

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 8
PLANNING

464 WEST 4th STREET, 6th Floor MS 725
 SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92401-1400
 PHONE (909) 383-4557
 FAX (909) 383-5936
 TTY (909) 383-6300

DOCKET
09-AFC-7

DATE APR 23 2010
 RECD. APR 26 2010



*Flex your power!
 Be energy efficient!*

April 23, 2010

Mr. Alan Solomon
 Project Manager
 California Energy Commission
 1516 Ninth Street
 Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

Dear Mr. Solomon:

Docket 09-AFC-7, Staff Assessment/Draft Environmental Impact Study
 Palen solar Power Project (09-AFC-7)
 08-RIV 10, 114:402

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has reviewed the Staff Assessment/Draft Environmental Impact Study (SA/DEIS) for the proposed Palen Solar Power Project (PSPP). The PSPP site will comprise of approximately 40-acres of private property and 5,160-acres of federal land managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The site is approximately 0.5 miles north of Interstate 10 (I-10) and 10 miles east of Desert Center in an unincorporated area of Riverside County. An extension of the Corn Springs Road at the I-10 Interchange will access the site.

PSPP will consist of a concentrated solar thermal electric generating facility and will transmit power to the proposed new Southern California Edison Red Bluff substation using an overhead single circuit 230-kilovolt line. There are two possible locations for the proposed substation, both of which cross over, and are south of I-10.

Activities during the 39-month construction phase of the project may cause temporary traffic impacts I-10. Potential transportation impacts and mitigation have been identified and addressed in Section C.10.12-Proposed Conditions of Certification TRANS-1- 5of the SA/DEIS. Our Operations Staff is still reviewing the SA/DEIS and additional comments may be provided.

Although there are no site plans as to the road extension and it has not been determined where the tie-line would cross I-10, the following comments for your review are not to be considered complete, final or inclusive:

SA/DEIS

- Section C- Environmental Analysis, C.10-Traffic and Transportation Page C.10-3 Local Highway and Roads, states "... bicycle and pedestrian circulation is not allowed on freeways such as I-10." It should be noted in case of potential conflicts that bicycles are allowed on State Highways where no alternative route is available. Bicycles are allowed on I-10 from Dillon Road, Coachella to Mesa Drive, Blythe.

Access Road

- Right-of-way (RW) for I-10 extends beyond the Corn Springs Road Interchange. If it is determined that the access road will be within our RW, plans for work within Caltrans RW must be prepared according to most recent Caltrans design standards and construction practices.
- The applicant shall be responsible for maintenance of the access road.

I-10 Tie-line

- When lane closures are required on the State Highway System during construction, we recommend that the Section 517 of the Encroachment Permits Manual be referenced for the proper procedures to manage traffic during construction. The manual can be accessed online at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/developserv/permits/>

Project Development Procedures Manual Chapter 17 Transverse Utility Encroachment

New utility installations, and adjustment or relocation of existing utilities, may be permitted to cross a freeway or expressway. To the extent feasible and practicable, they should cross on a line generally normal to, but not less than 60° from the freeway longitudinal alignment, and preferably under the freeway. The utility should be located in such a manner that it can be serviced, maintained, and operated from outside the right of way, except for special cases covered under "New Utility Longitudinal Encroachments".

Permits

Caltrans has the discretionary authority to issue special permits for the movement of vehicles/loads exceeding statutory limitations on the size, weight, and loading of vehicles contained in Division 15 of the California Vehicle Code. Requests for such special permits require the completion of and application for a Transportation Permit.

Information regarding Transportation Permit application for travel entering the State or beginning **SOUTH** of the San Luis Obispo/Kern County lines (includes Inyo and Mono Counties) contact:

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SOUTH Region Transportation Permits Office
464 West 4th Street, 6th Floor, MS 618
San Bernardino, CA 92401-1400
(909) 383-4637

Or you may visit our web page at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/permits/contact.htm>

Issuance of a Caltrans Encroachment Permit will be required prior to any construction within the RW and shall be in compliance to all current design standards, applicable policies, and construction practices. Please reference the Encroachment Permits Manual at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/developserv/permits/> Chapter 600 Utility Permits for applicable requirements. In addition we recommend referencing the Right of Way Manual Chapter 13 <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/rowman/manual/index.htm> and the Project Development Procedure Manual <http://dot.ca.gov/hq/oppd/pdpm/pdpmn.htm> Chapter 17.

These comments are based upon a review of the materials provided for our evaluation. Other comments detailing possible impacts to State facilities may follow as the project progresses. We appreciate the opportunity to review this project. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at (909) 383-4557 for assistance.

Sincerely,



DANIEL KOPULSKY
Office Chief
Community Planning/Local Development Review

c: Richard Goh, Encroachment Permits Riverside County
Haissam Yahya, Surveillance Region B
John Wilson, Wilson Engineering