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Darden Clean Energy Project (23-OPT-02C)

Monthly Compliance Report No. 8,
Reporting Period: January 2026

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February 2026



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1 Introduction

The Darden Clean Energy Project (DCEP) is a 1,150 MW solar photovoltaic (PV) facility, a 4,600 MW-hour battery energy storage system (BESS), a step-up substation, a generation-intertie line, and a switchyard on approximately 9,500 acres in western Fresno County, California.

Provided by California AB 205, the California Energy Commission (CEC) has the statutory authority to certify solar photovoltaic, and other facilities, for construction and operation in lieu of any permit, certificate, or similar document required by a state, local, or regional agency, or federal agency, to the extent permitted by federal law, for those facilities, that Opt-in to a thorough review process by CEC staff. DCEP was certified for construction and operation by the CEC on June 11, 2025. Pursuant to the Conditions of Certification (COCs) identified in the CEC's Staff Assessment and Final Order certified on June 12, 2025, and published to the project's docket (23-OPT-02), this is the Monthly Compliance Report (MCR) to the CEC's Compliance Project Manager (CPM). This MCR will include details on recent or upcoming submittals to the CPM, Delegate Chief Building Official (DCBO), and/or other relevant authorities pursuant to the requirements outlined in the COCs.

Project construction activities at the Breaker-and-a-Half (BAAH) in January included ongoing general site grading and contouring to prepare the site for foundation pad construction (Section 4.1). Steel poles were delivered and staged on site within the Limits of Disturbance (LOD). Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) training was provided verbally, in person, or via recorded WEAP, as needed, for biological, paleontological, and cultural resources (Appendix A). The summary table for January WEAP attendance and the cumulative tally of staff participation in the WEAP training are included in Appendix A. Biological resources monitoring occurred daily in January, and paleontological and cultural monitoring occurred when earthwork required monitoring. The summary table of daily monitoring activities is provided as Appendix B.

Pre-seeding activities continued throughout the Photovoltaic-BESS facility (PVB) in January and included disking, soil amendments and treatments, compaction, development of access roads, and establishment of staging/laydown areas (Appendix B). Gen-tie tree clearing, mulching, and stump grinding continued throughout January. Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) have been staked throughout the project site, including permanent avoidance ESAs for protected Swainson's hawk trees and permanent avoidance ESAs for burrowing owl colonies along the north and southeast of the property. Biological monitoring was conducted daily throughout January. No paleontological or cultural monitoring has been required to date. WEAP trainings have been provided verbally, in-person, or via the recorded WEAP, as needed, for biological resources (Appendix A).

2 Key Events

Project: Darden Clean Energy Project

Docket Number: 23-OPT-02C

Compliance Project Manager: Joseph Douglas

2.1 Master Key Events List

Table 1 Key Events List

Event Description	Date
Certification Date	6/12/2025
Finalize Land Sale Transaction	10/15/2025
On-line Date	3/31/2028
Site Activities	
LNTP Issued for BAAH	10/24/2025
Start Site Mobilization/Construction (Harlan Switchyard only)	10/29/2025
Began staking Limits of Disturbance (COC BIO-7)	10/31/2025
CEC Approval for Pre-seeding Activities Issued	11/25/2025
Start Site Assessment/Pre-construction/Pre-Seeding	12/1/2025
Start Site Mobilization/Construction (Darden)	2/1/2026
Begin Driving Steel Foundations	3/31/2026
Begin Installation of Major Equipment	4/15/2026
First Start/Energizing of PV Array or BESS	4/22/2027
Obtain Building Occupation Permit	5/19/2028
Start Commercial Operation	3/31/2028
Complete All Construction	3/24/2028
Transmission Line Activities	
Gen-tie Route Tree Clearing	12/8/2025
Start Transmission Line Construction	4/13/2026
Complete Transmission Line Construction	3/24/2027
Synchronization with Grid and Interconnection	4/22/2027

3 Monthly Compliance Report Required Documents

Table 2 provides a list of documents and information required to be submitted with each Monthly Compliance Report.

Table 2 Monthly Compliance Report Submittal Requirements

COC Number	Document or Description	Location in MCR
AQ-SC-3	Fugitive Dust Control	Mortenson has continued to conduct trainings, provide available resources, monitor site conditions, and implement dust control measures (such as water trucks for non-stabilized/seeded ground) as required by AQ-SC-3.
BIO-5, PAL-5, CUL-3, SWITCH CUL-3	Master WEAP Training Attendance List	Appendix A
BIO-2	Summary of daily monitoring activities	Appendix B
BIO-6, PAL-6, SWITCH CUL-4	Implementation of BRMIMP Measures survey results, construction activities that were monitored, non-compliance incidences and resolution, species observed, sensitive paleontological or cultural resources observed	Appendix B There are no non-compliance incidents to report for the month of January 2026.
BIO-7	General Impact Avoidance Measures	During all work activities, monitors ensured avoidance measures were implemented on site, including staking limits of disturbance, ensuring BMPs were in place, capping staged pipes, containing and removing trash, ensuring ESA buffers were avoided, maintaining speed limits, ensuring dust suppression was applied, and implementing SWPPP procedures as needed during storm events.
BIO-10	SWHA Plans	Buffer reduction request submitted on December 11, 2025, was conditionally approved by the CPM on January 16, 2026.
BIO-12	BUOW Plan	Biological monitoring of work activities near BUOW ESAs was conducted in January. No infractions occurred. ESA signage and barriers are in place to demarcate the ESA boundaries. BUOW DBs conducted inspections of blocked burrows and confirmed none were unblocked. To mitigate for the eviction of five active BUOW burrows, six artificial burrows were installed at the following location: 36.455016, -120.188589; leaving one surplus artificial burrow available for future mitigation needs following nesting season.

IP Darden I, LLC and Affiliates
Darden Clean Energy Project (23-OPT-02C)

COC Number	Document or Description	Location in MCR
		The BUOW carcass discovered and reported to the CEC on 12/5/2026 was received by CDFW. No further information has been provided by CDFW.
		Buffer reduction request submitted on December 11, 2025, was conditionally approved by the CPM on January 16, 2026.
BIO-14	American badger AMMs	AMBA AMMs implemented in accordance with the BRMIMP include den monitoring with infrared cameras, den exclusion/blocking as appropriate, and excavation of unoccupied dens. All excavations have been confirmed to be negative for AMBA occupancy based on camera monitoring and have been collapsed or blocked as appropriate.
COM-5	Compliance Matrix	Appendix D
COM-6	January MCR	Section 2, Table 1 Key Events List
	Harlan Switching Station Compliance Report January 2026 (Starflower)	Appendix C; Page 3
	Darden – PVB: Minor Incident Report	Appendix E: At approximately 2:30 p.m. on 1/22/25, the Mortenson Superintendent was notified by a trade partner of a hydraulic fluid spill of approximately 15 gallons on site, due to the release of a hydraulic hose. The environmental incident took place in Area 14. Work was stopped, and the area was secured. An immediate response was initiated to remove and contain the impacted soil in a proper receptacle for disposal as indicated in the SMP and CWMP. Remedial actions will include developing action plans, conducting more detailed pre-use inspections to help prevent future spills, and conducting closer inspections of subcontractor equipment. On-site environmental contact for Intersect was notified. See report details and photographs in Appendix E.
CIVIL-1	Statement of Certification of DBCO Approval of CIVIL-01 Documents (Drainage Structure Design, Grading Plan, Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan, SWPPP, Soils, Geotechnical, or Foundation Investigations Reports	Appendix F
GEN-2	Harlan Switching Station Compliance Report January 2026 (Starflower)	Appendix C; Page 3
	January MCR	Section 4.1.2, Table 4 DCEP Schedule Progress Tracker
GEN-06	DCBO’s Approval of the Qualifications of All Special Inspectors	Appendix G
MECH-1	Copy of Transmittal Letter Conveying DCBO Inspection Approvals	Appendix I

COC Number	Document or Description	Location in MCR
SWITCH-AQ-1 / AQ-SC-4	Harlan Switching Station Compliance Report January 2026 (Starflower)	Appendix C; Page 17
SWITCH-GHG-01 / AQ-SC-5	Harlan Switching Station Compliance Report January 2026 (Starflower)	Appendix C; Page 19
	Darden – PVB	Appendix H: Equipment List
WATER-6	Harlan Switching Station Compliance Report January 2026 (Starflower)	Appendix C; Page 21
	Darden – PVB	The Darden Clean Energy Project has used a total of 44,400 gallons of water for the month of January
Worker Safety-3	Harlan Switching Station Compliance Report January 2026 (Starflower)	Appendix C (Includes NOISE-02, Worker Safety-11, and SWITCH HAZ-02); Page 22
	Darden - PVB Safety Inspection forms	Monthly Safety Inspection Report: Luis Munoz of M. A. Mortenson is the designated Construction Safety Supervisor during the month of January 2026 for the Darden Clean Energy Project. All supporting information has been provided and approved through the month of January in compliance with WS-3. On-site safety and WEAP training are ongoing and have been provided to all on-site and off-site employees, including subcontractors, throughout January 2026. A superintendent and/or safety representative has been on-site at all times during construction and testing activities. This is a standard that M. A. Mortenson will continue to implement throughout the life of the project. Safety Inspections have been completed at least weekly.

4 Reporting Period Updates

The following updates are for the Reporting Period of January 1 through 31.

4.1 Key Construction Events

4.1.1 Harlan (BAAH) Switchyard

The Harlan (BAAH) Switchyard is currently under active construction, and the following activities occurred in January:

- Continuation of critical earthwork operations, including over-excavation of the switchyard pad to achieve design subgrade elevations, followed by cut, fill, and compaction processes to ensure proper soil density and stability
- Access road successfully completed
- Steel deliveries for above-grade construction began, with approximately 90% of yard steel received

Table 3 Current progress toward major construction tasks is as follows

Task	Status
Site preparation BMPs	100% complete
Stripping organics across site	100% complete
Pad over-excavation	17% complete
Pad cut / fill / compaction	7% complete
Access road installation	100% complete

The summary WEAP training attendance log is provided in Attachment A. Twenty-three days of biological, cultural, and paleontological monitoring were performed at the BAAH (Attachment B).

4.1.2 Darden I through IV Photovoltaic-BESS (PVB) Site and Gen-tie

Activities conducted in January consisted of:

- **Civil:** Activities for January 2026 included finishing the Initial Site Preparation Scope of Work (SOW): Disking of Soils, Application of Soil Amendment, Superficial Leveling by Till & Pack, and Seeding, BMP install, including: Construction Site Entrances and Perimeter Control e.g., Silt Fence/Fiber Rolls, Laydown Yard Install, and Access Road Install (Table 4).
- **Gen-Tie:** ROW work was completed between Structures 38-23 and 11-9, with field activities running from January 1 through January 31. The crew successfully finalized all required clearing and access preparations within this segment during that period. Additionally, mulching and stump grinding were completed from Structures 38-29.

The summary WEAP training attendance log is provided in Attachment A. Twenty-two days of biological monitoring were performed at the PVB project site (Attachment B).

Table 4 DCEP Progress Tracker

Task Name	Installed to date	Total	UOM	Percent complete
E&S Control - Silt Fence	9266	44100	LF	21.01%

Task Name	Installed to date	Total	UOM	Percent complete
Install Entrances	0.75	3	EA	25.00%
Project Office & Yard Complex	12.25	77	AC	15.91%
Place & Compact Agg Base - Substation	5	9500	LF	0.05%
Disking Aerating	8640	8640	AC	100.00%
Till & Pack	8640	8640	AC	100.00%
Seeding	8640	8640	AC	100.00%
Gen-Tie Clearing	81	81	EA	100.00%
Gen-Tie Mulching	81	81	EA	100.00%
Gen-Tie Stump Grinding	65	81	EA	80.24%

4.2 Other Governmental Agency Filings and Submittals

Coordination is ongoing with Fresno County Staff, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District staff, and Fresno County Fire Protection District, as needed, regarding applicable filings and permits needed.

Filings Submitted to Other Agencies for the PVB project site:

- Encroachment Permits:
 - Gen-Tie Entrances – Pending Fresno County Review
 - Road Improvement – Pending Fresno County Review

4.3 Additions to Onsite Compliance File

The following are additions to the on-site compliance file for the DCEP:

- BIO-8: Nesting Bird Management Plan
- CIVIL-1: Statement of Certification of DCBO Approval (Appendix F)
- GEN-06: Copy of DCBO's approval of the qualifications of all special inspectors
- NOISE-02: Noise Pollution Training Log
- SWITCH HAZ-01: Monthly SPCC Inspection; Waste Management
- SWITCH HAZ-02: Emergency Fire & Protection Training Log; Fire Extinguisher Inspection Form
- SWITCH WASTE-01: Waste Diversion Training Log
- SWITCH WATER-01: Weekly & Post Precipitation BMP Inspections
- TRANS-02: Haul Permits Log; Hazardous Waste Delivery Log
- TRANS-03: Roadway Inspection, pre-mobilization
- Worker Safety-03: General Site Safety Inspection & Certification
- Worker Safety-11: Valley Fever Training Log; Air Quality Monitoring & Inspections

4.4 Conditions of Certification Updates

This section summarizes only the significant updates to the status of compliance for each COC, categorized by technical resource area. Minor updates and progress comments are included in Attachment E, Compliance Matrix.

4.4.1 Biological Resources

BIO-1 Designated Biologist Selection.

The project owner shall assign at least one Designated Biologist to the project (multiple personnel may be required to meet the license conditions). The project owner shall submit the resume of the proposed Designated Biologist, with at least three references and contact information, to the Energy Commission Compliance Project Manager (CPM) for approval.

- Additional staff resumes for DB status approval submitted to the CEC on 1/29/26

BIO-08: Nesting Bird Management Plan (NBMP)

The project owner shall submit the NBMP to the CPM at least 30 days before the start of site mobilization activities.

- Re-submitted to CEC on 1/22/2026.
- Approved by CEC on 1/23/2026.

BIO-09: Swainson's Hawk Conservation Strategy and Foraging Habitat Revegetation and Management Plan

No fewer than 60 days prior to the start of pre-construction site mobilization the project owner shall submit to the CPM, for review and approval, a draft Swainson's Hawk Conservation Strategy and a draft Foraging Habitat Revegetation and Management Plan to be included the Swainson's Hawk Conservation Strategy and Foraging Habitat Revegetation and Management Plan (Plan). The Plan shall be finalized prior to the start of ground disturbance. The project owner shall submit the annual monitoring reports to the CPM for review within 30 days after the end of each reporting period.

- Submitted revised draft 2 of Foraging Habitat Revegetation and Management Plan to CEC on 1/6/2026, and received comments from CEC on 1/15/2026. Submitted revised draft 3 to CEC on 1/21/2026, and received comments from CEC on 1/23/2026. Submitted revised draft 4 to CEC on 1/29/2026.
- Received comments from CEC for draft Swainson's Hawk Conservation Strategy on 1/15/2026. Submitted revised draft 2 to CEC on 1/20/2026. Received comments from CEC on 1/23/2026. Submitted revised draft 3 to CEC on 1/29/2026.

BIO-10: Swainson's Hawk Nest Abandonment Contingency Plan

The Designated Biologist shall prepare a Swainson's hawk Nest Abandonment Contingency Plan and submit it to the CPM for written approval at least 45 days prior to the start of preconstruction site mobilization.

- Submitted revised draft to CEC on 1/7/2026.
- Approved by CEC on 1/15/2026.

BIO-12: Buffer Reduction Request

If the Designated Biologist determines that specific project activities are not likely to affect the burrowing owl using known or nesting burrowing owl burrows due to the nature of the specific project activities and/or due to objects or topography that might reduce potential noise disturbance and obstruct view of the project activities from the nest, then the Designated Biologist may email a written

request to the CPM to reduce the buffer distance with documented observational data (Buffer Reduction Request). The CPM will review each Buffer Reduction Request on a case-by-case basis and provide a determination in response to each Buffer Reduction Request in writing. The CPM may request additional and/or ongoing biological monitoring prior to approving a Buffer Reduction Request.

- Buffer reduction request submitted on December 11, 2025, was conditionally approved by the CPM on January 16, 2026.

4.4.2 Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

GHG-01: Identification of Compliant Refrigerant Cooling Fluid Installation and Estimated GHG Emissions

To ensure compliance with this condition the project owner must identify and confirm the compliant refrigerant cooling fluid installation, along with an estimated annual greenhouse gas emissions in metric tons of CO₂-equivalent (MTCO₂e) to be submitted to the CEC CPM for verification, within 30 days prior to installation of HVAC. Once confirmed and approved by the CEC CPM, this verification is considered complete.

- Submitted confirmation of compliant refrigerant cooling fluid design to CEC on 1/13/2026.
- Received comments from CEC on 1/15/2026. Resubmitted to CEC on 1/22/2026.

4.4.3 Compliance Conditions and Compliance Monitoring Plan

COM-05: Compliance Matrix

The project owner is required to submit a compliance matrix to the CPM with each MCR and ACR.

- Refer to Section 5, Compliance Matrix.

COM-06: First Monthly Compliance Report

During pre-construction, construction, or closure, the project owner or authorized agent shall submit an electronic searchable version of the MCR to the CPM within 10 business days after the end of each reporting month.

- This MCR is being submitted in accordance with COM-6.

4.4.4 Facility Design

CIVIL-01: Drainage Structure Design, Grading Plan, Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan, SWPPP, Soils, Geotechnical, or Foundation Investigations Reports

At least 15 days (or project owner- and DCBO-approved alternative time frame) prior to the start of site grading the project owner shall submit the documents described above to the DCBO for design review and approval. In the next MCR following the DCBO's approval, the project owner shall submit a written statement certifying that the documents have been approved by the DCBO.

- DCBO approval with conditions received on 1/14/2026. See Appendix F.

GEN-06: Copy of DCBO's Approval of Qualifications of All Special Inspectors

At least 15 days (or project owner- and DCBO-approved alternative time frame) prior to the start of an activity requiring special inspection, the project owner shall submit to the DCBO for review and approval, with a copy to the CPM, the name(s) and qualifications of the certified weld inspector(s), or other certified special inspector(s) assigned to the project to perform one or more of the duties set forth above. The project owner shall also submit to the CPM a copy of the DCBO's approval of the qualifications of all special inspectors in the next MCR.

- Submitted DCBO approval to CEC on 1/5/2026. See Appendix G.

4.4.5 Geology, Paleontology, and Minerals

PAL-01: Resume and Cover Letter for Paleontological Resources Monitors (PRM)

At least 30 days prior to ground disturbance, the PRS or project owner shall provide a letter with resumes naming anticipated PRMs for the project. The letter shall state that the identified PRMs meet the minimum qualifications for paleontological resource monitoring as required by this condition of certification. If additional PRMs are needed during the project, the PRS shall provide additional letters and resumes to the CPM. The letter shall be provided to the CPM for approval no later than one week prior to the monitor's beginning on-site duties.

- Approval of additional PRMs received from CEC on 1/28/2026.

4.4.6 Noise and Vibration

NOISE-06: Pile Driving Control

At least 15 days prior to first pile driving, the project owner shall submit to the CPM a description of the pile driving technique to be employed, including calculations showing its projected noise impacts and peak particle velocity at monitoring locations R-5, R-8, and R-13.

- Submitted to CEC on 1/2/2026.

At least 10 days prior to first production pile driving, the project owner shall notify residences in the vicinity of the project. The notification may be in the form of letters, or other effective means, as approved by the CPM. In this notification, the project owner shall state that it will perform this activity in a manner to reduce the potential for any project-related noise and vibration complaints.

- Submitted copy of letter to be submitted to nearby residences to CEC on 1/13/2026.

4.4.7 Solid Waste Management

WASTE-01: Construction Waste Management Plan (CWMP)

No less than 30 days prior to the start of site mobilization, the project owner shall submit the Construction Waste Management Plan to the CPM for approval.

- Submitted revised CWMP to CEC on 1/30/2026.

4.4.8 Transmission Line Safety and Nuisance

TLN-01: Electrical Engineer Letter Affirming Transmission Line Compliance

At least 30 days before starting construction of the transmission lines or related structures and facilities, the project owner shall submit to the compliance project manager (CPM) a letter signed by a California-registered electrical engineer affirming that the lines will be constructed according to the requirements stated in the condition.

- Submitted to CEC on 1/15/2026.

4.4.9 Water Resources

WATER-03: Flood Hazard Reduction: Plan to Install Underground Wiring

No later than thirty (30) days prior to start of construction, the project owner shall submit a plan to install underground wiring to PV panels in compliance with Ordinance 15.48.080 (A)(2)(a) to the CPM for review and approval and to Fresno County for review.

- Resubmitted to CEC on 1/12/2026, following Fresno County's confirmation of compliance on 1/9/2026.

4.4.10 Worker Safety and Fire Protection

Worker Safety-01: Project Construction Health and Safety Program

At least 90 days prior to the start of construction, the project owner shall submit to the CPM for review and approval a copy of the Project Construction and Safety and Health Program. The project owner shall provide to the CPM a copy of letters from the FCFPD detailing resolved comments on the Construction Fire Prevention Plan, the Emergency Action Plan, and Emergency Response Plan.

- Resubmitted to CEC for PV/BESS on 1/21/2026.

Worker Safety-05: Laboratory Findings for Groundwater Testing

At least 30 days prior to the planned use of the well water, the project owner shall submit the laboratory findings to the CPM for review and approval of the use of the well water.

- Submitted clarification letter from Deluge to CEC on 1/29/2026.

4.5 Two-Month Look-Ahead

Over the next two months, the following compliance activities are scheduled, and the project owner will make the following compliance filings, as needed:

- BIO-8: Nesting Bird Preconstruction Surveys, as needed, depending on work schedule and ongoing site disturbance. Surveys will be performed according to COC BIO-8(2)
- BIO-10: Swainson's Hawk Preconstruction Nesting Survey
- NOISE-6: Notification to residents in project vicinity - prior to first pile driving
- STRUC-1: Final Plant Design, Specifications, and Calculations for substations, BESS, and O&M buildings

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- SWITCH GHG-01: Implementation of Greenhouse Emissions Reduction; Combustion Engine Emissions Log
- SWITCH HAZ-01: Monthly SPCC Inspection
- SWITCH HAZ-02: Emergency & Fire Protection Training Log; Fire Extinguisher Inspection Form
- SWITCH WASTE 01: Waste Diversion Training Log; Monthly Waste Diversion Log; Construction Waste Log
- SWITCH WATER-01: Weekly & Post-precipitation BMP Inspections
- TRANS-02: Haul Permits Log; Hazardous Waste Delivery Log
- TSE-03: Final Design Plans, Specifications, and Calculations for Equipment and Systems of the Power Plant Switchyard, Outlet Line, and Termination
- TSE-04: Design Drawings, Specs, and Calculations for the Poles/Towers, Foundations, Anchor Bolts, Conductions, Grounding Systems, and Major Switchyard Equipment
- WATER-5: Well Installation Permit and Well Completion Report
- WORKER SAFETY-03: General Site Safety Inspection & Certification
- WORKER SAFETY-11: Valley Fever Training Log; Air Quality Monitoring & Inspections

4.6 Project Incidents and Corrective Actions

No safety incidents have occurred, and no safety-related corrective actions have been required.

At approximately 2:30 p.m. on 1/22/25, the Mortenson Civil superintendent at the PVB project site was notified by a trade partner of a hydraulic fluid spill of approximately 15 gallons on site, due to the release of a hydraulic hose. The environmental incident took place at Area 14. Work was stopped, and the area was secured. An immediate response was initiated to remove and contain the impacted soil in a proper receptacle for disposal. Future action plans will include a more detailed pre-use inspection to help prevent spills. On-site environmental contact for Intersect was notified. See report details and photographs in Appendix E.

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Appendix A

Master WEAP Training Attendance List – January 2026

Appendix B

January 2026 - Daily Monitoring Summary Table

Appendix C

Harlan Switching Station Compliance Report – January 2026 (Starflower)

Appendix D

COM-5 COC Tracking Table

Appendix E

Minor Incident Report

Appendix F

Statement of Certification of DBCO Approval (CIVIL-01)

Appendix G

DCBO Approval of the Qualifications of All Special Inspectors (GEN-06)

Appendix H

Darden PVB Equipment List - January 2026

Appendix I

Copy of Transmittal Letter Conveying DCBO Inspection Approvals – MECH-1