



March 1, 2010

Mr. David Flores
California Energy Commission
1516 9th Street,
Sacramento, CA 95814

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CHAIR
Simon Housman
Rancho Mirage

ATTN: Marie McLean

VICE CHAIRMAN
Rod Ballance
Riverside

Subject: Blythe Solar Millennium Project

Dear David and Marie:

COMMISSIONERS

Arthur Butler
Riverside

Thank you for taking the "time out" to stop by, meet with us, and discuss the Blythe Solar Millennium Project. I know your schedule in the area was a hectic one, and we appreciated the opportunity you provided to us to discuss our local concerns with the proposed Solar Millennium Project within the Blythe Airport Influence Area (AIA).

Robin Lowe
Hemet

John Lyon
Riverside

On the surface, Solar Power applications have the "potential" to achieve one of the most important ALUC criteria for development within AIAs, namely low people density development. The problem 'starts' with the fact that there is much about solar technology that is unknown at present. Furthermore, not all solar technologies (photovoltaic, thermal, etc) may be equal in terms of their ability to co-exist successfully in the airport environ.

Glen Holmes
Hemet

Melanie Fesmire
Indio

As we discussed in our meeting, and as condensed below, these are some of RCALUC's major concerns regarding the potential hazards to flight for the Blythe Airport that may be created by the proposed project. In answering these concerns, we firmly believe that the burden of proof is on the applicant to show no incompatibility exists, and to provide qualitative, quantitative science (studies) to review in this regard, rather than generalities:

STAFF

Director
Ed Cooper

- Reflectivity and temporary flash occurrences;

John Guerin
Barbara Santos

- There appears to be some body of literature out there on this subject, http://www.sandia.gov/solar/CSP_papers/Advanced/Glint_Glare_SolarPACES_2009.pdf that can be used to analyze the potential reflection from a specific type of solar array and its impact on aircraft approaching a runway. Factors would include the physical location of the arrays in relation to the runway; tracking movement of the panels themselves; the nature and type of solar being proposed. Certainly more scientific that the parking lot full of car analogy we have been given.

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- Radio frequency emissions from electrical motors (servo) or other on-site equipment (transmission lines) and the potential for interference;
- The height and velocity of thermal plumes from the dry cooling units;
 - analyze in relation to local flight patterns and single events;
 - physical properties; visual; invisible; lack of oxygen within the vented plume
- Height and location of structures, including the dry cooling units and power poles and lines;

- Provision of adequate open space within any portion of the project potentially within Compatibility Zone D; and
- The cumulative impacts of additional hazards to flight considering the amount of existing and proposed solar (and conventional energy generating) facilities surrounding the Blythe Airport.
 - perhaps the most difficult of questions; which distraction becomes the one-to-many for pilots in an obstruction filled airspace.

Without measurable data to determine the level of impacts on each of these issues, we are unable to determine whether this project would be consistent with the Blythe Airport Compatibility Plan ... or present significant hazards to flight that could interfere with airport operations.

Sincerely,
RIVERSIDE COUNTY AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION



Edward C. Cooper, Director

Cc: George Johnson – Riverside County TLMA Director
Ron Goldman – Riverside County Planning Director
Alan Solomon – California Energy Commission
James Adams – California Energy Commission
Sandy Hesnard – CALTRANS, Division of Aeronautics
Chad Davies - Riverside County EDA
Jim Rodkey – Blythe Airport
ALUC Staff