

DOCKETED

Docket Number:	09-AFC-05C
Project Title:	Abengoa Mojave Compliance
TN #:	233312
Document Title:	Statement of Staff Approval of Proposed Change
Description:	Project Change
Filer:	Keith Winstead
Organization:	California Energy Commission
Submitter Role:	Commission Staff
Submission Date:	6/4/2020 10:20:52 AM
Docketed Date:	6/4/2020

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Main website: www.energy.ca.gov
CEC-57 (Revised 1/19)



STATEMENT OF STAFF APPROVAL OF PROPOSED CHANGE MOJAVE SOLAR PROJECT (09-AFC-05C)

On February 13, 2020, Mojave Solar, LLC (project owner), filed a post-certification petition for a project change for the Mojave Solar Project (MSP). The 250-megawatt solar thermal generation facility was certified by the California Energy Commission (CEC) in September 2010 and began commercial operation in December 2014. The MSP is located between Barstow and Kramer Junction, approximately nine miles northwest of Hinkley, in San Bernardino County.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED CHANGE

The project owner is requesting the installation of new improved vertical carbon beds replacing the existing horizontal vessels. The purpose is to improve the capture of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and operation of the ullage system with installation of the new carbon bed configuration. The three canisters will be interconnected using a pipe-rack system that allows the vessels to operate in series, lead-lag, or single vessel. The petition is available on the [CEC's MSP](https://www2.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/abengoa/index.html) webpage at:

<https://www2.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/abengoa/index.html>.

ENERGY COMMISSION STAFF REVIEW AND CONCLUSIONS

Title 20, California Code of Regulations, section 1769, states that a project owner shall petition the commission for approval of any change it proposes to the project design, operation, or performance requirements included in the Commission Decision.

CEC technical staff reviewed the petition for potential environmental effects and consistency with applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards (LORS). Staff has determined that the technical or environmental areas of Cultural Resources, Geological and Paleontological Resources, Land Use, Public Health, Socioeconomics, Soil and Water Resources, Transmission Line Safety and Nuisance, Vibration and Waste Management, are not affected by the proposed changes.

For the technical areas of Air Quality, Biological Resources, Facility Design, Hazardous Materials Management, Noise, Traffic and Transportation, Visual Resources, and Worker Safety and Fire Protection, staff has determined the facility would continue to comply with applicable LORS and the proposed project change would not result in any significant adverse environmental impacts, or require a change to any conditions of certification.

Staff notes the following for the technical areas affected by the project change:

AIR QUALITY

The request for the installation of the new carbon adsorption system would not cause any adverse air quality impacts and would reduce ozone precursor emissions (that is, VOCs). There are no proposed changes to the air quality conditions of certification.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Construction of the proposed carbon absorption system improvement would take one or two days and require approximately four personnel. Staging for installation would take place near the carbon absorption ullage system that is common to both plants. Construction activities would not occur near any biologically sensitive areas and would be entirely within the existing desert tortoise fencing. All work would occur in a highly developed area of the plant and is therefore not expected to impact biological resources. Implementation of Conditions of Certification **BIO-1** through **BIO-7** in the Commission Decision would ensure impacts to biological resources would be less than significant.

FACILITY DESIGN

Installation of the equipment associated with this petition must comply with the 2019-edition of the California Building Code. Implementation of the existing Facility Design conditions of certification would ensure this.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

During the installation of the proposed carbon adsorption system, several hazardous materials would be used onsite. Similar to equipment maintenance activities, these materials would include solvents, gasoline, lubricants, and welding gases, which are already listed in the annual compliance report under the existing **HAZ-1** condition. Therefore, with the project owner's continued compliance with existing conditions of certification, **HAZ-1** specifically, the proposed project change would not have a significant effect on the environment and the project would continue to comply with all applicable LORS.

The installation and operation of the carbon adsorption system would not have a significant impact on hazardous materials management.

NOISE AND VIBRATION

Construction work associated with this petition would be temporary and would occur during the daytime hours. Construction noise impacts would be further reduced by the

implementation of the existing conditions of certification. Construction work would create a less-than-significant noise impact.

There would be no change in operational noise.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

The construction and installation of the new carbon adsorption system would generate approximately three concrete deliveries during the one or two-day concrete foundation pour. Construction-related traffic trips would be minimal and temporary and would not generate significant vehicle miles travelled. Condition of Certification **TRANS-2** (Traffic Control Plan) is applicable to the proposed project change. Impacts to the transportation system from installation of the new carbon adsorption systems would be less than significant.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Impacts to visual resources would be less than significant. Installation of the improved, approximately 12 feet-tall, carbon absorption system would be visually consistent with the site's industrial uses and would be completely surrounded by existing facility components. Condition of Certification **VIS-3** would apply to the project change and ensure that night lighting on the site is minimized.

WORKER SAFETY AND FIRE PROTECTION

By continuing to comply with the existing conditions of certification, the project owner's proposed installation of a new carbon adsorption system on site would not have a significant impact on the environment and would continue to comply with all applicable LORS. Activities to be performed during construction of the carbon adsorption system would include the installation of three vertical tanks and the associated piping. The installation of the proposed carbon adsorption system would comply with worker safety and fire safety requirements already included in health and safety plans utilized for construction of the main facility per Condition of Certification **WORKER SAFETY-1**.

The installation and operation of the carbon adsorption system would not have a significant impact on power plant worker safety.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Environmental Justice – Figure 1 shows 2010 census blocks in the six-mile radius of the Mojave Solar Project with a minority population greater than or equal to 50 percent. The population in these census blocks represents an environmental justice (EJ) population

based on race and ethnicity as defined in the United States Environmental Protection Agency's *Guidance on Considering Environmental Justice during the Development of Regulatory Actions*. Staff conservatively obtains demographic data within a six-mile radius around a project site based on the parameters for dispersion modeling used in staff's air quality analysis. Air quality impacts are generally the type of project impacts that extend the furthest from a project site. Beyond a six-mile radius, air emissions have either settled out of the air column or mixed with surrounding air to the extent the potential impacts are less than significant. The area of potential impacts would not extend this far from the project site for most other technical areas included in staff's EJ analysis.

Based on California Department of Education data in the Environmental Justice – Table 1, staff concluded that the percentage of those living in the Barstow Unified School District (in a six-mile radius of the project site) and enrolled in the free or reduced price meal program is larger than those in the reference geography, and thus are considered an EJ population based on low income as defined in *Guidance on Considering Environmental Justice During the Development of Regulatory Actions*. Environmental Justice – Figure 2 shows where the boundaries of the school district are in relation to the six-mile radius around the Mojave Solar Project site.

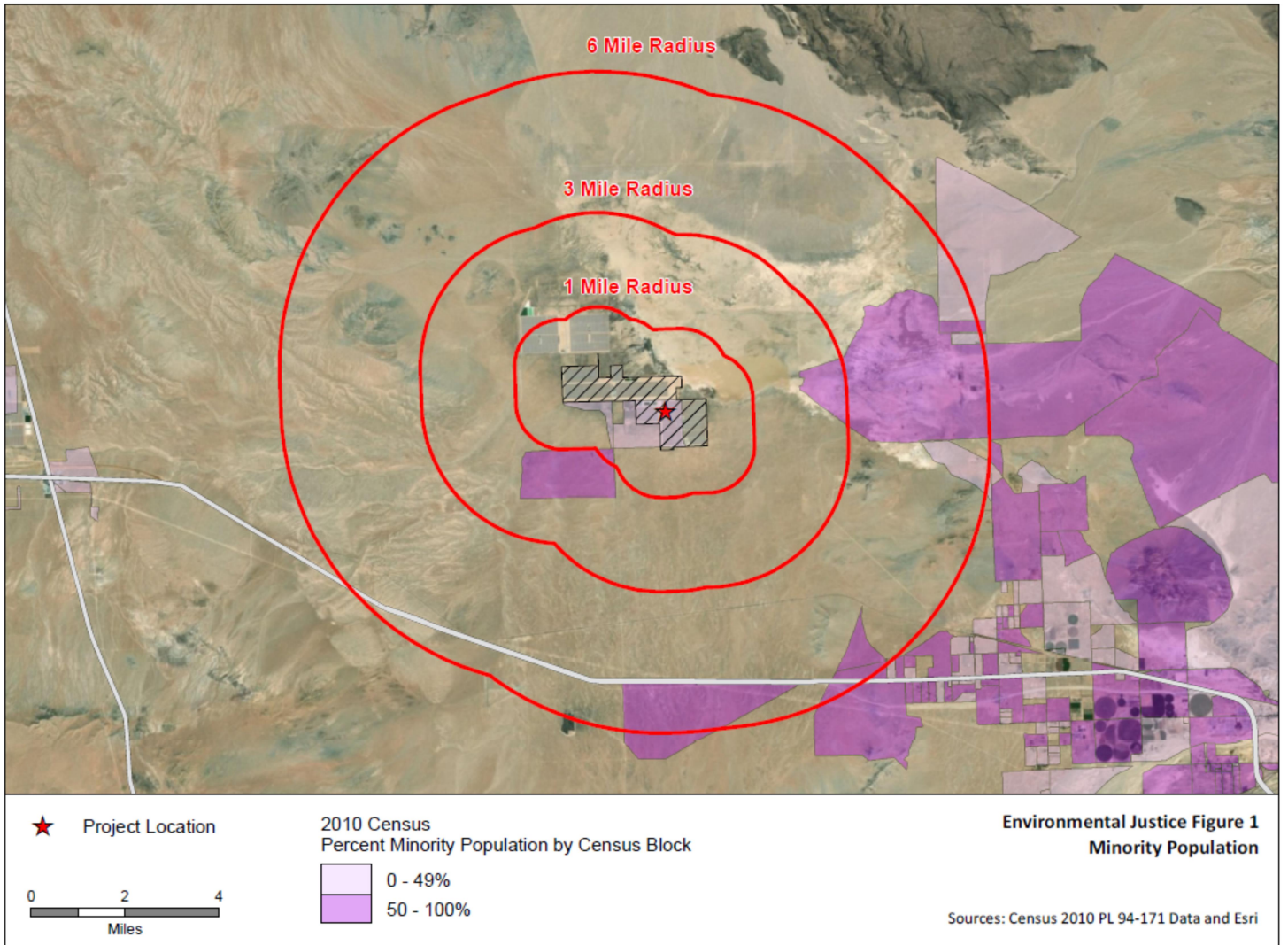
**Environmental Justice – Table 1
 Low Income Data within the Project Area**

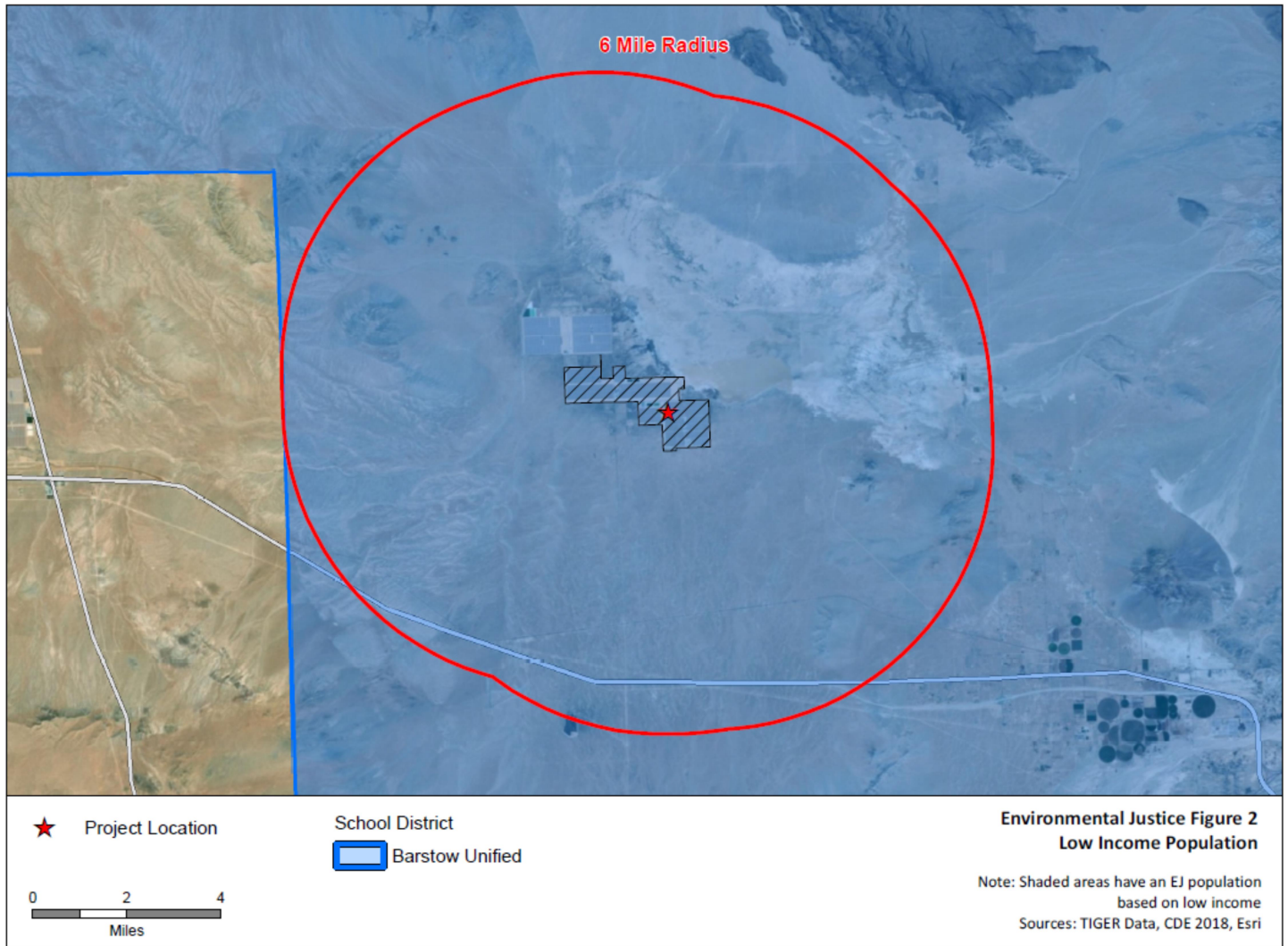
SCHOOL DISTRICT IN SIX-MILE RADIUS	Enrollment Used for Meals	Free or Reduced Price Meals	
Barstow Unified	6,226	4,937	79.3%
REFERENCE GEOGRAPHY			
San Bernardino County	403,196	288,979	71.7%
<small>Source: CDE 2018. California Department of Education, DataQuest, Free or Reduced Price Meals, District level data for the year 2017-2018, <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>.</small>			

The following technical areas (if affected by a proposed project change) consider impacts to EJ populations: Air Quality, Cultural Resources (indigenous people), Hazardous Materials Management, Land Use, Noise and Vibration, Public Health, Socioeconomics, Soil and Water Resources, Traffic and Transportation, Transmission Line Safety and Nuisance, Visual Resources, Waste Management, and Worker Safety and Fire Protection.

Environmental Justice Conclusions

For the technical areas that address EJ which are affected by the project change – Air Quality, Hazardous Materials Management, Noise and Vibration, Traffic and Transportation, Visual Resources, and Worker Safety and Fire Protection – staff concludes that impacts would be less than significant, and thus would be less than significant on the EJ population represented in Environmental Justice – Figure 1, Figure 2, and Table 1.





ENERGY COMMISSION STAFF DETERMINATION

Pursuant to Title 20, California Code of Regulations, section 1769(a)(3)(A), CEC staff has determined for this petition that approval by the Commission at a noticed business meeting or hearing is not required and the proposed changes meet the criteria for approval by staff because:

- i. there is no possibility that the change may have a significant impact on the environment;
- ii. the change would not cause the project to fail to comply with any applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, or standards; and
- iii. the change will not require a change to, or deletion of, a condition of certification adopted by the commission in the final decision or subsequent amendments.

Staff also concludes that the proposed changes do not meet the criteria requiring production of subsequent or supplemental review as specified in Title 14, California Code of Regulations, section 15162(a).

WRITTEN COMMENTS

This Statement of Staff Approval of the proposed project changes has been filed in the docket for this project. Pursuant to section 1769(a)(3)(C), any person may file an objection to staff's determination within 14 days of the filing of this statement on the grounds that the project change does not meet the criteria set forth in section 1769(a)(3)(A). Absent any objections as specified in 1769(a)(3)(C), this petition will be approved 14 days after this statement is filed.

Written comments or objections to staff's determination may be submitted using the CEC's e-Commenting feature, as follows: Go to the CEC's project webpage and click on either the "Comment on this Proceeding," or "Submit e-Comment" link. When your comments are filed, you will receive an email with a link to them.

Written comments or objections may also be mailed:

California Energy Commission
Docket Unit, MS-4
Docket No. 09-AFC-05C
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

All comments and materials filed with the Docket Unit will be added to the facility Docket Log and be publicly accessible on the CEC's webpage for the facility.

If you have questions about this notice, please contact Chris Davis, Compliance Office Manager, at (916) 654-4842, or via e-mail at Chris.Davis@energy.ca.gov.

For information on public participation, please contact the Public Advisor, at (916) 654-4489 (800) 822-6228 (toll-free in California) or send your e-mail to publicadvisor@energy.ca.gov.

News media inquiries should be directed to the CEC Media Office at (916) 654-4989, or by e-mail at mediaoffice@energy.ca.gov.

Listserv: Mojave Solar Project