

**DOCKETED**

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| <b>Docket Number:</b>   | 24-OPT-03  |
| <b>Project Title:</b>   | Soda Mountain Solar  |
| <b>TN #:</b>            | 258373   |
| <b>Document Title:</b>  | Local Agency Notification of Receipt of Opt-In Application for Soda Mountain Solar Project (24-OPT-03) and distribution list |
| <b>Description:</b>     | Distributed via email on August 7, 2024  |
| <b>Filer:</b>           | Lisa Worrall   |
| <b>Organization:</b>    | California Energy Commission   |
| <b>Submitter Role:</b>  | Commission Staff   |
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August 7, 2024

Notice of Receipt of Opt-In Application for Soda Mountain Solar Project (24-OPT-03) / Request for Comments and Information

This letter serves as notification that the California Energy Commission (CEC) has received an opt-in application for the Soda Mountain Solar Project (24-OPT-03). Soda Mountain Solar, LLC ("Applicant"), proposes to construct, operate, and maintain a utility-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) electrical generating and storage facility and associated infrastructure to generate and deliver renewable electricity to the statewide electricity transmission grid. The Soda Mountain Solar Project (project) would generate up to 300 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy and include up to 300 MW of battery storage. The project also includes future decommissioning, which is anticipated to occur after 30 years of operation. The project is located on approximately 2,670 acres of land administered by the U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District, within the jurisdiction of the Barstow Field Office in San Bernardino County.

The project components are as follows: 1) The solar plant site (i.e., all facilities that create a footprint in and around the field of solar panels, including the solar field consisting of solar power arrays), operation and maintenance buildings and structures, stormwater infrastructure, and related infrastructure and improvements. 2) A substation and switchyard for interconnection to the existing transmission system. 3) Approximately 300 MW of lithium-ion battery energy storage system across 18 acres.

The project would operate year-round and would generate electricity during daylight hours. The project would generate and deliver solar-generated power to the regional electrical grid through an interconnection with the existing Marketplace-Adelanto 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission line operated by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

The Project Description (TN 257912) section of the application can be accessed directly at the following link:

<https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/GetDocument.aspx?tn=257912&DocumentContentId=93845>.

In 2022, Assembly Bill 205 established a new Opt-In Certification Program for eligible non-fossil-fueled power plants, energy storage, and manufacturing and assembly facilities to optionally seek certification through the CEC. Upon receipt of an application, the CEC has the exclusive authority to certify the site and related facility. With certain exceptions, the issuance of a certificate by the CEC is in lieu of any permit, certificate, or similar document required by any state, local, or regional agency, or federal agency

to the extent permitted by federal law, and supersedes any applicable statute, ordinance, or regulation of any state, local, or regional agency, or federal agency to the extent permitted by federal law. The CEC is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act and is required to prepare an environmental impact report for any facility that elects to opt into the CEC's jurisdiction.

The CEC provides the following notice pursuant to Public Resources Code section 25545.8, which states that subsections (f) and (k) of Public Resources Code section 25519 apply to an opt-in application. The relevant language from Public Resources Code section 25519 is as follows:

(f) Upon receipt of an application, the commission shall forward the application to local governmental agencies having land use and related jurisdiction in the area of the proposed site and related facility. Those local agencies shall review the application and submit comments on, among other things, the design of the facility, architectural and aesthetic features of the facility, access to highways, landscaping and grading, public use of lands in the area of the facility, and other appropriate aspects of the design, construction, or operation of the proposed site and related facility.

(k) The commission shall transmit a copy of the application to any governmental agency not specifically mentioned in this act, but which it finds has any information or interest in the proposed site and related facilities, and shall invite the comments and recommendations of each agency. The commission shall request any relevant laws, ordinances, or regulations that an agency has promulgated or administered.

Pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 20, section 1877, subsection (f), the CEC staff shall provide information to the local government for review and comment. The relevant language from California Code of Regulations, title 20, section 1877 is as follows:

(f) The opt-in application shall contain preliminary information demonstrating overall net positive economic benefit to the local government that would have had permitting authority over the site and related facility, consistent with Public Resources Code section 25545.9. Staff shall provide the submitted information to the local government for review and comment.

The CEC has set up a web page for the project at the following link:

<https://www.energy.ca.gov/powerplant/solar-photovoltaic-pv/soda-mountain-solar-project>.

The documents which comprise the opt-in application can be found in the project docket, which is accessible via the project webpage or directly at the following link: <https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/Lists/DocketLog.aspx?docketnumber=24-OPT-03>.

The applicant has provided information to demonstrate that the project would provide a net positive economic benefit to the local government that would have had permitting authority in Appendix S Community Benefit Agreement Strategy (TN 257940). We look forward to receiving the County of San Bernardino's comments pursuant to Public Resources Code sections 25519(f) and 25519(k), and California Code of Regulations, title 20, section 1877(f) at your earliest convenience.

The CEC also wishes to make the County of San Bernardino aware that Public Resources Code section 25538 applies to an opt-in application. The language from Public Resources Code section 25538 is as follows:

Upon receiving the commission's request for review under subdivision (f) of Section 25519 and Section 25506, the local agency may request a fee from the commission to reimburse the local agency for the actual and added costs of this review by the local agency. The commission shall reimburse the local agency for the added costs that shall be actually incurred by the local agency in complying with the commission's request.

To stay informed about this project and receive notice of upcoming public meetings, sign up to the project subscription, which can be accessed on the project webpage. Once enrolled, automatic email notifications are sent via govDelivery when documents and notices are posted to the project docket.

Feel free to reach out to me directly via email if you have any questions about this notice. Thank you.

Lisa Worrall  
Project Manager  
California Energy Commission  
[lisa.worrall@energy.ca.gov](mailto:lisa.worrall@energy.ca.gov)

Enclosures: Figure 2-1 Project Site Vicinity (from application, TN 257912)  
Figure 2-6 Project Overview Site Plan (from application TN 257912)



Figure 2-1. Project site vicinity.

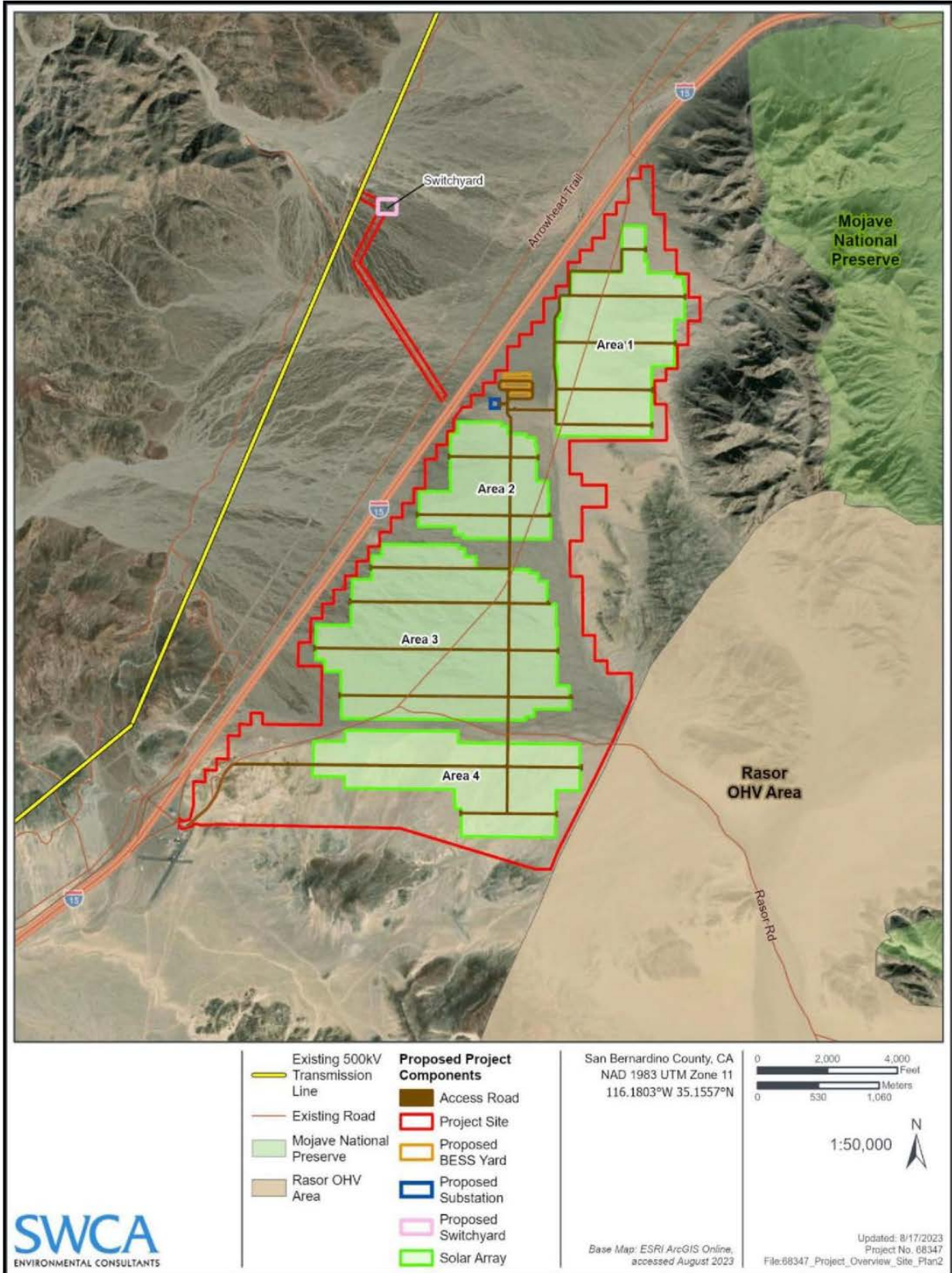


Figure 2-6. Project overview site plan.

Distributed via email to the following contacts:

| <b>First</b> | <b>Last</b> | <b>Title</b>            | <b>Agency</b>  |
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| Manikhone    | Cruz        | Planner                 | County of San Bernardino, Department of Public Works               |
| Daniel R.    | Munsey      | Fire Chief/ Fire Warden | San Bernardino County Fire Protection District                     |
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|              |             |                         | San Bernardino County Land Use Services                            |
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