



BEFORE THE ENERGY RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
 COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
 1516 NINTH STREET, SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
 1-800-822-6228 – WWW.ENERGY.CA.GOV

DOCKET	
11-AFC-4	
DATE	JAN 17 2012
RECD.	JAN 17 2012

**FOR THE RIO MESA SOLAR
 ELECTRIC GENERATING FACILITY**

Docket No. 11-AFC-04

**NOTICE OF INFORMATIONAL HEARING, ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING
 MEETING, AND PUBLIC SITE VISIT**

On October 14, 2011, Rio Mesa Solar I, LLC, Rio Mesa Solar II, LLC, and Rio Mesa Solar III, LLC (collectively referred to as “Applicant”) jointly filed an Application for Certification (AFC) with the California Energy Commission for three separate certifications to construct and operate three plants known as Rio Mesa I, Rio Mesa II, and Rio Mesa III as a single facility referred to as Rio Mesa Solar Electric Generating Facility (Rio Mesa SEGF). The three limited liability companies are wholly owned by Rio Mesa Solar Holdings, LLC, which in turn, is wholly owned by BrightSource Energy, Inc.

Rio Mesa SEGF will be located on approximately 5,750 acres comprised of public and private land on the Palo Verde Mesa in Riverside County, California. The project will require a right-of-way grant from the federal Bureau of Land Management and an amendment to the California Desert Conservation Area Plan. The project site is approximately 13 miles southwest of Blythe, California.

Each solar plant will use concentrated solar thermal technology to generate 250 megawatts (MW), for a total combined net output of 750 MW. The three plants will be connected by a common overhead 220 kilovolt (kV) generator tie-line to the Southern California Edison (SCE) Colorado River Substation, located approximately 9.7 miles north of the project site.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Energy Commission has designated a Committee of two commissioners to conduct proceedings on the AFC. The Committee has scheduled a public informational hearing, environmental scoping meeting, and site visit to discuss the proposed project as described below:

Wednesday, February 1, 2012

**Site Visit begins (bus leaves City Hall) at 12:30 p.m.
(Applicant will provide lunch during the bus ride)**

Public Informational Hearing/Environmental Scoping Meeting begins at 3:00 p.m.

**Blythe City Hall Council Chambers
235 N. Broadway
Blythe, California 92225
(Map Attached)**

Prior to the informational hearing and environmental scoping meeting, members of the public are invited to join the Committee on a tour of the proposed site. The Applicant will provide transportation to and from the site. For reservations, call the Energy Commission Public Adviser's Office at (916) 654-4489 or 1-800-822-6228 or e-mail: publicadviser@energy.state.ca.us, giving your name, telephone number and the number of persons requesting a reservation.

Please make your reservation on or before January 26, 2012 so that we can assure you a space on the bus.



TELECONFERENCE OPTION: Parties and the public may attend the Informational Hearing and Environmental Scoping Meeting in person at the above location or by telephone and/or by computer via our "WebEx" web conferencing system. For details on how to participate by WebEx, please see the "Participation through WebEx" directions attached to this Notice.

Background

The Energy Commission has begun its review of the AFC. During the review period, Energy Commission staff (Staff) will determine whether the proposed project complies with applicable laws related to public health and safety, environmental impacts, and engineering requirements. The Informational Hearing and Environmental Scoping Meeting are sponsored by the Energy Commission to inform the public about the AFC and to invite public participation in the review process.

As the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Energy Commission is responsible for reviewing and ultimately approving or denying all applications to construct and operate thermal electric power plants, 50 MW and greater, in California. The Energy Commission facility certification process carefully examines public health and safety, environmental impacts and engineering aspects of proposed power plants and all related facilities such as electric transmission lines and natural gas and water pipelines.

Purpose of the Informational Hearing

The power plant licensing process, which incorporates requirements equivalent to the environmental impact report process of CEQA, considers all relevant engineering and environmental aspects of the proposed project. The licensing review provides a public forum allowing an Applicant, Commission Staff, governmental agencies, adjacent landowners, and members of the general public to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the project, and to propose changes, mitigation measures, and alternatives as necessary.

This Informational Hearing and Environmental Scoping Meeting provide an opportunity for members of the community in the project vicinity to obtain information, to offer comments and concerns, and to view the project site. The Applicant will explain plans for developing the project. Staff will explain the administrative licensing process for this proposed project and Staff's role in reviewing the AFC.

Project Description

The AFC proposes a facility comprised of three concentrating solar thermal electrical generating plants with shared common areas and systems. Each plant requires approximately 1,850 acres of land. The total area required for all three plants and their shared facilities is approximately 5,750 acres.

The first plant, known as Rio Mesa I, would be constructed at the south end of the project site. The second plant, known as Rio Mesa II, would be located in the central portion of the project site. The third plant, known as Rio Mesa III, would be located in the northern portion of the project site. Each plant will generate 250 MW using solar energy as its primary fuel source.

Each plant will use a solar power boiler located on top of a dedicated 750-foot tall concrete tower and will also have a solar field based on heliostat mirror technology developed by BrightSource. The heliostat fields will focus solar energy on the solar power boiler, which in turn, will convert the solar energy to superheated steam.

To save water in the proposed project's desert environment, each solar plant would use an air-cooling condenser for the main steam cycle. Raw water would be drawn daily from on-site wells located in the common area. The groundwater would be treated in an on-site treatment system for use as potable water, service water, firewater, boiler make-up water, auxiliary cooling water and, for washing the heliostats.

The project's natural gas system will connect to the TransCanada Gas Transmission Company (TCGT) North Baja pipeline, which runs adjacent to the eastern edge of the solar fields. Physical facilities associated with the natural gas supply system include one or more tap and meter stations to be located on the main TCGT pipeline. A gas metering station will be required at the TCGT tap point to measure and record gas volumes and facilities will be installed either at the tap station or the powerblock to regulate the gas pressure and to remove any liquids or solid particles. The metering station will require a minimum area of approximately 150 feet by 150 feet.

The Rio Mesa SEGF will be interconnected to the SCE grid through upgrades to SCE's 220-kV Palo Verde-Devers line, which is north of the project site. The upgrades will include SCE's construction of a new 220/500-kV substation (Colorado River Substation) adjacent to the Palo Verde-Devers line. Power from the Rio Mesa SEGF will be transmitted at 220-kV to the new substation along a common 9.7-mile long generator-tie line.

The project site has been previously disturbed by World War II military operations and subsequent investigative activities in the 1970s related to the SunDesert Nuclear Power Plant proposed by San Diego Gas and Electric.

If approved, construction of the project would take place in three phases over a period of 36 months. The engineering and environmental details of the proposed project are contained in the AFC, which may be viewed at:

<http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/riomesa/index.html>

Copies of the AFC are available at the local public agencies that are involved in the review process and at the following libraries: Palo Verde Valley District Library, Riverside Main Library, Lake Tamarisk Library, and the Coachella Branch Library. Copies are also available at the Energy Commission's Library in Sacramento, the California State Library in Sacramento, and at public libraries in Eureka, Fresno, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego. In addition, copies will be distributed to those public agencies that would normally have jurisdiction except for the Energy Commission's exclusive authority to certify sites and related facilities.

Proposed Schedule and Issue Identification Report

To assist the parties and public in understanding the process, Staff shall file a proposed schedule for AFC review. Staff shall also file an Issue Identification Report summarizing the major issues. The proposed schedule and Staff's report shall be filed no later than **5:00 p.m. on January 25, 2012**. The Applicant shall file a joint response, if any, no later than **noon on January 30, 2012**.

At the Informational Hearing and Environmental Scoping Meeting, Staff and Applicant shall indicate whether anticipated data responses would resolve any issues of concern raised in Staff's Issue Identification Report.

Public Adviser and Public Participation

The Energy Commission invites members of the public and other interested parties to participate either on an informal basis or by intervening in the proceeding. Both types of participation allow written and oral comments. At the informal participation level, written and oral public comments are considered by the Commissioners and are part of the record, but are not part of the formal evidentiary record. Intervenors have the right to introduce evidence into the evidentiary record and cross-examine the other parties' witnesses.

The Energy Commission's Public Adviser's Office is available to provide the public with an understanding of a proceeding and to make recommendations for meaningful participation. For assistance, contact Jennifer Jennings, the Public Adviser, at (916) 654-4489 or 800-822-6228 or e-mail at: **[publicadviser@energy.state.ca.us]**.

If you have a disability and need assistance to participate in this event, contact Lourdes Quiroz no less than five days prior to the hearing at 916-654-5146 or e-mail: **[lquiroz@energy.state.ca.us]**.

Information

Questions of a legal or procedural nature should be directed to Kourtney Vaccaro, the Hearing Adviser, at (916) 654-4328 or e-mail: **[kvaccaro@energy.state.ca.us]**.

Technical questions concerning the project should be addressed to Pierre Martinez, the Staff Project Manager, at (916) 651-3765 or e-mail: **[pmartine@energy.state.ca.us]**.

Media inquiries should be directed to the Office of Media and Public Communications at (916) 654-4989 or e-mail: **[mediaoffice@energy.state.ca.us]**.

Information concerning the status of the project, as well as notices and other relevant documents may be viewed on the Energy Commission's Internet web page at: **[<http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/riomesa/index.html>]**.

Dated: January 17, 2012, at Sacramento, California.

Original Signed By:

CARLA PETERMAN
Commissioner and Presiding Member
Rio Mesa SEGF AFC Committee

Original Signed By:

KAREN DOUGLAS
Commissioner and Associate Member
Rio Mesa SEGF AFC Committee

Mailed to Lists: POS, 7411, 7412, 7413, 7414

PARTICIPATION IN THE INFORMATIONAL HEARING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING MEETING
THROUGH WEBEX
THE ENERGY COMMISSION'S ON-LINE MEETING SERVICE

1. COMPUTER LOG-ON WITH A DIRECT PHONE NUMBER:

- Please go to <https://energy.webex.com> and enter the meeting number unique to the specific hearing date:

➤ 2/1/12 - meeting number: **921 423 589**

When prompted, enter your information and the meeting password: **riomesa#1**

After you login, a prompt will appear on-screen for you to provide your phone number. In the **Number box**, type your area code and phone number and click OK. **You will receive a call back on your phone for the audio of the meeting.** International callers can use the "Country/Region" button to help make their connection.

2. COMPUTER LOG-ON FOR CALLERS WITH AN EXTENSION PHONE NUMBER, ETC:

- Please go to <https://energy.webex.com> and enter the unique meeting number:

- 2/1/12 - meeting number: **921 423 589**

When prompted, enter your information and the meeting password: **riomesa#1**

After you login, a prompt will ask for your phone number. Click "CANCEL."

- ***Instead** call 1-866-469-3239 (toll-free in the U.S. and Canada). When prompted, enter the meeting number above and your unique Attendee ID number which is listed in the top left area of your screen after you login.*

3. TELEPHONE ONLY (NO COMPUTER ACCESS):

- Call **1-866-469-3239** (toll-free in the U.S. and Canada) and when prompted enter the meeting number:

- 2/1/12 - meeting number: **921 423 589**

If you have difficulty joining the meeting, please call the WebEx Technical Support number at 1-866-229-3239. To see if your computer is compatible, visit [<http://support.webex.com/support/system-requirements.html>].

Please be aware that the meeting's WebEx audio and on-screen activity may be recorded.

**Blythe City Hall Council Chambers
235 N Broadway
Blythe, CA 92225**



Wednesday, February 1, 2012

**Site Visit begins (bus leaves City Hall) at 12:30 p.m.
Informational Hearing/Environmental Scoping Meeting begins at 3:00 p.m.**



**BEFORE THE ENERGY RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
1516 NINTH STREET, SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
1-800-822-6228 – WWW.ENERGY.CA.GOV**

**APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION
FOR THE *RIO MESA SOLAR*
*ELECTRIC GENERATING FACILITY***

**DOCKET NO. 11-AFC-04
PROOF OF SERVICE
(Revised 1/17/12)**

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*indicates change

DECLARATION OF SERVICE

I, Maggie Read, declare that on, January 17, 2012, I served and filed copies of the attached NOTICE OF INFORMATIONAL HEARING, ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING MEETING, AND PUBLIC SITE VISIT, dated January 17, 2012. These documents are accompanied by the most recent Proof of Service list, located on the web page for this project at:

[<http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/riomesa/index.html>].

The documents have been sent to the other parties in this proceeding (as shown on the Proof of Service list) and to the Commission's Docket Unit or Chief Counsel, as appropriate, in the following manner:

(Check all that Apply)

For service to all other parties:

- Served electronically to all e-mail addresses on the Proof of Service list;
- Served by delivering on this date, either personally, or for mailing with the U.S. Postal Service with first-class postage thereon fully prepaid, to the name and address of the person served, for mailing that same day in the ordinary course of business; that the envelope was sealed and placed for collection and mailing on that date to those addresses **NOT** marked "e-mail preferred."

AND

For filing with the Docket Unit at the Energy Commission:

- by sending electronic copies to the e-mail address below (preferred method); **OR**
- by depositing an original and 12 paper copies in the mail with the U.S. Postal Service with first class postage thereon fully prepaid, as follows:

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION – DOCKET UNIT
Attn: Docket No. 11-AFC-4
1516 Ninth Street, MS-4
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512
docket@energy.state.ca.us

OR, if filing a Petition for Reconsideration of Decision or Order pursuant to Title 20, § 1720:

- Served by delivering on this date one electronic copy by e-mail, and an original paper copy to the Chief Counsel at the following address, either personally, or for mailing with the U.S. Postal Service with first class postage thereon fully prepaid:

California Energy Commission
Michael J. Levy, Chief Counsel
1516 Ninth Street MS-14
Sacramento, CA 95814
mlevy@energy.state.ca.us

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct, that I am employed in the county where this mailing occurred, and that I am over the age of 18 years and not a party to the proceeding.

Original signed by: _____
Maggie Read
Hearing Adviser's Office