

**DOCKETED**

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<b>Document Title:</b>	STATUS REPORT FOR THE MISSION COLLEGE BACKUP GENERATING FACILITY (19-SPPE-05) APPLICATION FOR SMALL POWER PLANT EXEMPTION (SPPE)
<b>Description:</b>	CEC staff status update for Mission College Backup Generating Facility SPPE
<b>Filer:</b>	Lisa Worrall
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# Memorandum

To: Commissioner Karen Douglas, Presiding Member  
Vice Chair Janea Scott, Associate Member

Date: March 25, 2020

From: **California Energy Commission**  
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Subject: **STATUS REPORT FOR THE MISSION COLLEGE BACKUP GENERATING FACILITY (19-SPPE-05) APPLICATION FOR SMALL POWER PLANT EXEMPTION (SPPE) PROCEEDING**

In its REQUEST FOR STATUS REPORT FROM STAFF BY NO LATER THAN MARCH 25, docketed on March 19, 2020, the Hearing Officer requested that "Staff file a status report no later than March 25, 2020 that states whether Staff plans to file its environmental assessment of the proposed project by April 9, 2020, and if not, when Staff intends to file its environmental assessment."

As noted in the transcript of the March 4, 2020 Committee Conference (TN 232471), staff provided the following information with respect to its publication schedule:

"At this stage Staff believes it has all the information it needs to finalize its analysis and take the necessary steps towards the publication of its Initial Study. With respect to the schedule, it will not be possible for Staff to publish the Initial Study by March 16th due to the number of sections that aren't completed and Staff's workload on other activities and proceedings.

For example, Staff's priority this week is to respond to CEQA comments on the Sequoia Initial Study and to intervenor's motion -- and to an intervenor's motion to compel, both of which are due on Friday, March 6th. Staff believes that publication of the Mission College Initial Study sometime between April 9th and the 16th is realistic."

This information was current at the time it was presented, but that March 4 presentation pre-dated the various steps taken by the California Energy Commission to address potential impacts associated with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Project staff and consultants are now mostly working remotely, which has impacted staff's access to key files, as well as computers and software needed for certain elements of the publication process. Staff has adapted quickly to the challenges associated with remote work, but nevertheless there have been impacts to Staff's publication schedule. Whereas on March 4 we identified April 9-16 as a realistic range for completing the Initial Study, we now believe April 16-23 is a more realistic publication target, and we are managing our efforts accordingly.

If the Committee wishes to memorialize a new publication date in an updated scheduling order, staff recommends identifying April 23 as the date for issuance of the Initial Study, with the understanding that staff will endeavor to issue it before that date if at all possible. As for memorializing subsequent dates, there are indications that filing with the State Clearinghouse may take longer than usual due to COVID-19 precautions, thereby potentially delaying the start of the comment period for state agencies. The schedule should reflect this potential uncertainty. Staff will continue to keep the Committee and applicant apprised when key milestones have been completed.