

DOCKETED

Docket Number:	02-AFC-01C
Project Title:	Sonoran Energy Project (formerly Blythe Energy Project Phase II) - Compliance
TN #:	207174
Document Title:	Email from Palm Springs Fish & Wildlife Office
Description:	N/A
Filer:	Susan Fleming
Organization:	Fish and Wildlife Office/Jody Fraser
Submitter Role:	Public Agency
Submission Date:	1/4/2016 10:36:00 AM
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bottom:.0001pt;
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From: Martine, Andrea@Energy
Sent: Monday, January 04, 2016 9:48 AM
To: Fleming, Susan@Energy
Cc: Ali, Anwar@Energy
Subject: FW: Alta Gas Sonoran Energy Project
(Blythe
II)

From: Fraser, Jody [mailto:jody_fraser@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2015 3:09 PM
To: Martine, Andrea@Energy
Cc: Pete Sorensen; Mark Massar; Kim, Richard@Wildlife; massy@wapa.gov
Subject: Alta Gas Sonoran Energy Project (Blythe II)

Reference Number: FWS-ERIV-09B0033-16TA0109

Andrea,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Petition to Amend the subject project to ensure compliance with the original section 7 consultation and associated amendments conducted with the Western Area Power Administration and the Bureau of Land Management for impacts to the Mojave desert tortoise. Based

on our review of the information received and in our files, we have determined that the existing consultation and amendments for the project remain relevant and the conservation measures identified as part of the proposed action to offset impacts to desert tortoise have been fulfilled. The measures contained in those documents pertaining to avoidance and minimization of impacts to individual desert tortoises should continue to be implemented where necessary. Since the time of the original consultation, the Fish and Wildlife Service has updated protocols specific to desert tortoise; therefore, please refer the applicant to the following website for the most up-to-date guidance: <http://www.fws.gov/carlsbad/PalmSprings/DesertTortoise.html>.

In addition, data collected on projects with transmission infrastructure and water features suggest that impacts to resident and migratory birds can be significant. We recommend that the transmission line associated with this phase be buried underground, if possible, and that the evaporation ponds be eliminated from this phase and shared with the previously constructed phase that is located on adjacent lands. Finally, in order to comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, we recommend that Alta Gas work with the regulatory and wildlife agencies to develop and implement a Bird and Bat Conservation Strategy that includes a mortality monitoring component. Gathering of these data will help inform future management and guidance relative to these important resources.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Jody Fraser, Biologist

Palm Springs Fish and Wildlife Office

777 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way, Suite 208

Palm Springs, CA 92262

760.322.2070 x207

jody_fraser@fws.gov