52** may be removed by performing an isotropic etching process such as wet etching or the like using etchants which are selective to the materials of the first nanostructures **52**, while the second nanostructures **54**, the substrate **50**, the STI regions **68** remain relatively unetched as compared to the first nanostructures **52**. In embodiments in which the first nanostructures **52** include, e.g., SiGe, and the second nanostructures **54A-54C** include, e.g., Si or SiC, tetramethylammonium hydroxide (TMAH), ammonium hydroxide (NH₄OH), or the like may be used to remove the first nanostructures **52** in the n-type region.

(56) In FIGS. **18A** and **18B**, gate dielectric layers **100** and gate electrodes **102** are formed for replacement gates. The gate dielectric layers **100** are deposited conformally in the second recesses **98**. The gate dielectric layers **100** may be formed on top surfaces and sidewalls of the substrate **50** and on top surfaces, sidewalls, and bottom surfaces of the second nanostructures **54**. The gate dielectric layers **100** may also be deposited on top surfaces of the first ILD **96**, the CESL **94**, the first spacers **81**, and the STI regions **68**.

(57) In accordance with some embodiments, the gate dielectric layers **100** comprise one or more dielectric layers, such as an oxide, a metal oxide, the like, or combinations thereof. For example, in some embodiments, the gate dielectrics may comprise a silicon oxide layer and a metal oxide layer over the silicon oxide layer. In some embodiments, the gate dielectric layers **100** include a high-k dielectric material, and in these embodiments, the gate dielectric layers **100** may have a k value greater than about 7.0, and may include a metal oxide or a silicate of hafnium, aluminum, zirconium, lanthanum, manganese, barium, titanium, lead, and combinations thereof. The formation methods of the gate dielectric layers **100** may include molecular-beam deposition (MBD), ALD, PECVD, and the like.

(58) The gate electrodes **102** are deposited over the gate dielectric layers **100**, respectively, and fill the remaining portions of the second recesses **98**. The gate electrodes **102** may include a metal-containing material such as titanium nitride, titanium oxide, tantalum nitride, tantalum carbide, cobalt, ruthenium, aluminum, tungsten, combinations thereof, or multi-layers thereof. For example, although single layer gate electrodes **102** are illustrated in FIGS. **18A** and **18B**, the gate electrodes **102** may comprise any number of liner layers, any number of work function tuning layers, and a fill material. Any combination of the layers which make up the gate electrodes **102** may be deposited between adjacent ones of the second nanostructures **54**.

(59) After the filling of the second recesses **98**, a planarization process, such as a CMP, may be performed to remove the excess portions of the gate dielectric layers **100** and the material of the gate electrodes **102**, which excess portions are over the top surface of the first ILD **96**. The remaining portions of material of the gate electrodes **102** and the gate dielectric layers **100** thus form replacement gate structures of the resulting nano-FETs. The gate electrodes **102** and the gate dielectric layers **100** may be collectively referred to as "gate structures."

(60) In FIGS. **19A-19C**, the gate structure (including the gate dielectric layers **100** and the corresponding overlying gate electrodes **102**) is recessed, so that a recess is formed directly over the gate structure and between opposing portions of first spacers **81**. A gate mask **104** comprising one or more layers of dielectric material, such as silicon nitride, silicon oxynitride, or the like, is filled in the recess, followed by a planarization process to remove excess portions of the dielectric material extending over the first ILD **96**. Subsequently formed gate contacts (such as the contacts

114, discussed below with respect to FIGS. **21A** and **21B**) penetrate through the gate mask **104** to contact the top surface of the recessed gate electrodes **102**.

(61) As further illustrated by FIGS. **19A-19C**, a second ILD **106** is deposited over the first ILD **96** and over the gate mask **104**. In some embodiments, the second ILD **106** is a flowable film formed by FCVD. In some embodiments, the second ILD **106** is formed of a dielectric material such as PSG, BSG, BPSG, USG, or the like, and may be deposited by any suitable method, such as CVD, PECVD, or the like.

(62) In FIGS. **20A-20C**, the second ILD **106**, the first ILD **96**, the CESL **94**, and the gate masks **104** are etched to form third recesses **108** exposing surfaces of the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** and/or the gate structure. The third recesses **108** may be formed by etching using an anisotropic etching process, such as RIE, NBE, or the like. In some embodiments, the third recesses **108** may be etched through the second ILD **106** and the first ILD **96** using a first etching process; may be etched through the gate masks **104** using a second etching process; and may then be etched through the CESL **94** using a third etching process. A mask, such as a photoresist, may be formed and patterned over the second ILD **106** to mask portions of the second ILD **106** from the first etching process and the second etching process. In some embodiments, the etching process may over-etch, and therefore, the third recesses **108** extend into the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** and/or the gate structure, and a bottom of the third recesses **108** may be level with (e.g., at a same level, or having a same distance from the substrate), or lower than (e.g., closer to the substrate) the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** and/or the gate structure. Although FIG. **20B** illustrate the third recesses **108** as exposing the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** and the gate structure in a same cross section, in various embodiments, the epitaxial source/drain regions **92** and the gate structure may be exposed in different cross-sections, thereby reducing the risk of shorting subsequently formed contacts. After the third recesses **108** are formed, silicide regions **110** are formed over the epitaxial source/drain regions **92**. In some embodiments, the silicide regions **110** are formed by first depositing a metal (not shown) capable of reacting with the semiconductor materials of the underlying epitaxial source/drain regions **92** (e.g., silicon, silicon germanium, germanium) to form silicide or germanide regions, such as nickel, cobalt, titanium, tantalum, platinum, tungsten, other noble metals, other refractory metals, rare earth metals or their alloys, over the exposed portions of the epitaxial source/drain regions **92**, then performing a thermal annealing process to form the silicide regions **110**. The un-reacted portions of the deposited metal are then removed, e.g., by an etching process. Although silicide regions **110** are referred to as silicide regions, silicide regions **110** may also be germanide regions, or silicon germanide regions (e.g., regions comprising silicide and germanide). In an embodiment, the silicide region **110** comprises TiSi, and has a thickness in a range between about 2 nm and about 10 nm.

(63) Next, in FIGS. **21A-C**, contacts **112** and **114** (may also be referred to as contact plugs) are formed in the third recesses **108**. The contacts **112** and **114** may each comprise one or more layers, such as barrier layers, diffusion layers, and fill materials. For example, in some embodiments, the contacts **112** and **114** each include a barrier layer and a conductive material, and is electrically coupled to the underlying conductive feature (e.g., gate electrodes **102** and/or silicide region **110** in the illustrated embodiment). The contacts **114** are electrically coupled to the gate electrodes **102** and may be referred to as gate contacts, and the contacts **112** are electrically coupled to the silicide regions **110** and may be referred to as source/drain contacts. The barrier layer may include titanium, titanium nitride, tantalum, tantalum nitride, or the like. The conductive material **118** may be copper, a copper alloy, silver, gold, tungsten, cobalt, aluminum, nickel, or the like. A planarization process, such as a CMP, may be performed to remove excess material from a surface of the second ILD **106**.

(64) FIGS. **21A-C** illustrate an embodiments having three nanostructures for illustrative purposes, and in some embodiments more or fewer nanostructures may be formed. For example, FIGS. **21D-E** illustrate cross-sectional views of a device similar to the ones illustrated in FIGS. **21A-B**,

wherein like reference numerals refer to like features, having two first nanostructures **52A-B** and two second nanostructures **54A-B** are disposed over the fins **66**.

(65) FIGS. **22A-24B** illustrate various manufacturing steps according to some embodiments. The process illustrated in FIGS. **22A-24B** assume processes similar to those discussed above with reference to FIGS. **2-11C** were previously performed. Accordingly, after first inner spacers **90** are formed as discussed above with reference to FIGS. **11A-11C**, processing may proceed to FIGS. **22A-22B** wherein bottom dielectric layers **95** are formed along a bottom of the first recesses **86**. The bottom dielectric layers **95** may reduce substrate leakage and well isolation leakage.

(66) In some embodiments, the bottom dielectric layers **95** may be formed by depositing a dielectric material layer, such as silicon nitride, silicon carbon nitride, silicon oxycarbonitride, or the like, using techniques such as ALD, PVD, CVD, or the like. The dielectric material layer may be initially formed over the masks **78**, along the sidewalls of the first spacers **81**, and along a bottom and sidewall surfaces of the first recesses **86** (e.g., a top surface of the substrate **50** and sidewalls of the second nanostructures **54** and the first inner spacers **90**). An implantation process may be performed to implant ions, such as carbon, oxygen, germanium, or combinations thereof, into the dielectric material layer along the horizontal surfaces such that dielectric material layer on the vertical surfaces such as along the sidewalls of the second nanostructures **54**, the first inner spacers **90**, and the first spacers **81** are implanted less or are substantially free of the ions. The implanted ions may lower the etch rate of the implanted portions of the dielectric material layer (e.g., portions of the dielectric material layer along the bottom of the first recesses **86**) as compared to the un-implanted portions of the dielectric material layer along the sidewalls of the second nanostructures **54**, the first inner spacers **90**, and the first spacers **81**. A subsequent etch process removes the dielectric layer from the sidewalls of the second nanostructures **54**, the first inner spacers **90**, the masks **78**, and the first spacers **81**, while leaving the dielectric material layer along the bottom of the first recesses **86** to form the bottom dielectric layers **95** as illustrated in FIG. **22B**. The above description provide one method of forming the bottom dielectric layers **95**, while other methods are possible.

(67) In FIGS. **23A-B**, the seeding layers **91** are formed in the first recesses **86** by similar methods as discussed previously with respect to FIGS. **12A-12B**. In some embodiments, as shown in FIG. **23B**, the seeding layers **91** are continuous U-shaped layers, with sidewalls covering the sidewalls of the second nanostructures **54** and the sidewalls of the first inner spacers **90**. The bottom portions of the seeding layers **91** may be in direct contact with top surfaces of the bottom dielectric layers **95**.

(68) Thereafter, processes similar to those discussed above with reference to FIGS. **13A-21C** may be performed to, for example, form epitaxial source/drain regions **92**, the first ILD **96**, gate electrodes **102**, the second ILD **106**, contacts **112**, and contacts **114**. FIGS. **24A-B** illustrate cross-sectional views of a device similar to the ones illustrated in FIGS. **21B-C**, wherein like reference numerals refer to like features. As illustrated in FIGS. **24A-B**, the bottom dielectric layers **95** are disposed between the substrate **50** and the seeding layers **91**. By forming the bottom dielectric layers **95** under the epitaxial source/drain regions **92**, the substrate **50** is electrically isolated from the epitaxial source/drain region **92**, which reduces substrate leakage and well isolation leakage, thereby improves the overall performance of the nano-FETs.

(69) The embodiments described here have some advantages. For example, seeding layers may be formed over the sidewalls of nanostructures and gate inner spacers, and a substrate, prior to the formation of epitaxial source/drain regions over the seeding layers. By forming the seeding layers, the nucleation sites for the growth of the epitaxial source/drain regions are more abundant and more evenly distributed, which leads to increased uniformity of the epitaxial source/drain regions and reduced defects, such as voids and stacking faults, thereby improves the overall performance of the nano-FETs.

(70) In an embodiment, a semiconductor device includes a plurality of nanostructures over a

substrate; a gate structure wrapping around the plurality of nanostructures; a source/drain region adjacent the plurality of nanostructures; inner spacers between the source/drain region and the gate structure, wherein the source/drain region includes a first semiconductor layer covering sidewalls of the plurality of nanostructures and sidewalls of the inner spacers, wherein a cross-section of the first semiconductor layer is a continuous U-shaped semiconductor layer, wherein the first semiconductor layer is polycrystalline; and a second semiconductor layer over the first semiconductor layer, wherein the second semiconductor layer has a higher concentration of a first dopant than the first semiconductor layer. In an embodiment, the second semiconductor layer is monocrystalline. In an embodiment, the first semiconductor layer is in direct contact with the substrate. In an embodiment, the semiconductor device further includes a dielectric layer between the first semiconductor layer and the substrate, wherein the dielectric layer is in direct contact with the first semiconductor layer. In an embodiment, the first semiconductor layer is free of the first dopant. In an embodiment, a concentration of the first dopant in the first semiconductor layer is greater than 0 and less than 5×10^{19} atoms/cm³. In an embodiment, a concentration of the first dopant in the second semiconductor layer is greater than 2×10^{21} atoms/cm³. In an embodiment, the first dopant is phosphorus. In an embodiment, the first semiconductor layer has a thickness in a range between 0.5 nm and 3 nm.

(71) In an embodiment, a method of forming a semiconductor device includes forming a stack of nanostructures over a substrate; forming a recess through the stack of nanostructures; depositing a first semiconductor layer in the recess, wherein the first semiconductor layer is amorphous; annealing the first semiconductor layer, wherein the annealing crystallizes a first portion of the first semiconductor layer; and depositing a second semiconductor layer over the first portion of the first semiconductor layer. In an embodiment, forming the first semiconductor layer further includes doping the first semiconductor layer with a dopant of a first conductivity type, wherein the first semiconductor layer has a first dopant concentration. In an embodiment, forming the second semiconductor layer further includes doping the second semiconductor layer with a dopant of the first conductivity type, wherein the second semiconductor layer has a second dopant concentration. In an embodiment, second dopant concentration is greater than the first dopant concentration. In an embodiment, the first portion of the first semiconductor layer is polycrystalline after annealing. In an embodiment, the method further includes removing a second portion of the first semiconductor layer before depositing the second semiconductor layer.

(72) In an embodiment, a method of forming a semiconductor device includes forming a semiconductor stack, the semiconductor stack includes a plurality of sacrificial layers; and a plurality of nanostructures, wherein the plurality of sacrificial layers and the plurality of nanostructures are disposed on each other in an alternating fashion; forming a gate structure on the semiconductor stack; etching the semiconductor stack to form a recess adjacent the gate structure; forming a plurality of inner spacers on sidewalls of the plurality of sacrificial layers; and forming a source/drain region includes forming a first semiconductor layer in the recess, wherein the first semiconductor layer is formed on sidewalls of the plurality of nanostructures and sidewalls of the plurality of inner spacers, and wherein the first semiconductor layer comprises an amorphous semiconductor layer; crystallizing a portion of the first semiconductor layer; and forming a second semiconductor layer on the crystallized portion of first semiconductor layer. In an embodiment, the second semiconductor layer is crystalline. In an embodiment, forming the first semiconductor layer includes forming the first semiconductor layer along sidewalls of the gate structure. In an embodiment, after crystallizing, removing the first semiconductor layer from sidewalls of the gate structure. In an embodiment, the method further includes depositing a dielectric layer in the recess before forming the first semiconductor layer, wherein forming the first semiconductor layer comprises forming the first semiconductor layer over the dielectric layer.

(73) The foregoing outlines features of several embodiments so that those skilled in the art may better understand the aspects of the present disclosure. Those skilled in the art should appreciate

that they may readily use the present disclosure as a basis for designing or modifying other processes and structures for carrying out the same purposes and/or achieving the same advantages of the embodiments introduced herein. Those skilled in the art should also realize that such equivalent constructions do not depart from the spirit and scope of the present disclosure, and that they may make various changes, substitutions, and alterations herein without departing from the spirit and scope of the present disclosure.

Claims

1. A method of forming a semiconductor device, the method comprising: forming a stack of nanostructures over a substrate; forming a recess through the stack of nanostructures; depositing a first semiconductor layer in the recess, wherein the first semiconductor layer is amorphous; annealing the first semiconductor layer, wherein the annealing crystallizes a first portion of the first semiconductor layer; and depositing a second semiconductor layer over the first portion of the first semiconductor layer.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein forming the first semiconductor layer further comprises: doping the first semiconductor layer with a dopant of a first conductivity type, wherein the first semiconductor layer has a first dopant concentration.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein forming the second semiconductor layer further comprises: doping the second semiconductor layer with a dopant of the first conductivity type, wherein the second semiconductor layer has a second dopant concentration.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the second dopant concentration is greater than the first dopant concentration.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the first portion of the first semiconductor layer is polycrystalline after annealing.
6. The method of claim 1, further comprising: removing a second portion of the first semiconductor layer before depositing the second semiconductor layer.
7. A method of forming a semiconductor device, the method comprising: forming a semiconductor stack, the semiconductor stack comprising: a plurality of sacrificial layers; and a plurality of nanostructures, wherein the plurality of sacrificial layers and the plurality of nanostructures are disposed on each other in an alternating fashion; forming a gate structure on the semiconductor stack; etching the semiconductor stack to form a recess adjacent the gate structure; forming a plurality of inner spacers on sidewalls of the plurality of sacrificial layers; and forming a source/drain region comprising: forming a first semiconductor layer in the recess, wherein the first semiconductor layer is formed on sidewalls of the plurality of nanostructures and sidewalls of the plurality of inner spacers, and wherein the first semiconductor layer comprises an amorphous semiconductor layer; crystallizing a portion of the first semiconductor layer; and forming a second semiconductor layer on the crystallized portion of the first semiconductor layer.
8. The method of claim 7, wherein the second semiconductor layer is crystalline.
9. The method of claim 7, wherein forming the first semiconductor layer comprises forming the first semiconductor layer along sidewalls of the gate structure.
10. The method of claim 9, further comprising: after crystallizing, removing the first semiconductor layer from the sidewalls of the gate structure.
11. The method of claim 7, further comprising: depositing a dielectric layer in the recess before forming the first semiconductor layer, wherein forming the first semiconductor layer comprises forming the first semiconductor layer over the dielectric layer.
12. A method of forming a semiconductor device, the method comprising: forming a stack of nanostructures over a substrate; forming a recess through the stack of nanostructures; and forming a source/drain region in the recess comprising: forming a first semiconductor layer on sidewalls of the stack of nanostructures, wherein the first semiconductor layer is polycrystalline; and forming a

second semiconductor layer on the first semiconductor layer, wherein the second semiconductor layer is monocrystalline.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the first semiconductor layer is U-shaped in a cross-sectional view.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein the first semiconductor layer comprises a first dopant of a first concentration, wherein the second semiconductor layer comprises the first dopant of a second concentration, and wherein the second concentration is higher than the first concentration.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the first dopant is phosphorus.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein the first concentration is in a range between 0 and 5×10^{19} atoms/cm³.

17. The method of claim 14, wherein the second concentration is greater than 2×10^{21} atoms/cm³.

18. The method of claim 12, wherein forming the first semiconductor layer comprises: depositing the first semiconductor layer as an amorphous layer; and annealing the first semiconductor layer to crystallize the first semiconductor layer.

19. The method of claim 12, wherein the first semiconductor layer is in contact with the substrate.

20. The method of claim 12, further comprising forming a dielectric layer on the substrate, wherein the first semiconductor layer is in contact with the dielectric layer.
