

DOCKETED

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State of California

California Natural Resources Agency

Memorandum

To: Commissioner Noemi Gallardo, Presiding Member
Commissioner Andrew McAllister, Associate Member

Date: March 5, 2025

From: California Energy Commission
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Eric Veerkamp
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Subject: STATUS REPORT #17 FOR MORTON BAY GEOTHERMAL PROJECT (23-AFC-01)

The Presiding Member's Second Revised Joint Scheduling Order and Order Granting Staff's Motion to Extend Due Dates for the Morton Bay Geothermal Project (MBGP), dated on February 5, 2025 (TN 261553), directs the parties to file monthly status reports. Status reports shall include, 1) a summary of any significant communications with other Parties and other federal, state, local agencies, and tribal governments; 2) a description of the outcome of any public workshop or other coordination meetings held during that month; and 3) a discussion of any factors it is aware of that impact the schedule of the proceeding. Additionally, California Energy Commission (CEC) staff is directed to provide an itemized list and description of all outstanding information needed to complete the Final Staff Assessment (FSA).

Staff continues to comply with the Presiding Member's Scheduling Order for the MBGP Proceeding filed on September 15, 2023 (TN 252284), which orders the parties to file a status report on "October 31st, and by the last business day of every month thereafter." The CEC staff is further ordered to "include summaries of the progress of discovery in each monthly report, including descriptions of significant communications with other federal, state, and local agencies, and tribal governments, and identify any factors that may impact the schedule of the proceeding. Status reports shall also include a description of the outcome of any public workshop or other meeting held during that month."

Summary of Progress of Discovery and Known Issues

On January 31, 2025, the applicant filed Applicant's Response to Staff's Motion to Extend the Due Date for the Final Staff Assessments (TN 261508).

On February 5, 2025, the Committee filed the Second Revised Scheduling Order and Order Granting Staff's Motion to Extend Due Dates (TN 261553).

On February 7, 2025, the applicant filed Applicant's Motion for Suspension of Application for Certification Proceeding for the Morton Bay Geothermal Project (TN 261639).

On February 12, 2025, CURE filed CURE's Response to Applicants' Motion for Suspension of Proceedings (TN 261715).

On February 14, 2025, UAW filed United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America's Response to Applicants' Motion for Suspension of Proceedings (TN 261753).

On February 14, 2025, the CEC staff filed CEC Staff's Reply to Applicant's Suspension Motion (TN 261785).

Schedule Impacts

On February 7, 2025, the applicant filed Applicant's Motion for Suspension of Application for Certification Proceeding for the Morton Bay Geothermal Project (TN 261639). As indicated in Staff's Reply to Applicants' Motion to Suspend filed February 14, 2025 (TN 261785), staff does not oppose the motions to suspend the three geothermal proceedings as well as staff's work on these projects. Staff recommends the applicants be ordered to file bimonthly reports and at least a 30-day notice of any motion to restart proceedings. Staff concurs with CURE's recommendation that a comprehensive filing with all outstanding information be submitted for each project at the time the applicants are ready to reactivate proceedings rather than filing outstanding information on a rolling basis as the applicant's request.

Summary of Outstanding Staff Information/Data Items

<u>Title or Brief Description of Missing Information</u>	<u>Entity Expected to Provide the Missing Information</u>	<u>Expected Date of Receipt of Information</u>	<u>Additional Information (Date Requested)</u>
Water Resources			
Salton Sea Impacts Study	Applicant	Early 2025	July 2024
<u>Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)</u> Letter of Map Revision (LOMR)	FEMA	Unknown	Original request made by applicant directly to FEMA (CEC staff first requested in summer 2024)

Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) (water board) input on applicant backup flood control plan (impoundment infrastructure in the flood plain)	Colorado River Basin RWQCB Water Board	Unknown	January 6, 2025
Project Description			
Revised General Arrangements (site layout with reoriented cooling towers and ponds)	Applicant	Unknown	October 10, 2024, post workshop Informal information request No. 2, TN 259521
Biological Resources			
Biological Assessment for Yuma's Ridgway Rail (Morton Bay)	Applicant	First Quarter 2025	September 19, 2024, workshop and, post- workshop Informal information request No. 4, Nov. 13, 2024, TN 260001 (applicant indicated they were preparing)
Information from applicant regarding access roads to well pads	Applicant	Unknown	January 8, 2025
Agricultural return flow assessment for impacts on desert pupfish and rail habitat.	Applicant	First Quarter 2025	September 19, 2024, workshop (applicant indicated they were preparing) Nov. 13, 2024 post- workshop information

			request No. 4, <u>TN 260001</u>
Information from applicant to assess impacts from well pads, gen-tie segments, and pull site work on wetlands under existing restoration orders that are part of the IID O-N Drain connector project	Applicant	Unknown	January 8, 2025
Air Quality			
Revised air modeling data and Revised data for Nitrogen Deposition analysis (due to reorientation of the facility cooling towers)	Applicant	First Quarter 2025	Post-Workshop Information Request Number 5, dated November 20, 2024 (TN 260393)

CEC staff will continue to follow the directives of the February 5, 2025, Scheduling Order, and provide regular updates to the Committee.