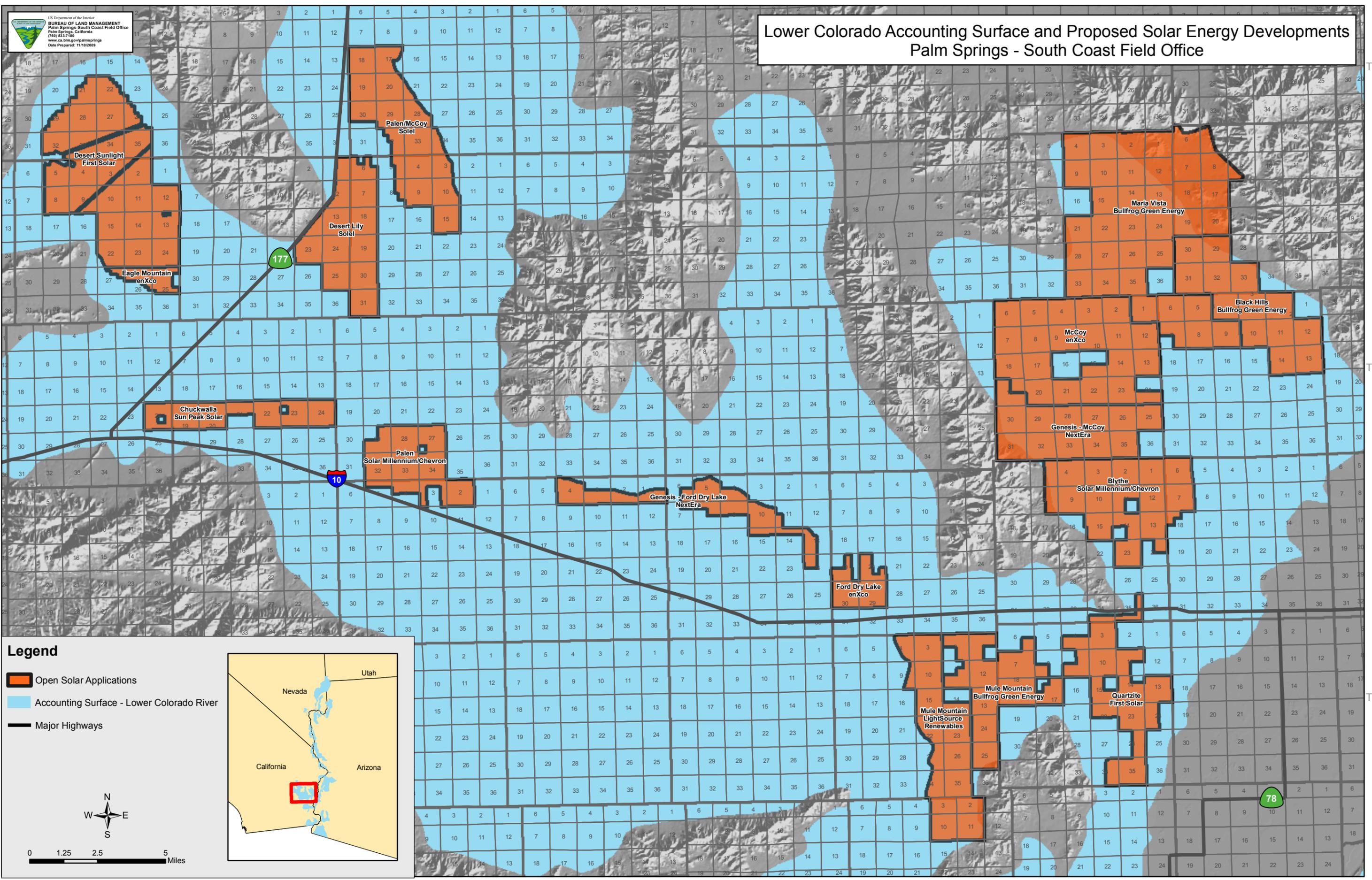


5.b. - Blythe and Palen Solar Power Projects

Lower Colorado Accounting Surface and Proposed Solar Energy Developments Palm Springs - South Coast Field Office



Legend

- Open Solar Applications
- Accounting Surface - Lower Colorado River
- Major Highways



CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

1516 NINTH STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814-5512
www.energy.ca.gov

09-AFC-6

DATE DEC 21 2009

RECD DEC 21 2009

**TO: AGENCY DISTRIBUTION LIST**

REQUEST FOR AGENCY PARTICIPATION IN THE REVIEW OF THE BLYTHE SOLAR POWER PROJECT, DISTRIBUTION OF APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION SUPPLEMENT (09-AFC-6)

On August 24, 2009, the California Energy Commission received an Application For Certification (AFC) from Solar Millennium, LLC and Chevron Energy Solutions to construct and operate the Blythe Solar Power Project in Riverside County. On October 26, 2009, a Supplement to the AFC was received and evaluated by staff. Subsequently, at the Energy Commission's November 18, 2009 Business Meeting, the AFC was deemed complete, beginning staff's analysis of the proposed project.

As part of our review process, the staff of the Energy Commission endeavors to work closely with local, state and federal agencies to ensure that all laws, ordinances, regulations and standards are met and incorporated into the final decision of the Energy Commission.

Project Description

The Blythe Solar Power Project (project) is a concentrated solar thermal electric generating facility with four adjacent, independent, and identical units of 250 megawatt (MW) nominal capacity each for a total nominal capacity of 1,000 MW. The project is proposed to be located in the southern California inland desert, approximately eight miles west of the city of Blythe and two miles north of the Interstate-10 freeway in Riverside County, California. The applicants are seeking a right-of-way grant for approximately 9,400 acres of lands owned by the Federal government and administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Construction and operation of the project would disturb a total of about 7,030 acres.

The project would generate electric power through solar energy using parabolic trough technology. Pipelines supplying water would be routed from on-site wells to water treatment units. Water would be used principally for solar mirror washing, feedwater makeup, onsite domestic use, cooling of auxiliary equipment, and firewater supply. Total water consumption for the project is estimated at 600 acre-feet per year.

A natural gas pipeline for cold start up and freeze protection would be installed parallel to the project's new access road and would tie into a gas transmission pipeline south of Interstate-10. Proposed electric transmission lines would connect each steam turbine generator to a central internal switchyard. From this switchyard, a new single-circuit three-phase 500 kilovolt (kV) transmission line would interconnect with Southern California Edison's regional transmission system at its planned Colorado River substation. If approved, project construction would begin in the fourth quarter of 2010, with commercial operation commencing in the second quarter of 2013.

**PROOF OF SERVICE (REVISED 12/15/09) FILED WITH
ORIGINAL MAILED FROM SACRAMENTO ON 12/21/09**

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Energy Commission and Bureau of Land Management Joint Review Process

The BLM and the Energy Commission have executed a Memorandum of Understanding concerning their intent to conduct a joint environmental review of the project in a single National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process. It is in the interest of the BLM and the Energy Commission to share in the preparation of a joint environmental analysis of the proposed project to avoid duplication of staff efforts, to share staff expertise and information, to promote intergovernmental coordination at the local, state, and federal levels, and to facilitate public review by providing a joint document and a more efficient environmental review process.

Under federal law, the BLM is responsible for processing requests for rights-of-way to authorize the proposed project and associated transmission lines and other facilities to be constructed and operated on land it manages. In processing applications, the BLM must comply with the requirements of NEPA, which requires that federal agencies reviewing projects under their jurisdiction consider the environmental impacts associated with the proposed project construction and operation.

As the lead agency under 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's 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.

Agency Participation

To ensure that the Energy Commission has the information needed in order to make a decision, the Energy Commission's regulations identify a special role for federal, state, and local agencies (see, California Code of Regulations, title 20, sections 1714, 1714.3, 1714.5, 1742, 1743, and 1744). As a result, we request that you conduct a review of the AFC and provide us with the following information:

- 1) a discussion of those aspects of the proposed site and related facilities for which your agency would have jurisdiction but for the exclusive jurisdiction of the Energy Commission to certify sites and related facilities;
- 2) a determination of the completeness of the list in the AFC of the laws, regulations, ordinances, or standards which your agency administers or enforces and would be applicable to the proposed site and related facilities but for the Energy Commission's exclusive jurisdiction;
- 3) a description of the nature and scope of the requirements which the applicant would need to meet in order to satisfy the substantive requirements of your agency but for the Energy Commission's exclusive jurisdiction, and identification of any analyses that the Energy Commission should perform in order to determine whether these substantive requirements can be met; and
- 4) an analysis of whether there is a reasonable likelihood that the proposed project will be able to comply with your agency's applicable substantive requirements.

December 21, 2009

Page 3

The scope of your agency's comments on the AFC should encompass significant concerns, and substantive requirements that would be required for permitting by your agency but for the Energy Commission's exclusive jurisdiction or certification (California Code of Regulations, title 20, section 1714.5, subdivision (a)(2)). Please let us know if you need additional information or need to perform analyses or studies in order to resolve any concerns of your agency (California Code of Regulations, title 20, section 1714.5).

The project was found to be data adequate on **November 18, 2009**, we request that all agency comments be provided to us by **January 18, 2010**, except for the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District's Preliminary and Final Determinations of Compliance, which should be provided by **March 18, 2010** and **May 18, 2010**, respectively. You may be asked to present and explain your conclusions at public and evidentiary hearings on the project (see, California Code of Regulations, title 20, sections 1714.3, 1714.5, 1743, 1744.5, and 1748). Local agencies may seek reimbursement for reasonable costs incurred in responding to these requests. However, per California Code of Regulations, title 20, section 1715 reimbursement is not available to state and federal agencies.

Enclosed is a copy of the AFC in electronic format (CD). If you would like to have a hard copy of the AFC sent to you, if you have questions, or if you would like to participate in the Energy Commission's review of the proposed project, please contact Alan Solomon, Energy Commission Project Manager, at (916) 653-8236, or by email at asolomon@energy.state.ca.us. The status of the proposed project, copies of notices, a copy of the AFC, and other relevant documents are also available on the Energy Commission's Internet web site at:

http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/solar_millennium_blythe/index.html. You can also subscribe to receive email notification of all notices at <http://www.energy.ca.gov/listservers>.

Sincerely,

Eileen Allen, Manager
Energy Facilities Siting and Dockets Office

Enclosure

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

1516 NINTH STREET
 SACRAMENTO, CA 95814-5512
 www.energy.ca.gov

09-AFC-7DATE DEC 21 2009RECD DEC 21 2009

TO: AGENCY DISTRIBUTION LIST

REQUEST FOR AGENCY PARTICIPATION IN THE REVIEW OF THE PALEN SOLAR POWER PROJECT, DISTRIBUTION OF APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION SUPPLEMENT (09-AFC-7)

On August 24, 2009, the California Energy Commission received an Application For Certification (AFC) from Solar Millennium, LLC and Chevron Energy Solutions to construct and operate the Palen Solar Power Project in Riverside County. On October 26, 2009, a Supplement to the AFC was received and evaluated by staff. Subsequently, at the Energy Commission's November 18, 2009 Business Meeting, the AFC was deemed complete, beginning staff's analysis of the proposed project.

As part of our review process, the staff of the Energy Commission endeavors to work closely with local, state and federal agencies to ensure that all laws, ordinances, regulations and standards are met and incorporated into the final decision of the Energy Commission.

Project Description

The Palen Solar Power Project (project) is a concentrated solar thermal electric generating facility with two adjacent, independent, and identical units of 250 megawatt (MW) nominal capacity each for a total nominal capacity of 500 MW. The project is proposed to be located in the Southern California inland desert, approximately 10 miles east of the small community of Desert Center, in eastern Riverside County, California; approximately halfway between the cities of Indio and Blythe; and about three miles east of the southeast end of Joshua Tree National Park. The applicants are seeking a right-of-way grant for approximately 5,200 acres of lands owned by the federal government and administrated by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Construction and operation of the project would disturb a total of about 2,970 acres.

The project would generate electric power through solar energy using parabolic trough technology. Pipelines supplying water would be routed from on-site wells to water treatment units. Water would be used principally for solar mirror washing, feedwater makeup, onsite domestic use, cooling of auxiliary equipment, and firewater supply. Total water consumption for the project is estimated at 300 acre-feet per year.

The project would use two propane-fueled boilers for quick startup and two heaters for freeze protection. Electric transmission lines would connect each steam turbine generator to a central internal switchyard. From this switchyard, a new double-circuit 230 kilovolt (kV) transmission line would interconnect with Southern California Edison's (SCE) regional transmission system at its planned Red Bluff substation. If approved, project construction would begin in the fourth quarter of 2010, with commercial operation commencing in mid 2013.

**PROOF OF SERVICE (REVISED 12/15/09) FILED WITH
 ORIGINAL MAILED FROM SACRAMENTO ON 12/21/09**

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Energy Commission and Bureau of Land Management Joint Review Process

The BLM and the Energy Commission have executed a Memorandum of Understanding concerning their intent to conduct a joint environmental review of the project in a single National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process. It is in the interest of the BLM and the Energy Commission to share in the preparation of a joint environmental analysis of the proposed project to avoid duplication of staff efforts, to share staff expertise and information, to promote intergovernmental coordination at the local, state, and federal levels, and to facilitate public review by providing a joint document and a more efficient environmental review process.

Under federal law, the BLM is responsible for processing requests for rights-of-way to authorize the proposed project and associated transmission lines and other facilities to be constructed and operated on land it manages. In processing applications, the BLM must comply with the requirements of NEPA, which requires that federal agencies reviewing projects under their jurisdiction consider the environmental impacts associated with the proposed project construction and operation.

As the lead agency under 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's 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.

Agency Participation

To ensure that the Energy Commission has the information needed in order to make a decision, the Energy Commission's regulations identify a special role for federal, state, and local agencies (see, California Code of Regulations, title 20, sections 1714, 1714.3, 1714.5, 1742, 1743, and 1744). As a result, we request that you conduct a review of the AFC and provide us with the following information:

- 1) a discussion of those aspects of the proposed site and related facilities for which your agency would have jurisdiction but for the exclusive jurisdiction of the Energy Commission to certify sites and related facilities;
- 2) a determination of the completeness of the list in the AFC of the laws, regulations, ordinances, or standards which your agency administers or enforces and would be applicable to the proposed site and related facilities but for the Energy Commission's exclusive jurisdiction;
- 3) a description of the nature and scope of the requirements which the applicant would need to meet in order to satisfy the substantive requirements of your agency but for the Energy Commission's exclusive jurisdiction, and identification of any analyses that the Energy Commission should perform in order to determine whether these substantive requirements can be met; and
- 4) an analysis of whether there is a reasonable likelihood that the proposed project will be able to comply with your agency's applicable substantive requirements.

December 21, 2009

Page 3

The scope of your agency's comments on the AFC should encompass *significant* concerns, and substantive requirements that would be required for permitting by your agency but for the Energy Commission's exclusive jurisdiction or certification (California Code of Regulations, title 20, section 1714.5, subdivision (a)(2); emphasis added). Please let us know if you need additional information or need to perform analyses or studies in order to resolve any concerns of your agency (California Code of Regulations, title 20, section 1714.5).

The project was found to be data adequate on **November 18, 2009**, we request that all agency comments be provided to us by **January 18, 2010**, except for the South Coast Air Quality Management District's Preliminary and Final Determinations of Compliance, which should be provided by **March 18, 2010** and **May 18, 2010**, respectively. You may be asked to present and explain your conclusions at public and evidentiary hearings on the project (see, California Code of Regulations, title 20, sections 1714.3, 1714.5, 1743, 1744.5, and 1748). Local agencies may seek reimbursement for reasonable costs incurred in responding to these requests. However, per California Code of Regulations, title 20, section 1715 reimbursement is not available to state and federal agencies.

Enclosed is a copy of the AFC in electronic format (CD). If you would like to have a hard copy of the AFC sent to you, if you have questions, or if you would like to participate in the Energy Commission's review of the proposed project, please contact Alan Solomon, Energy Commission Project Manager, at (916) 653-8236, or by email at asolomon@energy.state.ca.us. The status of the proposed project, copies of notices, a copy of the AFC, and other relevant documents are also available on the Energy Commission's Internet web site at:

http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/solar_millennium_palen/index.html. You can also subscribe to receive email notification of all notices at <http://www.energy.ca.gov/listservers>.

Sincerely,

Eileen Allen, Manager
Energy Facilities Siting and Dockets Office

Enclosure

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, California 95814Main website: www.energy.ca.gov**DOCKET****09-AFC-6**

DATE _____

RECD DEC 23 2009

Notice of Staff Workshop on Data Responses for the Blythe and Palen Solar Power Projects (09-AFC-6) and (09-AFC-7)

The California Energy Commission staff will conduct a combined workshop for the proposed Blythe and Palen Solar Power Projects to discuss staff's data requests and to work towards resolving issues. All interested agencies and members of the public are invited to participate.

The workshop will be held:

**Thursday, January 7, 2010
Starting at 9:30 am**

**California Energy Commission
Hearing Room B
1516 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512
(Wheelchair Accessible)**

Call-in Number (toll free): **888-955-8942** (pass code: **59103**)

PURPOSE

The purpose of the workshop is to allow staff, the applicant, interested agencies, and the public to discuss Solar Millennium's Data Responses which are expected to be filed on January 6, 2010, and to work towards resolving project issues. Subjects to be discussed include: Alternatives, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources and Soil & Water Resources. Other technical areas of the data requests and data responses may be discussed as necessary.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

On August 24, 2009, the California Energy Commission received an Application For Certification (AFC) from Solar Millennium, LLC and Chevron Energy Solutions to construct and operate the Blythe and Palen Solar Power Projects in Riverside County.

The Blythe project is proposed to be located in the southern California inland desert, approximately eight miles west of the city of Blythe and two miles north of the Interstate-

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ORIGINAL MAILED FROM SACRAMENTO ON 12/23/09**

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10 freeway in Riverside County, California. The applicants are seeking a right-of-way grant for approximately 9,400 acres of lands owned by the Federal government and administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Construction and operation of the project would disturb a total of about 7,030 acres. The Blythe project would have a nominal capacity of 1,000 MW.

The Palen project is proposed to be located in the Southern California inland desert, approximately 10 miles east of the small community of Desert Center, in eastern Riverside County, California; approximately halfway between the cities of Indio and Blythe; and about three miles east of the southeast end of Joshua Tree National Park. The applicants are seeking a right-of-way grant for approximately 5,200 acres of lands owned by the federal government and administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Construction and operation of the project would disturb a total of about 2,970 acres. The Palen project would have a nominal capacity of 500 MW.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Over the coming months, the Energy Commission will conduct a number of public workshops and hearings to determine whether the proposed project should be approved for construction and operation and, if so, under what set of conditions. The workshops will provide the public as well as local, state and federal agencies the opportunity to participate in reviewing the proposed project. The Energy Commission will issue notices for these workshops and hearings at least ten days prior to the meeting. If you are not currently receiving these notices and wish to be placed on the mailing list, please contact Hilarie Anderson, Project Assistant, at (916) 651-0479, or by email at handerso@energy.state.ca.us.

If you desire information about participating in the Energy Commission's review of the proposed project, please contact the Energy Commission's Public Adviser by phone at (916) 654-4701 or toll free in California at (800) 822-6228, or by email at publicadviser@energy.state.ca.us. Technical or project schedule questions should be directed to Alan Solomon, Energy Commission Project Manager, at (916) 653-8236, or by email at asolomon@energy.state.ca.us. News media inquiries should be directed to (916) 654-4989, or by email at mediaoffice@energy.state.ca.us.

Date: _____

TERRENCE O'BRIEN, Deputy Director
Siting, Transmission & Environmental
Protection Division

Proof of Service List
Mail Lists:

**ENERGY COMMISSION STAFF DATA RESPONSE WORKSHOP
FOR THE BLYTHE AND PALEN SOLAR POWER PROJECTS
(09-AFC-6) AND (09-AFC-7)**

**Thursday, January 7, 2010
Starting at 9:30 am**

**California Energy Commission
Hearing Room B
1516 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512
(Wheelchair Accessible)**

