

# Memorandum

Date: November 4, 2010

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To: James D. Boyd, Vice Chair and Presiding Member  
Anthony Eggert, Commissioner and Associate Member

From: **California Energy Commission** – Eric K. Solorio, *Project Manager*  
1516 Ninth Street  
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<b>DOCKET</b>	
<b>09-AFC-9</b>	
DATE	NOV 04 2010
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Subject: **Staff's Status Report #5 for the Ridgecrest Solar Power Project (09-AFC-9)**

Staff respectfully submits this Status Report #5 for consideration by the Committee.

### Recent Activities

Applicant recently filed its proposed Study Plan for the Mohave Ground Squirrel (MGS) habitat connectivity study. Staff is reviewing the Study Plan and will file comments by Friday, November 12, 2010 then hold a workshop on November 18, 2010, in an attempt to finalize the plan.

### Staff's Concerns Going Forward

It is important to mention that the MGS study will cost the applicant approximately \$1,500,000. Although the proposed MGS study will provide valuable information and data regarding the habitat and movement corridors of the MGS, staff continues to believe the site chosen by the applicant for the Ridgecrest project contains important biological resources that are deserving of protection. Staff remains concerned that approval of the project will lead to significant and immitigable impacts to not only the Mohave ground squirrel but also to the desert tortoise.

Regardless of the MGS study results, staff believes it is preferable, based upon what we know today, to preserve this site and surrounding area as opposed to developing it. Staff wants to reiterate that potential impacts to MGS are only one reason for staff recommending against approval of the project, as articulated in the draft Staff Assessment/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SA/DEIS). The project's potential impacts to desert tortoise continue to be a significant concern given the population density on the site. Staff has not seen any new information that would change the conclusions articulated in the SA/DEIS. Consequently, we believe it is important, before the applicant spends \$1.5 million dollars on a MGS study, to indicate that impacts solely to desert tortoise lead staff to the conclusion that this project site should not be developed. We do not expect the results of the Mohave ground squirrel study to change our opinion about the appropriateness of the proposed site for development.

PROOF OF SERVICE (REVISED 7/9/10) FILED WITH  
ORIGINAL MAILED FROM SACRAMENTO ON 11/4/10

TG



**BEFORE THE ENERGY RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
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1516 NINTH STREET, SACRAMENTO, CA 95814  
1-800-822-6228 – [WWW.ENERGY.CA.GOV](http://WWW.ENERGY.CA.GOV)**

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

**Docket No. 09-AFC-9  
PROOF OF SERVICE  
(Revised 7/9/2010)**

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DECLARATION OF SERVICE

I, Teraja` Golston, declare that on, November 04, 2010, I served and filed copies of the attached (09-AFC-09) Ridgecrest – CEC Staff Status Report #5. 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].

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:

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

X  by personal delivery;

     by delivering on this date, for mailing with the United States Postal Service with first-class postage thereon fully prepaid, to the name and address of the person served, for mailing that same day in the ordinary course of business; that the envelope was sealed and placed for collection and mailing on that date to those addresses **NOT** marked "email preferred."

**AND**

For filing with the Energy Commission:

X  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**

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I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, that I am employed in the county where this mailing occurred, and that I am over the age of 18 years and not a party to the proceeding.

Original Signature in Dockets

Teraja` Golston