

## CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

1516 NINTH STREET  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814-5512  
www.energy.ca.gov



August 11, 2008

Dear Librarian:

**DOCUMENT HANDLING OF THE PRELIMINARY STAFF ASSESSMENT  
FOR THE CPV SENTINEL ENERGY PROJECT  
APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION (07-AFC-3)**

The enclosed Preliminary Staff Assessment (PSA) contains the California Energy Commission staff's initial engineering and environmental evaluation of the proposed CPV Sentinel Energy Project. Please make this PSA available for those who may wish to be informed about the project. We request that you not allow the PSA or any of its contents to be removed from the library. To increase accessibility of the document, we ask, if possible, that you cross reference it as a general reference work under the title and author categories, as well as under such subjects as "Energy Commission," "electricity energy/generation," "power plant siting," or any other relevant subject. Please retain the enclosed letter to the public behind the front cover of the PSA.

The Energy Commission's siting process is open to the public and incorporates the input of the public as well as local, state and federal agencies. To facilitate public participation in our review process, the Commission distributes copies of staff documents such as the PSA to public libraries in communities near the proposed project, and in major cities throughout the state.

Thank you for your cooperation. If you have any questions, please contact John Kessler, Project Manager, at (916) 654-4679, or by e-mail at: [jkessler@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:jkessler@energy.state.ca.us)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eileen Allen".

EILEEN ALLEN  
Siting and Compliance Office Manager

DOCKET	
07-AFC-3	
DATE	AUG 11 2008
RECD.	AUG 13 2008

Enclosure

**CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION**

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SACRAMENTO, CA 95814-5512  
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August 11, 2008

To: MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE REVIEW OF THE CPV SENTINEL ENERGY PROJECT PRELIMINARY STAFF ASSESSMENT (07-AFC-3)**

The enclosed Preliminary Staff Assessment (PSA) contains the California Energy Commission staff's initial engineering and environmental evaluation of the CPV Sentinel Energy Project (CPV Sentinel) Application for Certification (07-AFC-3). With the exception of Soil and Water Resources, staff finds that the CPV Sentinel project would comply with all applicable laws, ordinances, regulations and standards. With the exception of Biological Resources and Soil and Water Resources, staff's preliminary conclusions are also that significant adverse direct, indirect or cumulative impacts are not likely to occur. The issues associated with the two technical areas in which staff is continuing its analysis, are summarized as follows:

- **Biology** – Staff has tentatively determined that operational-related impacts due to the use of groundwater in the Mission Creek Groundwater Subbasin may have significant direct and cumulative impacts on the mesquite hummocks vegetation community in the Willow Hole Conservation Area and the special-status species it supports. Staff is currently investigating whether this impact can be mitigated to a less than significant level. These mitigation measures could include a particular groundwater recharge schedule, participation by the applicant in a USFWS-sponsored deep irrigation system for the Willow Hole Conservation Area, and/or an alternative water supply.
- **Soil and Water** – The completion of staff's analysis of the proposed water supply plan is subject to obtaining and evaluating documentation indicating that the fresh water planned for importation and recharge into the Mission Creek Subbasin identified in the applicant's Implementation Plan is reasonably available and would be a reliable supply over the 30-year life of the project, and has been subject to appropriate California Environmental Quality Act review. Staff is also further considering the appropriate thresholds of significance for evaluating the applicant's water supply plan in light of local, regional and statewide water supply and water quality issues, including regional overdraft conditions.

On June 25, 2007, CPV Sentinel, LLC submitted an Application for Certification (AFC) to the California Energy Commission to construct and operate a simple-cycle (peaking) power plant. The CPV Sentinel Energy project (CPV Sentinel) is a proposed nominally rated 850 megawatt (MW) electrical generating facility that would encompass 37 acres of land situated within unincorporated Riverside County, California, adjacent to the Palm Springs northern city limits. The proposed project consists of eight natural gas-fired General Electric (GE) LMS100 combustion turbine generators (CTGs) operating in simple-cycle mode. The project will supply quick-start peaking capacity, energy, and ancillary services into the California Independent System Operator's (CAISO) Los Angeles Basin Local Capacity Requirement Area. The CAISO has identified this region as one needing

additional peaking capacity to meet resource adequacy requirements and ensure grid reliability.

The proposed project site is located approximately 1.3 miles east of State Route (SR) 62 (also referred to as Twentynine Palms Highway), 1.7 miles north of Interstate 10 (I-10), and 1.3 miles west of Indian Avenue. Powerline Roads North and South run along the south side of the property. Access to the site would be available from Dillon Road north onto the proposed access road to the project site. Access to Dillon Road is from the Dillon Road exit off SR 62 and from the Indian Avenue exit off I-10. The power plant, transmission lines, and portions of the gas line and construction laydown area would be located within unincorporated Riverside County. Portions of the construction laydown area and portions of the proposed gas line route would be located within the city of Palm Springs. The site is situated approximately 8 miles northwest of the center of Palm Springs and 4.5 miles west of the center of Desert Hot Springs.

The 37-acre proposed power plant site is currently vacant. The surrounding area is primarily characterized by industrial use with extensive development of wind energy and transmission infrastructure. The Devers substation is approximately 700 feet to the west of the proposed project site, and the Indigo Energy Facility is approximately 1.8 miles to the southeast. The proposed power plant site is zoned W2 (Controlled Development Area) and designated as PF (Public Facilities) in the Riverside County General Plan. Electrical power-generating facilities are permitted uses within this zoning district and General Plan designation.

Electricity generated by the proposed project would be delivered to the existing Southern California Edison (SCE) Devers substation via a 3,200-foot-long transmission line connecting the project switchyard to the Devers substation at the 220 kilovolt (kV) bus. It is currently anticipated that SCE will execute contracts with CPV Sentinel, LLC under which SCE will be responsible for final design, engineering, construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission line to the Devers substation. SCE will seek a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) from the California Public Utilities Commission for the line.

The applicant would be responsible for construction of a 3,200-foot-long road extending off Dillon Road to the project site and associated intersection widening at Dillon Road and the site access road. Fuel would be supplied to the project site via a 2.6-mile-long, 24-inch-diameter natural gas line extending from the existing Indigo Energy Facility to the CPV Sentinel site.

The proposed project would include a 3,200-foot-long potable water supply line extension to the project site from a current Mission Springs Water District's municipal line existing along Dillon Road. This water would be for human use at the CPV Sentinel site, not for power plant cooling. The proposed project would use a zero liquid discharge (ZLD) system, comprised of membrane-based wastewater treatment processes (microfiltration and reverse osmosis) coupled with a crystallizer system. This process would result in zero

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liquid wastewater discharge from the site. Under the proposed cooling water supply system, the project would pump groundwater via on-site or nearby wells within the Mission Creek Sub-basin. As defined in the applicant's Revised Water Supply Plan (AFC Supplement), groundwater used by the CPV Sentinel project would be replenished through the applicant's proposed Conservation Agreement and Implementation Agreement with the Desert Water Agency.

The Energy Commission is responsible for reviewing and ultimately approving or denying all applications for construction and operation of thermal electric power plants, 50 MW and greater, proposed for construction in California. The Energy Commission's facility certification process carefully examines public health and safety, environmental impacts and engineering aspects of proposed power plants, and all related facilities such as electric transmission lines and natural gas and water pipelines. The Energy Commission is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and produces several environmental and decision documents rather than an Environmental Impact Report.

The Energy Commission staff will conduct a publicly noticed workshop to discuss the PSA on a date to be determined, and which will be noticed separately. Based on the workshop, written comments received on the PSA, and additional information that will be gathered, the Energy Commission staff will revise the PSA and issue a Final Staff Assessment. The public and local, state and federal agencies are encouraged to participate. Written comments should be provided to John Kessler, Project Manager, by Friday, August 29, 2008, at the address on this letterhead or by email to [jkessler@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:jkessler@energy.state.ca.us).

If you desire information on participating in the Energy Commission's review of the project, please contact Elena Miller, the Energy Commission's Public Adviser, at (916) 654-4489 or toll free in California at (800) 822-6228, or by email at: [pao@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:pao@energy.state.ca.us). Technical or project schedule questions should be directed to John Kessler, Energy Commission Project Manager, at (916) 654-4679, or by email at: [jkessler@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:jkessler@energy.state.ca.us). If you need reasonable accommodation in terms of assistance, please contact Lourdes Quiroz of the Administrative Services Division at (916) 654-5146, or e-mail Lourdes at [lquiroz@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:lquiroz@energy.state.ca.us). The status of the project, copies of notices, and other relevant documents are also available on the Energy Commission's Internet web site at: <http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/sentinel/index.html>. News media inquiries should be directed to Assistant Director, Susanne Garfield, at (916) 654-4989, or by email at: [mediaoffice@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:mediaoffice@energy.state.ca.us).

**Note: Please retain this letter behind the front cover of the PSA. Thank You.**