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NATURAL RESOURCES

Assembly
California Legislature



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January 20, 2010

John Kessler, Project Manager
California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

George Meckfessel, Planning and Environmental Coordinator
Bureau of Land Management, Needles Field Office
1303 South U.S. Highway 95
Needles, CA 92363

DOCKET	
07-AFC-5	
DATE	01/20/10
RECD.	01/26/10

Re: Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System

Dear Mr. Meckfessel & Mr. Kessler,

BrightSource Energy's Ivanpah Solar Energy Generating System (ISEGS) project will bring needed economic development and jobs to California's High Desert, including my district. The project represents a tremendous opportunity for our region by itself, but is also an important first step in building the new solar industry that will greatly benefit our region. I support the Ivanpah SEGS project, and ask that the California Energy Commission (CEC) and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) issue permits for its prompt development.

The Ivanpah SEGS project will create 1,000 local jobs at the peak of construction and 86 permanent jobs, and will indirectly create more jobs needed to supply materials and services during the project's construction and operation. Over its thirty-year lifecycle, the project is expected to produce \$650 million in wages and \$400 million in state and local taxes. Additionally, wages and tax revenue would come from indirect jobs and economic activity spurred by the project.

When constructed, Ivanpah SEGS will produce more solar energy than all of the rooftop solar installed in the nation last year, and will more than double the amount of solar thermal energy produced in the U.S. today. It will produce enough clean energy to provide 150,000 homes in California with clean electricity free from fossil-fuel price volatility.

Ivanpah SEGS has been designed to minimize its environmental impacts. It will reduce water usage by 90 percent by using dry cooling, allowing Ivanpah to use approximately 30 times less water than other technologies. The project will also avoid more than 13 million tons of CO₂ emissions over its 30-year lifecycle, as well as 85 percent of the air emissions from an equally-sized natural gas plant. Its low-impact design reduces grading and minimizes need for concrete pads, keeping much of the site's vegetation in place. The project also makes use of the currently-used high-voltage transmission pathway that transects the site.

In recognition for its vitally important role in helping our nation meet its clean energy and economic goals, Ivanpah SEGS has been identified as a “fast-track” priority by the U.S. Department of Interior for obtaining federal stimulus benefits for California under the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The project has also been selected as the only utility-scale solar project of the sixteen applicants short-listed for a loan guarantee under the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) 1703 program.

California and the nation need BrightSource’s Ivanpah SEGS project, and others like it, to launch a stronger, more independent and competitive economy that once again proudly leads the world. I ask that BLM and CEC promptly approve and support the development of the Ivanpah SEGS project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Knight', written in a cursive style.

Steve Knight, Assemblyman
36th Assembly District

STK:do