



BEFORE THE ENERGY RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
 COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
 1516 NINTH STREET, SACRAMENTO, CA 95814  
 1-800-822-6228 – WWW.ENERGY.CA.GOV

**DOCKET**

**09-AFC-9**

DATE DEC 03 2009

RECD DEC 03 2009

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION  
 For the **RIDGECREST SOLAR  
 POWER PROJECT**

**DOCKET No. 09-AFC-9**

**NOTICE OF ENERGY COMMISSION INFORMATIONAL HEARING  
 ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING MEETING AND PUBLIC SITE VISIT  
 AND  
 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT SCOPING MEETING**

On September 1, 2009, Solar Millennium, LLC (Applicant), submitted an Application for Certification (AFC) to the Energy Commission to construct a solar thermal power plant facility in the high northern Mojave Desert in northeastern Kern County, California, about five miles southwest of the City of Ridgecrest, California. The Energy Commission has exclusive state-level jurisdiction to license this project and is considering the proposal under a twelve-month review process established by Public Resources Code section 25540.6. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is conducting its own concurrent process to determine whether to approve a Right of Way (ROW) grant sought by the Applicant which will extend across approximately 3,920 acres of public lands owned by the federal government.

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that the Energy Commission has designated a Committee of two commissioners to conduct proceedings on the Application. The Committee has scheduled a public Informational Hearing and Site Visit to discuss the proposed Project and the BLM will conduct a Public Scoping Meeting as described below:

***Tuesday, January 5, 2010***

**Site Visit begins (bus leaves City Hall) at 3:30 p.m.**

**Public Informational Hearing/Scoping Meeting begins at 5:00 p.m.**

**Ridgecrest City Hall  
 100 West California Avenue  
 Ridgecrest, California 93555  
 (Map Attached)**

Before the Informational Hearing/Scoping Meeting, members of the public are invited to join the Committee and the BLM on a tour of the proposed site. The Applicant will provide transportation to and from the site. For reservations, contact the Energy Commission's Public Adviser's Office at (916) 654-4489 or 1-800-822-6228 or e-mail: [\[publicadviser@energy.state.ca.us\]](mailto:publicadviser@energy.state.ca.us). Please make your reservation prior to **Monday, December 21, 2009** so that we can assure you a space.

## **Background**

On November 18, 2009, the Energy Commission began review of the Ridgecrest Solar Power Project (RSPP). During the review period, Energy Commission staff will determine whether the proposed project complies with applicable laws related to public health and safety, environmental impacts, and engineering requirements. This Informational Hearing/Scoping Meeting is co-sponsored by the Energy Commission and BLM to inform the public about the Project and to invite public participation in the review process.

As the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Energy Commission is responsible for reviewing and ultimately approving or denying all applications to construct and operate thermal electric power plants, 50 MW and greater, in California. The Energy Commission 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.

Under federal law, the BLM is responsible for processing applications for rights-of-way to authorize the proposed project and associated transmission lines and other facilities to be constructed and operated on land it manages. In processing applications, the BLM must comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which requires that federal agencies consider the environmental impacts associated with such projects.

Pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the BLM and the Energy Commission staff intend to conduct a joint environmental review of the Ridgecrest Solar Power Project in a single NEPA/ CEQA process. It is in the interest of the BLM and the Energy Commission to share in the preparation of a joint environmental analysis of the proposed project to avoid duplication of Staff efforts, to share Staff expertise and information, to promote intergovernmental coordination at the local, state, and federal levels, and to facilitate public review by providing a joint document and a more efficient environmental review process.

## **Purpose of the Informational/Scoping Hearing**

This Informational Hearing/Scoping Meeting provides an opportunity for members of the community in the project vicinity to obtain information, to offer comments and concerns, and to view the project site. The Applicant will explain plans for developing the RSPP

and the related facilities and Energy Commission staff will explain the administrative licensing process and Staff's role in reviewing the Application. The BLM staff will also explain the role of their agency in the joint process as is described in BLM's **Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement/Staff Assessment**, attached to this Notice as Attachment A.

## **Project Description**

The RSPP will utilize solar parabolic trough technology to generate electricity. With this technology, arrays of parabolic mirrors collect heat energy from the sun and refocus the radiation on a receiver tube located at the focal point of the parabola. A heat transfer fluid (HTF) is heated to high temperatures (750 degrees Fahrenheit) as it circulates through the receiver tubes. The heated HTF is then piped through a series of heat exchangers where it releases its stored heat to generate high pressure steam. The steam is then fed to a steam turbine generator where electricity is produced. The project will have a nominal output of 250 megawatts (MW), produced by a single power plant utilizing two solar fields.

The engineering and environmental details of the proposed project are contained in the AFC. Copies of the AFC are available at the local public agencies that are involved in the review process and at the following local libraries: Boron Library, Kern County Library, the Naval Air Warfare Tech Library in Ridgecrest, Ridgecrest Public Library, and the Walter Stiern Memorial Library in Ridgecrest. Other libraries with copies of the AFC are the Fresno County Library; San Diego Public Library; UCLA, University Research Library; Barstow Branch Library; San Bernardino County Library; Humboldt Library; San Francisco Public Library; the Energy Commission's Library in Sacramento; and the California State Library in Sacramento.

## **Proposed Schedule and Issue Identification Report**

To assist the parties and public in understanding the process, Energy Commission Staff shall file a proposed schedule for review of the AFC. Staff shall also file an Issues Identification Report summarizing the major issues. The proposed schedule and Staff's report shall be filed **no later than noon on December 17, 2009**. The Applicant shall file its response, if any, **no later than noon on December 21, 2009**.

## **Public Adviser and Public Participation**

The Energy Commission Public Adviser's Office is available to assist the public in participating in the application review process. For those individuals who require general information on how to participate, please contact the Deputy Public Adviser, Loreen R. McMahon at (916) 654-4489 or 1-800-822-6228 or e-mail: **[publicadviser@energy.state.ca.us]**. If you have a disability and need assistance to participate in this event, contact Lourdes Quiroz at (916) 654-5146 or e-mail: **[lquiroz@energy.state.ca.us]**.

## Further Information

Questions of a legal or procedural nature should be directed to Raoul Renaud, the Hearing Officer, at (916) 651-2020 or e-mail: [\[rrenaud@energy.state.ca.us\]](mailto:rrenaud@energy.state.ca.us).

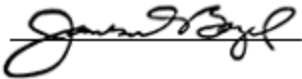
Technical questions concerning the Project should be addressed to Eric Solorio, the Staff Project Manager, at (916) 651-0966 or e-mail: [\[esolorio@energy.state.ca.us\]](mailto:esolorio@energy.state.ca.us).

Technical questions concerning the BLM permitting process should be addressed to Janet Eubanks, the BLM project manager, at (951) 697-5376 or e-mail: [\[carspp@blm.gov\]](mailto:carspp@blm.gov).

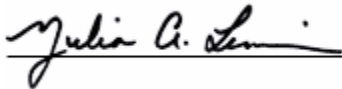
Media inquiries should be directed to the Office of Media and Public Communications at (916) 654-4989 or e-mail: [\[mediaoffice@energy.state.ca.us\]](mailto:mediaoffice@energy.state.ca.us).

Information concerning the status of the project, as well as notices and other relevant documents may be viewed on the Energy Commission's Internet web page at: [\[www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/ridgecrest/\]](http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/ridgecrest/).

Dated: December 3, 2009, at Sacramento, California.

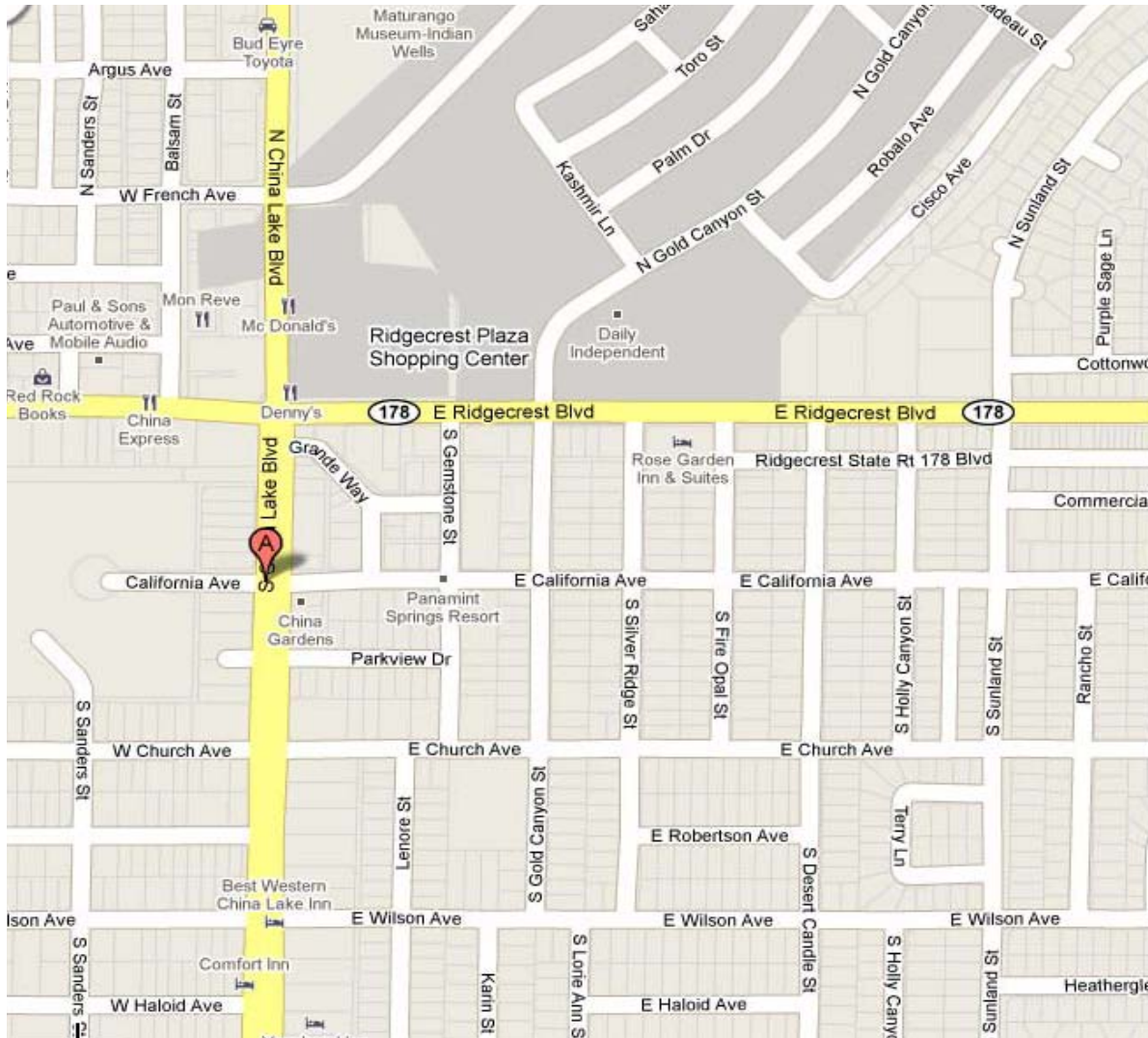


JAMES D. BOYD  
Vice Chair and Presiding Member  
Ridgecrest Solar AFC Committee



JULIA LEVIN  
Commissioner and Associate Member  
Ridgecrest Solar AFC Committee

*Mailed to Lists: POS, 7381, 7382, 7383, 7384*



**Tuesday, January 5, 2010**  
**Site Visit begins (bus leaves City Hall) at 3:30 p.m.**  
**Public Informational Hearing/Scoping Meeting begins at 5:00 p.m.**

**Ridgecrest City Hall (“A” on map)**  
**100 West California Avenue**  
**Ridgecrest, California 93555**

**ATTACHMENT A**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

4310-40-P

**Bureau of Land Management**

[CACA-049016, LLCAD05000 L51010000 ER0000 LVRWB09B2990]

**Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Solar Millennium Ridgecrest Solar Power Project, Kern County, California, and Possible Land Use Plan Amendment.**

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of Intent.

**SUMMARY:** In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Ridgecrest Field Office, together with the California Energy Commission (CEC), intend to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/ Staff Assessment (SA), which may include an amendment to the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan of 1980, as amended, and by this notice are announcing the beginning of the scoping process to solicit public comments and identify issues.

**DATES:** This notice initiates the public scoping process for the Draft EIS/SA and possible plan amendment. Comments on issues may be submitted in writing until December 23, 2009. The dates and locations of scoping meetings, information hearing, and site visits will be announced at least 15 days in advance through local media, the BLM website at <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/ridgecrest.html> and the CEC's Web site at [http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/solar\\_millennium\\_ridgecrest/index.html](http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/solar_millennium_ridgecrest/index.html). In order to be included in the Draft EIS/SA, all comments must be received prior to the close of the scoping period or 15 days after the last public meeting, whichever is later. We will provide additional opportunities for public participation upon publication of the Draft EIS and SA.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments on issues and planning criteria related to the Solar Millennium Ridgecrest Draft EIS and SA by any of the following methods:

- Web Site: <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/ridgecrest.html> or [http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/solar\\_millennium\\_ridgecrest/index.html](http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/solar_millennium_ridgecrest/index.html)
- Email: [CARSPP@blm.gov](mailto:CARSPP@blm.gov); and/or [esolorio@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:esolorio@energy.state.ca.us)
- Fax: BLM (951) 697-5299 and/or CEC (916) 654-3882
- Mail: BLM California Desert District, 22835 Calle San Juan de los Lagos, Moreno Valley, California 92553, Attn: Janet Eubanks; or California Energy Commission, 1516 Ninth Street, MS-15, Sacramento, California, 95814, Attn: Eric Solorio.

Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at the Ridgecrest Field Office.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**

For further information and/or to have your name added to our mailing list, contact Janet Eubanks, Project Manager, telephone (951) 697-5376; address 22835 Calle San Juan de los Lagos, Moreno Valley, California 92553; email [Janet\\_Eubanks@ca.blm.gov](mailto:Janet_Eubanks@ca.blm.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The applicant, Solar Millennium LLC, has applied for a right-of-way (ROW) authorization to construct and operate a parabolic trough, solar thermal, generating facility with a capacity of 250 megawatts. The project would connect to the existing Southern California Edison 230-kilovolt (kV) Inyokern/Kramer Junction transmission line. About a mile long portion of the 230 kV transmission line and about a mile long portion of a 115 kV line would be realigned to avoid the project area. The approximately 3,920-acre proposed ROW would contain two solar fields, a power block, construction areas, a dry-cooling tower, steel transmission towers with associated transmission lines, access roads, three covered water tanks, an underground water pipeline, water treatment facilities, a tie-in switchyard, a land treatment unit for bioremediation of any soil that may be contaminated by heat transfer fluid, an office, a warehouse, a parking lot and facility perimeter fencing. The Project would be located approximately five miles southwest of the city of Ridgecrest of Kern County, California.

The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine relevant issues that will influence the scope of the environmental analysis, including alternatives, and guide the process for developing the EIS. At present, the BLM has identified the following preliminary issues: special area designation, social and economic impacts including impacts to the public from traffic, ground and surface water quantity and quality, special status species management, cultural resources and visual resources.

Authorization of this proposal may require amendment of the CDCA Plan (1980 as amended). By this notice, the BLM is complying with requirements in 43 CFR §1610.2(c) to notify the public of potential amendments to land use plans, predicated on the findings of the EIS. If a land use plan amendment is necessary, the BLM will integrate the land use planning process with the NEPA process for this project.

The BLM will use the NEPA commenting process to satisfy the public involvement process for Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f) as provided for in 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3). Native American Tribal consultations will be conducted in accordance with policy, and Tribal concerns will be given due consideration, including impacts on Indian trust assets. Federal, state, and local agencies, tribes and stakeholders that may be interested or affected by the BLM's decision on this project are invited to participate in the scoping process and, if eligible, may request or be requested by the BLM to participate as a cooperating agency.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment –

including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Authority: 40 CFR 1501.7 and 43 CFR 1610.2.

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Thomas Pogacnik  
Deputy State Director, Natural Resources  
California State Office

AUTHORITY: 40 CFR §1501.7; 43 CFR §1610.2





**BEFORE THE ENERGY RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
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**APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION  
For the *RIDGECREST SOLAR  
POWER PROJECT***

**Docket No. 09-AFC-9**

**PROOF OF SERVICE  
(Est. 11/18/09)**

**APPLICANT**

Nicole Tenenbaum  
Senior Project Manager  
1625 Shattuck Avenue, Suite 270  
Berkeley, CA 94709-1161  
[tenenbaum@solarmillennium.com](mailto:tenenbaum@solarmillennium.com)

Elizabeth Copley  
AECOM Project Manager  
2101 Webster Street, Suite 1900  
Oakland, CA 94612  
[elizabeth.copley@aecom.com](mailto:elizabeth.copley@aecom.com)

Scott Galati, Esq.  
Galati/Blek, LLP  
455 Capitol Mall, Suite 350  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
[sgalati@gb-llp.com](mailto:sgalati@gb-llp.com)

Peter Weiner  
Matthew Sanders  
Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker LLP  
55 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Suite 2400-3441  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
[peterweiner@paulhastings.com](mailto:peterweiner@paulhastings.com)  
[matthewsanders@paulhastings.com](mailto:matthewsanders@paulhastings.com)

**INTERESTED AGENCIES**

California ISO  
[e-recipient@caiso.com](mailto:e-recipient@caiso.com)

**ENERGY COMMISSION**

JAMES D. BOYD  
Vice Chair and Presiding Member  
[jboyd@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:jboyd@energy.state.ca.us)

JULIA LEVIN  
Commissioner and Associate  
[jlevin@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:jlevin@energy.state.ca.us)

Raoul Renaud  
Hearing Officer  
[rrenaud@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:rrenaud@energy.state.ca.us)

Eric Solorio  
Project Manager  
[esolorio@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:esolorio@energy.state.ca.us)

Jared Babula  
Staff Counsel  
[jbabula@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:jbabula@energy.state.ca.us)

Public Adviser  
[publicadviser@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:publicadviser@energy.state.ca.us)

**DECLARATION OF SERVICE**

I, Maggie Read, declare that on, December 3, 2009, I served and filed copies of the attached Notice of Energy Commission Informational Hearing Environmental Scoping Meeting & Public Site Visit and Bureau of Land Management Scoping Meeting, dated December 3, 2009. The original document, filed with the Docket Unit, is accompanied by a copy of the most recent Proof of Service list, located on the web page for this project at: [[http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/solar\\_millennium\\_ridgecrest](http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/solar_millennium_ridgecrest)].

The document has been sent to both the other parties in this proceeding (as shown on the Proof of Service list) and to the Commission's Docket Unit, in the following manner:

***(Check all that Apply)***

**For service to all other parties:**

sent electronically to all email addresses on the Proof of Service list;

by personal delivery or by depositing in the United States mail at Sacramento, California with first-class postage thereon fully prepaid and addressed as provided on the Proof of Service list above to those addresses **NOT** marked "email preferred."

**AND**

**For filing with the Energy Commission:**

sending an original paper copy and one electronic copy, mailed and emailed respectively, to the address below (preferred method);

**OR**

depositing in the mail an original and 12 paper copies, as follows:

**CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION**

Attn: Docket No. 09-AFC-9  
1516 Ninth Street, MS-4  
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

[docket@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:docket@energy.state.ca.us)

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Original signed by:  
Maggie Read