



# Nye County Water District

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12-011-DL (L)

January 31, 2012

Mr. Mike Monosmith  
California Energy Commission  
1516 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814-5112

DOCKET 11-AFC-2
DATE JAN 31 2012
RECD. FEB 14 2012

**Re: Request for Agency Participation in the Review of the Hidden Hills Solar Energy Project, Application for Certification (11-AFC-2)**

Dear Mr. Monosmith:

Staff and Board Members from the Nye County Water District (NCWD) have been following the California Energy Commission (CEC) proceedings of the Bright Source Energy, Inc. Hidden Hills Project (Project) with great interest. The project consists of two approximately 250 MW solar towers and related facilities on private lands just west of the Nevada border off of the Tecopa Highway.

The NCWD is a political subdivision of the State of Nevada formed in 2007 by the Nye County Water District Act, Chapter 542 Special Acts. The NCWD was formed with the purpose to secure and develop sustainable sources of water for the residents of Nye County Nevada. The location of the Project is in the Pahrump Basin which is a shared water basin between Nye County and Inyo County California.

Some areas within the Pahrump Basin have experienced drops in water level and the basin has been designated by the Nevada State Engineer as a basin in need of administration (Designated Basin). As a designated basin there are no additional appropriations of water rights and any use would require purchase of existing water rights. Water Districts are accorded special status to assist and advise the State Engineer in the administration of designated basins.

Bright Source Energy should be commended in the design of the Project, the information provided indicates an annual water usage of 140 acre feet of water to produce 500 MW of power. This is much more efficient in water usage than other Solar Thermal projects have indicated in their project designs. However any large uses of water in the desert, especially in designated basins like Pahrump need special attention. The Hidden Hills project is located adjacent to the State Line and although not physically in Nye County, many of the impacts from this project will be in Nye County. The electric transmission line and natural gas pipeline serving the Project pass through Nye County. Filings by Inyo County and other interested parties have expressed an interest in providing input into the CEC process in regards to mitigation and the need for

additional hydrologic information. The NCWD has the interests in the water science and mitigation strategies as well.

The NCWD in conjunction with Nye County Nevada has spent many years and spent considerable sums in developing hydrologic information and we have worked with other renewable energy developers in mitigation strategies for similar projects. The NCWD would like to share any information and applicable experience we have with the CEC. We request that the California Energy Commission include the Nye County Water District in any water studies and provide us with the opportunity to participate in and discussions of mitigation strategies and decisions about water usage.

If you have any questions or need additional information, you can contact me at (775)727-7727 or by email at llacy@co.nye.nv.us.

Sincerely,



L. Darrell Lacy  
Interim General Manager  
Nye County Water District

/ee