In the Matter of: Mariposa Energy Project

Docket # 09-AFC-03

INTERVENOR
OPENING BRIEF
MOUNTAIN HOUSE COMMUNITY SERVICE DISTRICT

March 24, 2011

Mountain House Community Services District
Morgan K. Groover, P.E.
Development Manager
230 S. Sterling Dr., Suite 100
Mountain House, CA 95391
INTRODUCTION

On April 16, 1996 The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors passed Resolution R-96-196, ordering the formation of Mountain House Community Services District.

On May 20, 1996, the San Joaquin County LAFCo, in accordance with State of California Government Code Section 61000 et seq., as Recorded as Instrument Number 96052700 in the Office of the Recorder, San Joaquin County, California, (attached), formed the Mountain House Community Services District to provide to the Community of Mountain House the following services:

A. Water Service  
B. Sewer Service  
C. Garbage Service  
D. Fire Protection  
E. Public Recreation  
F. Street Lighting  
G. Library buildings and services  
H. Convert utilities to underground  
I. Police protection  
J. Road maintenance  
K. Transportation Services  
L. Graffiti abatement  
M. CC & R’s enforcement  
N. Flood control protection  
O. Pest and weed abatement  
P. Wildlife habitat mitigation  
Q. Telecommunications services  
R. Dissemination of information

State of California Public Resource Code  
California Environmental Quality Act  
Chapter 3. State Agencies, Boards and Commissions  
Section 21104 (a) states:

Prior to completing an environmental impact report, the state lead agency shall consult with, and obtain comments from, each responsible agency, trustee agency, any public agency that has jurisdiction by law with respect to the project, and any city or county that borders on a city or county within which the project is located unless otherwise designated annually by agreement between the state lead agency and the city or county…

California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Guidelines for California Environmental Quality Act.  
Section 15002 (j) states:
Under CEQA, an agency must solicit and respond to comments from the public and from other agencies concerned with the project.

Section 15088 (b) states:

The lead agency shall provide a written proposed response to a public agency on comments made by that public agency at least 10 days prior to certifying an environmental impact report.

Section 15088 (d) states:

The response to comments may take the form of a revision to the draft EIR or may be a separate section in the final EIR…

On March 10, 2010, the Mountain House Community Services District Board of Directors passed Resolution R-MMX-4.

On April 12, 2010 a copy of the Mountain House Community Services District Resolution R-MMX-4 was noticed to all parties and posted with California Energy Commission regarding the Mariposa Project. (Copy attached)

Transcripts to the March 7, 2001 evidentiary hearing state:

On page 15 lines 14 through 25 and page 16 lines 1 through 7;

14 MR. DIGHE: Are you aware of the racial demographics of Mountain House?
15 DR. YUSUF: I'm aware of the fact that there is
16 diverse population of Mountain House based on the
17 observations I made during the last two days of hearings
18 we had at BBID. But I can't stipulate --
20 MR. DIGHE: Did you also take the Census 2000
21 data in your consideration when you did your analysis?
22 DR. YUSUF: Would you repeat that question,
23 please?
24 MR. DIGHE: Did you also take the Census 2000
25 data which the staff took in your analysis of the racial
demographics?
2 DR. YUSUF: I used the 2000 Census --
3 MR. DIGHE: Thank you.
4 DR. YUSUF: -- data.
5 MR. DIGHE: Are you aware that Mountain House did
6 not exist in year 2000?
7 DR. YUSUF: Yes, I'm aware of that.

On page 28 lines 12 through 17;

12 MR. SINGH: Okay. Environmental. Did you
13 contact -- or how many people you contacted in Mountain
14 House to look into their feeling about the power plant and
15 how it is going to impact?
16 DR. YUSUF: I did not personally contact anybody
17 at Mountain House, but I do understand that there have

On page 36 lines 8 through 14;

8 MR. SINGH: Did you do any analysis in last five
9 year how the Mountain House is growing or last ten years
10 how the Mountain House is growing, what is the rate of
11 growth? What is the rate of depletion of sustained --
12 those type of analysis have you done on Mountain House?
13 DR. YUSUF: No. My analysis did not specifically
14 target or look at Mountain House.

On page 75 lines 10 through 25 and page 76 lines 1 through 3;

10 MS. STENNICK: As I said, we relied on the 2000
11 Census data. And bear with me -- socioeconomics Figure 1
12 shows the total population within a six mile radius as 2,
13 164.
14 MR. SARVEY: And the Mountain House data was how
15 many people?
16 STAFF COUNSEL WILLIS: Just clarification if he's
17 asking for a survey data or --
18 MR. SARVEY: Survey data.
19 HEARING OFFICER CELLI: I think she's got the
20 answer to the question.
21 MS. STENNICK: The Mountain House community
22 demographics, the survey that was done in 2009 shows there
23 was approximately 9,930 individuals within the Mountain
24 House community.
25 MR. SARVEY: Okay. And did you consult with the
1 Mountain House Community Services District on whether they
2 considered their Census accurate?
3 MS. STENNICK: No.

On page 91 lines 11 through 22;

11 On or about -- I don't need an exact date. When
12 was the staff report prepared?
13 MS. FORD: The staff assessment?
14 MR. GROOVER: Yes. I'm sorry.
16 MR. GROOVER: Okay. We use 2000 Census that
17 showed 2000 people in the Census tract and we had
18 information that there was more than 10,000 people in
19 Mountain House. Is it normal when to look at the
20 community and ignore it when there's that big of a
21 disparity between the numbers you're using and the numbers
22 that are obviously there?

On page 92 line 25 and page 93 lines 1 through 13;

25 Understanding that the staff actually did look
1 into surveying that Mountain House prepared and staff
2 would have been aware that there was 10,000 people in
3 Mountain House, would it then be normal to go and use the
4 2010 data that says there's only 2000 people in the Census tracts?
6 HEARING OFFICER CELLI: Is that normal?
7 MS. STENNICK: When staff started the analysis on
8 this particular project, we probably began our analysis in
9 2009. The information the Mountain House communities
10 survey, which is not -- is not Census data. It's a survey
11 done by the Community Services District, that information
12 did not become available to us until after we had
13 published the preliminary staff assessment.

On page 93 lines 21 through 25 and page 94 lines 1 through 6;

21 HEARING OFFICER CELLI: Ms. Stennick, let me just
22 ask you this, because it's a yes or no question. Is it
23 normal practice to rely on the Census?
24 MS. STENNICK: Yes, it is normal practice for the
25 type of analysis that we do at the Energy Commission on
1 siting cases.
2 HEARING OFFICER CELLI: Okay. Would it be normal
3 practice in view of the fact that you know factually there
4 are more people there than is reflected in the Census? Is
5 would that be a normal practice to rely on the Census?
6 MS. STENNICK: Yes, it would.

On page 108 lines 10 and 11;

10 MS. STENNICK: Our analysis was not focused on
11 the community of Mountain House. Yes, we are aware that

On page 118 lines 6 through 12;

6 MR. SINGH: Mr. Hoffman, you mentioned that there
7 was a survey of Mountain House survey being conducted. Do
8 you know who provided those survey to you?
9 MR. HOFFMAN: I picked it off the website.
10 MR. SINGH: Website of which one?
11 MR. HOFFMAN: The Mountain House Community
12 Services District.

On page 140 lines through 15;

10 MR. HOFFMAN: Hypothetically, I think I probably
11 would have worked closer with a public adviser to identify
12 those sectors that needed may be some additional outreach.
13 And we do have public adviser and Jennifer is here who's
14 active in every project. And we do the best we can to
15 provide the outreach to the communities that every project
ARGUMENT

The Mountain House Community Services District has been a political subdivision of the State of California since May 20, 1996. The Mountain House Community Services District meets all definitions of a “Responsible Agency” under the State of California CEQA guidelines.

Under CEQA guidelines the California Energy Commission (CEC), acting as lead agency for the Mariposa Project, must notify, solicit comments from, and respond to comments made by Mountain House Community Services District. Reference is made to several pertinent CEQA sections listed above in the Introduction.

On January 5, 2011 the CEC posted a letter to the Docket from San Joaquin County (attached). The letter from San Joaquin County was in response to a request from the CEC to San Joaquin County for a review of the Mariposa Energy Project Supplemental Staff Assessment. So, it is obvious that the CEC staff does know that San Joaquin County does exist as a part of California and that it is contiguous to the county in which this project is sited. It is further evidence that CEC staff is aware it is required by law, as a lead agency, to solicit comments from responsible agencies bordering on, or in close proximity to, the project.

There is no record in the Mariposa Energy Project proceedings that the CEC has complied with those guidelines with regard to the political subdivision of Mountain House Community Services District. All communications from Mountain House Community Services District (MHCSD) to the CEC were unsolicited efforts by MHCSD asking to be heard by the lead agency; and no communication to the CEC from MHCSD has been responded to by the CEC.

In the testimony listed above there are eight quotes, from various professional staff, acknowledging that Mountain House was never considered in the environmental proceedings. One statement by staff, on page 118 and referenced above, has staff picking things from the MHCSD website but not asking MHCSD staff professionals for information. The statement and the meaning behind the comment on page 118 make it obvious that CEC staff knew Mountain House existed but made no effort to solicit comments from it.

The comments on page 93 of the March 7 transcripts by CEC Staff use the excuse that Mountain House was not considered because, “…information did not become available to us until after we had published the preliminary staff assessment.” Although, the California Environmental Quality Act specifically requires that a response to a responsible agency become a revision to the preliminary environmental document or as a separate section in the final document. This comment, on page 93 clearly shows that CEC staff did not contact a responsible agency, MHCSD, at least until after the preliminary staff assessment was complete and probably even later than that date if the information became available to CEC, as testified to on page 118, when CEC staff stumbled onto the MHCSD website.

The excuse for a lead agency not to contact a responsible agency during the course of an environmental investigation that, “We didn’t know the city of 10,000 people existed until we finished our work and we didn’t want to change our work once we found out,” is not listed in CEQA as an exception to the rules to which a lead agency must comply.
There is, additionally, one admission that staff should have made a better effort for outreach. In the case of a responsible agency, outreach from a lead agency is mandated by California law and should not be subject to untimely, wistful backward thinking and wishes.

In the unsolicited comments from the responsible agency, MHCSD, to the lead agency, CEC, contained in the MHCSD Board of Directors Resolution R-MMX-4, several items of concern were expressed to the CEC. The Applicant has taken it upon itself to address one of those concerns and has entered into an agreement with the Tracy Rural Fire Department. All other concerns addressed in the Resolution stand unaddressed by the lead agency in the Supplemental Staff Assessment. CEQA regulations specify that the environmental document may not be certified until all of the comments are addressed.

The Mariposa Energy Project Supplemental Staff Assessment states the following in the Introduction:

During this comment period, a public workshop was held on Monday, November 29, 2010, at the Byron Bethany Irrigation District to discuss staff’s findings, proposed mitigation, and proposed compliance-monitoring requirements. Based on the workshops and written comments, staff has refined its analysis, corrected any errors, and finalized conditions of certification.

This Supplemental Staff Assessment (SSA) has been prepared based upon discussions at the SA workshops and written comments provided by the applicant, agencies, other parties and public.

At the public workshop, during the open comment period, MHCSD appeared as an Intervenor and repeatedly asked professional staff to address Mountain House as a community in the Supplemental Staff Assessment as is required by CEQA. In response, repeatedly, CEC professional staff assured MHCSD that the Supplemental Staff Assessment would specifically address the community of Mountain House, as is required by CEQA. The Supplemental Staff Assessment for the Mariposa Energy Project is silent with regard to the Community of Mountain House and the responsible agency communication provided to the CEC in the MHCSD Board of Directors Resolution.

CONCLUSION

The Mariposa Energy Project CEC Supplemental Staff Assessment is not in compliance with any of the CEQA guidelines listed in the Introduction above and is therefore not in compliance with state law. The Supplemental Staff Assessment may not be certified until it is brought into compliance with state law.
EXHIBIT 1
SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY LAFCo DESIGNATION
MOUNTAIN HOUSE COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT
CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

LAFCo
1860 East Hazelton Ave.
Stockton, CA 95205

Short Form Designation:

MOUNTAIN HOUSE REORGANIZATION (LAFC 21-95)

1. Filed pursuant to action by the Board of Supervisors adopting Resolution No. R-96-196 dated April 16, 1996, certified copy attached.

2. The name of each district or city involved in this change of organization and the type of change ordered for each such city or district are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITY OR DISTRICT</th>
<th>TYPE OF CHANGE OF ORGANIZATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MOUNTAIN HOUSE COMMUNITY</td>
<td>FORMATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERVICES DISTRICT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRACY RURAL FIRE DISTRICT</td>
<td>DETACHMENT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. The city or districts are located in the following county(ies): San Joaquin County

4. Boundary description for said formation or change has been attached.

5. Terms and conditions, if any, are provided in said resolution, attached.

6. I hereby certify that the action taken by adoption of the above cited resolution complies with the boundaries and conditions specified by the Local Agency Formation Commission of San Joaquin County in Resolution No. 941.

GERALD F. SCOTT, EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Local Agency Formation Commission of San Joaquin County

Dated MAY 20, 1996
BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN JOAQUIN,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

R-96-  

RESOLUTION ORDERING THE FORMATION OF THE MOUNTAIN HOUSE COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

WHEREAS, the Formation of the Mountain House Community Services District entitled "The Mountain House Reorganization (LAFC 21-1995) Including Formation of the Mountain House Community Services District and Detachment from The Tracy Rural Fire Protection District" was initiated by petition of registered voters which contained signatures of more than 80% of the affected voters and on November 2, 1995, the Executive Officer of the Local Agency Formation Commission of San Joaquin County certified the application filed for processing in accordance with the Local Government Reorganization Act; and

WHEREAS, the Commission held a public hearing on the proposed reorganization on February 23, 1996, in the Board of Supervisors' Chambers, County Courthouse, pursuant to notice of hearing which was published, posted and mailed in accordance with State law; and

WHEREAS, said Commission designated the County of San Joaquin as the conducting authority and authorized the Board of Supervisors to order reorganization without an election;

WHEREAS, this Board of Supervisors held a public hearing on the proposed reorganization on April 16, 1996, in the Board of Supervisors' Chambers, County Courthouse, pursuant to notice of hearing which was published, posted and mailed in
accordance with State law; and,

WHEREAS, the approval of the formation is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act because the conducting authority powers at the termination of the public protest hearing are ministerial; and,

WHEREAS, in the alternative an initial study for this approval prepared which demonstrated that this reorganization is within the scope of the Final Environmental Impact Report of the Mountain House Master Plan and Specific Plan I;

NOW, THEREFORE, this Board of Supervisors does hereby find resolve, determine, and order as follows:

Section 1. The exercise of ministerial powers for this approval is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act; and in the alternative on the information contained in the initial study this reorganization is within the scope of the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Mountain House Master Plan and Specific Plan I.

Section 2. The above entitled reorganization is approved subject to the terms and conditions contained in Exhibit A.

Section 3. The boundaries are hereby approved as submitted, said boundaries being set forth in Exhibit B.

Section 4. The name shall be the "Mountain House Community Services District".

Section 5. The reasons for the proposal are contained in Exhibit C.

Section 6. The regular county assessment roll will be utilized.

Section 7. The affected territory will not be taxed for existing general bonded indebtedness because none exists for the territory detached from the aforesaid Fire District.
Section 3. The Clerk of this Board shall transmit six certified copies of this Resolution to the Executive Officer of the San Joaquin County Local Agency Formation Commission.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 12th day of April, 1996, by the following vote of the Board of Supervisors, to wit:

AYES: BARBER, SIMAS, SOUSA, MARENCO, CABRAL
NOES: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

[Signature]
ROBERT J. CABRAL, Chairman
Board of Supervisors
County of San Joaquin
State of California

ATTEST: LOIS M. SAHYOUN
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Joaquin, State of California

[Signature]
Deputy Clerk

[Signature]
ATTEST  May 7, 1996
CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN JOAQUIN, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

[Signature]
CAROLINE J. JONES
Exhibit A
Terms and Conditions for
Formation of the Mountain House CSD

1. The name of the district shall be the Mountain House Community Services District.

2. The initial Board of Directors of the community services district shall be the Board of Supervisors of San Joaquin County.

3. The effective date of formation of the community services district and detachment from the fire district shall be the date that the Certificate of Completion is recorded with the County Recorder.

4. The following services are designated as active services of the Mountain House CSD:

   A. Water service.
   B. Sewer service.
   C. Garbage service.
   D. Fire protection.
   E. Public recreation.
   F. Street lighting.
   G. Library buildings and services.
   H. Convert utilities to underground.
   I. Police protection.
   J. Road maintenance.
   K. Transportation services.
   L. Graffiti abatement.
   M. C C & Rs enforcement.
   N. Flood control protection.
   O. Pest and weed abatement.
   P. Wildlife habitat mitigation.
   Q. Telecommunications services.
   R. Dissemination of information.

5. The County Auditor shall transfer property tax revenue, effective for the 1997-98 fiscal year, to the Mountain House Community Services District as follows:

   (1) From the Tracy Rural Fire District -- all property tax revenue attributable to the fire district within the boundary of the detachment, and

   (2) From Road District No. 5 -- all property tax revenue attributable to the road district within the formation boundary of the community services district.
6. The appropriations limit for the community services district required by Article XIII B of the California Constitution shall be $700,000.

7. Development that exists at the time the district is formed shall not be subject to fees, charges or assessments associated with public facilities necessary to serve new development within the community services district. Such development may be charged to the extent it utilizes facilities (e.g., connections to and use of water or sewer system).

8. The Certificate of Completion for formation of the community services district shall not be recorded until the Board of Supervisors confirms that initial funding for the community services district has been resolved.
EXHIBIT 2
MOUNTAIN HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
RESOLUTION REGARDING MARIPOSA ENERGY PROJECT
BEFORE THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
MOUNTAIN HOUSE COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

RESOLUTION

R-MMX-4

RESOLUTION AMENDING RESOLUTION MMX-18 OPPOSING THE
PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF A POWER PLANT ON OR NEAR THE
BORDER OF ALAMEDA COUNTY AND THE MOUNTAIN HOUSE
COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

WHEREAS, Mariposa Energy, I.C.C has proposed the construction of a “peaker”
power plant in Alameda County near our western border; and

WHEREAS, said proposed power plant will have negative impact in the form of
air pollution on our community (in a county already in non-compliance) and our citizens;
and

WHEREAS, Mariposa Energy, LLC has acquired or plans to acquire air pollution
credits to offset regional or state-wide air pollution, but has not addressed the potential air
quality degradation in Mountain House; and

WHEREAS, there is no recognition that First Responder unmitigated obligations rest with the MICSOD safety forces, which include Tracy Fire and San Joaquin County
Sheriff; and

WHEREAS, Mariposa Energy, I.C.C has not specifically addressed any potential
impacts that may directly affect the Master Planned Community of Mountain House,
which was not in physical existence when the related East Almont Energy Center
(EAEC) was licensed within one mile of the Community in 2004; and

WHEREAS, if the California Energy Commission grants a license to Mariposa
Energy, LLC in the Alameda/Altamont area, it will lead to the area becoming a power
generation corridor with significant impact to Mountain House; and

WHEREAS, The Mariposa Energy, LLC application does not absolutely limit the
hours that the plant may run for perpetuity, so that the plant may apply to become more
than a “peaker” plant in the future.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mountain House Community
Services District opposes the construction and operation of said proposed power plant
until such time as all our concerns have been addressed and mitigated.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all appropriate state and federal agencies
involved in the application process for said proposed power plant be notified of our
opposition.
PASSED AND ADOPTED this 10th day of March, 2010, by the following vote of the Board of Directors of the Mountain House Community Services District, to wit.

AYES: BALZARINI, LAMB, PAYNE, TINGLE, SU

NOES:

ABSENT:

[Signature]
ANDY SU, PRESIDENT
Board of Directors of the Mountain House Community Services District, County of San Joaquin, State of California

ATTEST: MIMI DUZENSKI
Secretary of the Board of Directors of the Mountain House Community Services District, County of San Joaquin, State of California

[Signature]
EXHIBIT 3
SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY
COMMENTS TO CEC
REGARDING
SUPPLEMENTAL STAFF ASSESSMENT
December 23, 2010

California Energy Commission
Roger Johnson, Siting Office Manager
Siting, Transmission and Environmental Protection Division
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, California 95814-5512

SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL STAFF ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED MARIPOSA ENERGY PROJECT

The San Joaquin County Department of Public Works (Public Works) has reviewed the above referenced document and has the following concerns:

1. All construction traffic plans involving full or partial road or lane closures, as well as over-length vehicle movements within San Joaquin County, shall be routed to Public Works for review. This includes all construction and detour traffic plans.

2. Transportation of facility equipment on San Joaquin County roads that involves traffic control, route surveys, or lane closures requires an Encroachment Permit from the San Joaquin County Department of Public Works.

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard. Should you have questions or need additional information regarding the above comments, please contact me at (209) 468-3085.

Sincerely,

MARK HOPKINS
Senior Planner

M-H:rmk
TE-10LD41-M1

c: Alex Chetley, Senior Civil Engineer
    Firoz Vohra, Senior Traffic Engineer
    Mark Hopkins, Senior Planner
APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION
FOR THE MARIPOSA ENERGY PROJECT
(MEP)

Docket No. 09-AFC-3

PROOF OF SERVICE
(Revised 3/18/2011)

APPLICANT
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jass.singh2000@gmail.com

*indicates change
DECLARATION OF SERVICE

I, Janet Preis, declare that on March 30, 2011, I served and filed copies of the attached Staff's Opening Brief dated March 30, 2011. The original document, filed with the Docket Unit, are 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/mariposa/index.html]. 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;

by personal delivery;

x  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
Attn:  Docket No. 09-AFC-3
1516 Ninth Street, MS-4
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512
docket@energy.state.ca.us

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.

/x/ Janet Preis