

Memorandum



Date: July 12, 2013
Telephone: (916) 651-8891
File: 09-AFC-6C

To: **Commissioner Karen Douglas**, Presiding Member, Siting Committee for the Blythe Solar Power Project Amendment
Commissioner David Hochschild, Associate Member, Siting Committee for the Blythe Solar Power Project Amendment
Raoul Renaud, Hearing Officer, Blythe Solar Power Project Amendment

From: **California Energy Commission - 1516 Ninth Street Sacramento, CA 95814-5512** **Mary Dyas**, Compliance Project Manager
Siting, Transmission and Environmental Protection Division

Subject: **Blythe Solar Power Project Amendment (09-AFC-6C), STATUS UPDATE No. 1**

Data Requests

Data Request Set No. 1 (1–19) was published on May 29, 2013. In response to Data Request Set No. 1, the project owner’s Data Response Set No. 1 was received and docketed on June 20, 2013. Staff will be issuing Data Request Set No. 2 in the technical areas of Biological Resources and Socioeconomics. Staff anticipates docketing this request by July 11, 2013.

Staff Issues/Comments

1. Biological Resources

Staff provides the following update on information needed. Polarized light pollution, an impact associated with photovoltaic (PV) technology, is an environmental impact that is not known to occur with solar thermal projects, and so it was not analyzed during the original project proceeding. Polarized light may affect foraging behaviors, navigation, and orientation in birds. Therefore, staff will be requesting a discussion on collision risk, the various PV technologies being considered, and the identification of design measures to minimize and mitigate any negative ecological impacts.

2. Socioeconomics

The Petition to Amend provides the peak and average construction workforce numbers for the approved Blythe Solar Power Project. However, with the change in technology proposed for the modified project, staff requires additional information. Staff will be requesting more details on the workforce for the proposed modified project, including specific information about positions, schedules, and workforce relocation.

Staff Workshops

A workshop will be held in the future, after the Staff Assessment (SA) has been published.

Agency and Tribal Coordination

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is currently preparing a Notice of Intent for the amendment after which additional scoping is scheduled for late July. BLM Tribal scoping is tentatively scheduled for late July into mid-August. Biological Resources staff is currently working with the BLM, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and the California Department of Fish & Wildlife to ensure biological information is up-to-date and Cultural Resources staff is preparing for tribal consultations.

Schedule

The current Committee schedule identifies the Blythe Solar SA being published by July 17, 2013. Staff notes that the schedule issued in the Committee Scheduling Order is slipping due to technical staff's being directed to give priority to working on the Palen Solar Electric Generating System Amendment Preliminary SA and the Hydrogen Energy California PSA. Staff otherwise is diligently working to incorporate the newly obtained information provided in the applicant's Data Response Set No. 1. For the Blythe Solar SA to include a thorough analysis of the project, including additional data expected in response to Data Request Set No. 2, staff is working to publish the SA by August 30, 2013. The schedule below indicates new proposed dates based on the publishing date of the SA.

ACTIVITY	Committee Schedule May 15, 2013	Revised Schedule
Applicant files Petition for Amendment	06/29/2012	N/A
Applicant files Revised Petition for Amendment	04/12/2013	N/A
Staff files Data Requests	05/24/2013	05/29/2013
Applicant Files Responses to Data Requests	06/17/2013	06/20/2013
Parties file Status Reports 1	06/17/2013	07/11/2013
Staff Assessment Files	07/15/2013	08/30/2013
Staff Assessment Workshop	08/21/2013*	09/26/2013*
Staff Assessment Comment Period Closes	08/13/2013	09/30/2013
Parties File Status Reports 2	08/13/2013	09/30/2013
Supplemental Staff Assessment (if necessary)	09/13/2013	10/30/2013*
Committee Hearing on the Staff Assessment	10/07/2013	11/29/2013*
Proposed Decision	11/08/2013	12/08/2013*
Final Decision Adoption Hearing	1 st Business Meeting in December 2013	1 st Business Meeting in January 2014

*estimated dates; separate written notice will be provided for Workshop and Committee Hearing on Staff Assessment.

cc: Docket (09-AFC-6C)
Proof of Service List
Mail list # 7368