



DOCKET

02-REN-1038

February 15, 2011

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California Energy Commission
Dockets Office, MS-4
Re: Docket No. 02-REN-1038
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5504

Re: Comments on Docket No. 02-REN-1038, *RP3 Grant*

The Community Environmental Council is a regional nonprofit founded in 1970 with a mission to help solve some of our toughest environmental problems. Currently our focus is on the issues of climate change and energy use. Our dependence on polluting, expensive fossil fuels is harming our economy and our environment. It is vital that we transition to clean renewable source of energy, and that we take care to build such energy generation in a responsible manner.

We support the CA Energy Commission's efforts to provide support with planning and permitting to governments to evaluate and expedite renewable energy development in their jurisdictions. This comment letter serves to express our opinion that the grant should be including greater community groups participation.

It has been our experience that the biggest hurdles to installing utility scale renewable energy in our region are:

- Ensuring a transparent, thorough, accurate, yet timely review
- Building community support for the process and project

While our local jurisdictions have robust energy review protocols in place, the very nature of renewable energy often makes these processes insufficient. The community is a vital part of the process and should have a greater role in the planning and review process. In particular, community groups can act as conveners in ways that governments cannot. As independent third parties, community groups enjoy a level of trust and impartiality not held by most agencies, governments or developers.

Therefore, we would like recipients of this grant to be able to contract with local community groups to form official early consultation process to bring stakeholders together at the earliest possible time. This can increase transparency, garner credibility and expedite the process. All of these factors will lead to faster and more responsible renewable energy projects.

We thank you for your consideration and look forward to working on this program with you.

Sincerely,

Dave Davis
Executive Director

Megan Birney
Renewable Energy Specialist