

DOCKETED

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Project Title:	Santa Clara SC-Data Center, Phase 2 Application for Small Power Plant Exemption
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Document Title:	Staff Analysis and Recommendation of Proposed Change to Santa Clara Data Center Project
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Memorandum

To: Chair Weisenmiller
Commissioner Douglas
Commissioner Hochschild
Commissioner McAllister
Commissioner Scott

Date : August 26, 2015

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Subject: **Staff Analysis and recommendation of proposed change to Santa Clara Data Center Project, Docket No. 11-SPPE-01**

Staff received a letter dated July 22, 2015 from DuPont Fabros Technologies, LP informing the California Energy Commission (Energy Commission) that DuPont Fabros is proposing to change the description of the Santa Clara SC-1 Data Center by increasing the capacity from 72 MW to 99 MW. Staff recommends that the Commission acknowledge the notice of change and direct the project owner to receive approvals from the City of Santa Clara and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. Upon conclusion of those reviews, DuPont Fabros shall inform the Commission, and Staff will review the documents to determine if there are any substantial adverse impacts to the environment or energy resources.

The Energy Commission is responsible for licensing all thermal power plants in California that have a capacity of 50 megawatts (MW) or greater. (Pub. Resource Code, sections 25500, 25120.) The Energy Commission may exempt power plants from these requirements if they have a capacity not exceeding 100-MW and if the Energy Commission finds that no substantial adverse impact on the environment or energy resources will result from the construction or operation of the proposed facility or from the modifications. (Pub. Resources Code section 25541.) Such projects remain subject to applicable local permitting requirements.

The Santa Clara SC-1 Data Center was granted an Energy Commission small power plant exemption (11-SPPE-01) on March 28, 2012. With the exception of specific Conditions of Exemption, once a project has been granted an SPPE, the Energy Commission does not maintain active oversight of the project. In this case, the Energy Commission indicated that the project owner must submit any changes in the design and/or operation of the project to the Energy Commission for approval.

Based on review of the project during the SPPE proceeding and the overview provided to Staff of the current proposal, Staff does not believe there will be any adverse impacts on the environment or energy resources. This proposal adds 12 emergency diesel-fired internal combustion back-up generators, each with a capacity of 2.25 MW, for a total of 27 MW. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (District) issued permits for the previous 32 emergency diesel-fired internal combustion engines and would do so for the proposed back-up generators, and address any changes in ancillary equipment that are subject to District permits or oversight (e.g., expansion of cooling towers or diesel storage). We believe the conditions for operation of these proposed back-up generators would be essentially the same as those set forth in the SPPE.

Therefore, Staff recommends that the Commission direct DuPont Fabros to receive approvals from the local regulatory lead CEQA agencies as appropriate, provide Staff with the documentation, and return to the Commission for approval of the project description.