Energy Commission Siting, Transmission, & Environmental Protection Division

FILE: 08-AFC-8A	
PROJECT TITLE: Hydrogen Energy California	
☒ Telephone: (661) 323-7957	☐ Meeting Location: Telephone Exchange
NAME: Aaron Nousaine	DATE: 12/13/2012 TIME: ~~11:35 a.m.~~
WITH: John Spaulding, Executive Secretary, Building Trades Council for Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties	
SUBJECT: Projects Impacting Labor Availability for the Hydrogen Energy California Project	

Mr. Nousaine spoke a second time with Mr. John Spalding of the Building Trades Council (BTC) for Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties. The conversation was in follow up to the one from September 28th, 2012. The topic of conversation was the cumulative impact of projects currently planned and proposed in the region on labor availability for the HECA project. Mr. Nousaine first asked whether Mr. Spalding was aware of any projects that he felt might interfere with labor availability for the HECA project and, if so, what types of labor (e.g. general construction, electricians, pipefitters, boilermakers, etc.) would be most affected. Mr. Spalding replied that he was unaware of any projects that would require the full breadth of skilled and unskilled trades used for the HECA project. In other words, he was unaware of any projects that are currently planned, proposed, or under development that would have a significant impact on labor availability for the HECA project. He described how the large number of workers required by the project, along with the relatively long construction period, means that many construction and craft workers would prefer employment on the HECA project over other employment options. While the California high-speed rail project would require a significant number of workers in trades also required by the HECA project, he is unsure as to when the Merced to Palmdale sections would begin construction. While he felt it is possible that the high-speed rail project could begin construction prior to completion of the HECA project, there were two reasons why it should be unlikely to affect labor availability for the HECA project. First, the unemployment remains high among construction workers, which makes it unlikely that either project would experience a shortfall of local labor. Second, the HECA project would most likely be fully staffed prior to the beginning of construction on the high-speed rail project, meaning that HECA would already have secured the required workforce under the existing Project Labor Agreement (PLA) with the BTC and affiliated local unions.

Mr. Nousaine then asked whether Mr. Spalding felt that it would be reasonable to exclude small-scale development projects (e.g. single family homes and small commercial developments) from the cumulative project list for socioeconomics due to their relatively small labor requirements and short construction schedules. Mr. Spalding confirmed that even a large number of small-scale projects would be unlikely to impact labor availability for the HECA project, because workers and contractors would prefer the long-term job security afforded by large scale projects like HECA. Mr. Spalding described how most residential and commercial developments also have labor force requirements that are different from those of the HECA project. For example, most of these projects use non-union labor. They also rely on general construction laborers and carpenters, compared to the more specialized trades required by the HECA project. This means that commercial and residential projects rely on labor supplies that are separate from those used by the HECA project. In other words, they would have no impact on the amount of labor made available through the participating local unions.

Mr. Nousaine then noted that staff have identified a large number of solar photovoltaic and wind power projects currently proposed in Kern County and its surrounding labor market area. He asked Mr. Spalding whether these projects would have an impact on labor availability for the HECA project. Mr. Spalding confirmed that the listed solar photovoltaic projects would employ mostly general construction workers (such as electricians, laborers, iron workers, etc.) certified to handle and install photovoltaic solar panels. They would require electricians for installation of power inverters and other essential wiring. Wind projects would employ mostly general construction workers, crane operators, and others who have received special certifications for the installation of wind turbine components. These special certifications, available through the community college system, along with the steady stream of planned and proposed projects, helps to ensure that these workers will continue to work almost exclusively on solar and wind power installation projects. While this makes them unavailable for work on projects like HECA, it should not overly interfere with the ability of the HECA project to find labor, given the high unemployment rate among construction workers and the large labor force available in the greater Bakersfield labor market area.

cc:	**Signed:**
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