

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

REPORT OF CONVERSATION

Page 1 of 1

DOCKET

11-AFC-2

DATE MAR 28 2012

RECD. JUN 01 2012



Siting, Transmission, and Environmental Protection Division

FILE: 11-AFC-2

PROJECT TITLE: Hidden Hills Solar Electric Generating System

<input type="checkbox"/> Email	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phone	<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting Location:	
NAME: Eric Flodine, Vice President of Community Planning		DATE: March 28, 2012	TIME:
WITH: Strata Equity Group, San Diego, CA			
SUBJECT: Assembling large land purchases of private land for utility-scale solar development			

Staff was informed that Eric Flodine works as an agent for a company that has put together several large solar power plant sites in the West Mojave north of Edwards Air Force Base. Staff spoke with Eric to ask for information on the work required to negotiate purchases of large land areas for development of solar energy projects. General information on negotiating a theoretical purchase of thousands of acres of private land for a renewable solar project is applicable to the analysis of potential feasibility issues for the Sandy Valley Off-site Alternative, which is mostly in private ownership.

Eric briefly described the completed assemblage of over 11,000 acres in the Mojave Desert. Of the total acreage, several of the properties were extremely large, and approximately 6,000 acres of the total area were owned by one landowner. The entire land purchase involved 66 parcels and 40 separate landowners. Negotiations and purchases were completed in approximately 4 years.

Eric stated that the purchase price is not the issue. In other words, the cost to purchase lands from multiple owners is not the thing that will be the most difficult to overcome. Eric indicated that timing is extremely important; the time it could take to purchase such lands is more relevant to the effort than land costs. Title exceptions on a property or properties can be very complicated (e.g., mineral rights, various easements, road rights), and these complications can extend the time required to complete the necessary research to complete a land purchase. Genealogical research is required on occasion.

Eric stated that a group of landowners will generally fall into three categories: (1) a few eager sellers, (2) a few who think they own gold, and (3) a few who will not sell.

Staff asked about the time it could potentially take to negotiate purchasing land at the Sandy Valley Off-site Alternative site for development of a renewable solar facility. The Sandy Valley study area includes 3,354 acres, and staff estimates that ownership is divided between approximately 24 individual landowners (including three parcels that are management by the Bureau of Land Management [BLM]). Based on a rough estimate by Eric (3,000 acres owned by 24 landowners, without specifically accounting for the BLM-managed land), it could take over 2 years to assemble the necessary land for purchase. This estimate assumes one successful land purchase per month if the entire purchase was completed in 2 years.

CC: Jeanine Hinde

Amanda Stennick

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