DOCKETED	
Docket Number:	23-AFC-01
Project Title:	Morton Bay Geothermal Project (MBGP)
TN #:	252847
Document Title:	Application for Confidential Designation for Burrowing Owl Survey Report Biological Resources Figures and Appendices
Description:	N/A
Filer:	Amanda Cooey
Organization:	Ellison Schneider Harris & Donlan LLP
Submitter Role:	Applicant Representative
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Docketed Date:	10/31/2023



October 31, 2023

Mr. Drew Bohan Executive Director California Energy Commission 715 P Street Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Morton Bay Geothermal Project (23-AFC-01) Application for Confidential Designation for Burrowing Owl Survey Report Biological Resources Figures and Appendices

Dear Mr. Bohan:

Pursuant to Sections 2505 *et seq.*, of Title 20 of the California Code of Regulations, Morton Bay Geothermal LLC (the "Applicant") hereby submits this *Application for Confidential Designation* for figures and appendices contained in the Burrowing Owl Survey Report submitted in support of the Application for Certification of the Morton Bay Geothermal Project.

Please contact us at (916) 447-2166 if you have any questions or require additional information. Thank you.

Sincerely,

/s/

Samantha G. Neumyer Ellison Schneider Harris & Donlan LLP

Attorneys for Applicant

APPLICATION FOR CONFIDENTIAL DESIGNATION Morton Bay Geothermal Project (23-AFC-01)

Specifically indicate those parts of the record which should be kept confidential.
a. Title, date, and description (including number of pages) of the information or data for which you request confidential designation.

b. Parts of the information or data for which you request confidential designation

Morton Bay Geothermal LLC (the "Applicant") seeks confidential designation for the following biological resources information (the "Information") submitted on behalf of the Morton Bay Geothermal Project ("MBGP"):

- Figures 5, 6a, 6b, 7a, 7b, 8a, 8b;
- Appendix A: 2023 BUOW Breeding Season Proposed Methods, Figure 2;
- Appendix E: Representative BUOW at Burrow Photographs; and
- Appendix G: Occupied Burrow Photographs Within the Biological Study Areas

If granted confidential designation by the California Energy Commission ("CEC"), the Information should be kept confidential in its entirety as it contains sensitive information regarding the location of certain biological resources.

2. State the length of time the record should be kept confidential, and provide justification for the length of time.

The Information should be held confidential for the period determined necessary by the CEC to protect the biological resources identified therein.

- *3. Cite and discuss:*
 - (a) the provisions of the Public Records Act or other law that allow the Commission to keep the information or data confidential, and explain why the provision applies to the material.
 - (b) the public interest in nondisclosure of the material submitted for confidential designation. If the material contains trade secrets or its disclosure would otherwise cause loss of a competitive advantage, please state how it would be lost, the value of the information to the applicant and the ease or difficulty with which the information could be legitimately acquired or duplicated by others.

CEC Staff has directed the Applicant to submit figures and data, such as that contained in the Information, under confidential cover, for an evaluation of whether the figures contain sensitive information regarding special status biological resources.

The Information includes details regarding burrowing owl occurrences and locations in the areas surveyed on behalf of the MBGP, Black Rock Geothermal Project, and Elmore North Geothermal Project. California Government Code Section 7922.000 provides that an agency

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may withhold information from disclosure where the public interest served by nondisclosure clearly outweighs the public interest of disclosure.

The public interest in nondisclosure outweighs that of disclosure, as disclosure may enable the location of sensitive biological resources sites by entities conducting unauthorized collection or disturbance of such resources.

4. State whether the information may be disclosed if it is aggregated with other information or masked to conceal certain portions, and if so the degree of aggregation or masking required.

The Applicant considered whether it would be possible to aggregate or mask the Information. Figures depicting general locations and other descriptive details contained within the Information can be created at a less granular level of detail. Other portions of the documents identified above may be publicly disclosed. The Applicant can prepare a redacted version upon request.

5. State whether and how the information is kept confidential by the applicant and whether it has ever been disclosed to a person other than an employee of the applicant, and if so under what circumstances.

The Information is accessible to employees or consultants working on behalf of the Applicant, the Black Rock Geothermal Project, and the Elmore North Geothermal Project; biological resources professionals and organizations with access to the California Natural Diversity Database; and regulatory agencies that have regulatory oversight or other responsibilities over either the Information or the MBGP.

I certify under penalty of perjury that the information contained in this Application for Confidential Designation is true, correct, and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I am authorized to make this Application and Certification on behalf of the Applicant.

Dated: October 31, 2023

ELLISON SCHNEIDER HARRIS & DONLAN LLP

By: /s/

Samantha G. Neumyer Ellison Schneider Harris & Donlan LLP

Attorneys for the Applicant