

**CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION**

PUBLIC ADVISER'S OFFICE  
1516 NINTH STREET, MS - 12  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814-5512  
PublicAdviser@energy.state.ca.us



February 13, 2010

Ms. Cathy Perfect  
Managing Editor  
Kern Valley Sun  
PO BOX 3074  
Lake Isabella, CA 93240

<b>DOCKET</b>
<b>09-AFC-9</b>
DATE <u>FEB 13 2010</u>
RECD. <u>MAR 16 2010</u>

**RE: Proposed Ridgecrest Solar Power Project Site Visit & Informational Hearing/Scoping Meeting (Docket No. 09-AFC-9)**

Dear Ms. Perfect:

The California Energy Commission (Energy Commission) received an Application for Certification (AFC) from Solar Millennium LLC (Docket No. 09-AFC-09) on September 1, 2009, for the Ridgecrest Solar Power Project (RSPP). Solar Millennium LLC proposes to construct, own, and operate a concentrated solar thermal electric generating facility with a single solar plant of 250-megawatt (MW) nominal capacity.

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 proposed site is immediately south of U.S. Highway 395 approximately five miles southwest of the city of Ridgecrest, California. An application has been filed with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for a right-of-way (ROW) grant of approximately 3,920 acres. The total area that will be disturbed by project construction and operation is about 1,760 acres. The facility footprint itself will be about 1,440 acres. Additionally, the proposed site will require the relocation of roughly 7,500 feet (1.4 miles) of two existing transmission lines owned and operated by Southern California Edison.

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 BLM is conducting its own concurrent process to determine whether to approve a ROW grant sought by the applicant which will extend across approximately 3,920 acres of public lands owned by the federal government.

The Energy Commission power plant licensing process, which incorporates requirements equivalent to the environmental impact report process of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), considers all relevant engineering and environmental aspects of the proposed project. The licensing review provides a public forum allowing the applicant, Commission staff, governmental agencies, adjacent landowners, and members of the general public to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the project, and to propose changes, mitigation measures, and alternatives as necessary. 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 federal agencies to consider the environmental impacts associated with such projects.

The committee and staff of the Energy Commission, in conjunction with BLM, will hold a site visit and public informational hearing/scoping meeting on **Tuesday, January 5, 2010** at the location and time indicated on the enclosed notice. At these events, the applicant will describe the proposed project; Energy Commission staff will explain the

Energy Commission facility certification process and public participation opportunities, identify potential project issues, answer questions and take public comments. The BLM staff will also explain the role of their agency in the joint process. This is the first of several publicly noticed events that will take place during a thorough one-year review process.

The Energy Commission encourages and invites all interested government representatives, agencies, organizations, associations and individuals to take part in this process. Written comments are welcome and should always indicate the project name and docket number. All comments received will be docketed and become part of the official documentation (or record) compiled for the project. If you or your representatives are interested but unable to attend, written comments may be submitted in a variety of ways:

<b>Comment Method</b>	<b>Ridgecrest Solar Power Project, Docket (09-AFC-9)</b>
<b>U.S. Mail</b>	Eric Solorio <i>Project Manager</i> Siting, Transmission & Environmental Protection Division California Energy Commission 1516 Ninth Street, MS-15 Sacramento, CA 95814
<b>Electronic Mail</b> <i>(please remember to include your name and return address in the e-mail).</i>	<a href="mailto:esolorio@energy.state.ca.us">esolorio@energy.state.ca.us</a>
<b>Hand delivered</b>	To the Energy Commission Dockets Unit or at any publicly noticed meeting for the Ridgecrest Solar Power Project.
<b>Verbal comment</b>	Presented at any publicly noticed meeting for the Ridgecrest Solar Power Project.

The enclosed map and English notice provide the details for these first public events, as well as the project contacts and ways to obtain more information about the proposed project and the energy facility certification process. Please help us to publicize these events by making the enclosed notice visible/available to the public. If you need additional copies of this notice, please contact our office.

The Public Adviser's Office is available to advise the public on the most effective methods of participation. If you desire more information about this project, the site visit and informational hearing on **Tuesday, January 5, 2010** or ways to become involved, please contact the Public Adviser's Office. There are several methods of contacting the Public Adviser's Office: by phone at (916) 654-4489; by leaving a message at the toll-free in California phone line at (800) 822-6228; by sending a facsimile to (916) 654-4493; and/or by electronic mail to [publicadviser@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:publicadviser@energy.state.ca.us).

Sincerely,

*James Davis*

Public Liaison  
California Energy Commission

Enclosures