CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION
1516 NINTH STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814-5512

DOCKET
01-AFC-24C
DATE JAN 27 2006
RECD. JAN 27 2006

DATE: January 27, 2006

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Connie Bruins, Compliance Project Manager

SUBJECT: **PALOMAR ENERGY PROJECT (01-AFC-24C)**
ERRATA TO STAFF ANALYSIS
RE: CORRECTION TO NOISE LEVEL LIMITS

Palomar Energy, LLC, the owner/operator of the Palomar Energy Project, has requested to correct the noise level limits at two locations during plant operation specified in the existing Condition of Certification NOISE-6.

Staff's analysis, which was mailed to the post-certification mailing list on December 22, 2005, included project impacts on a proposed hospital that may or may not be constructed across the Citricado Parkway from the power plant. The analysis concluded that the project would not cause any adverse impacts on the proposed hospital.

On January 12, 2006, staff determined that the initial calculations made for the analysis of the proposed hospital were incorrect in that the permitted plant noise levels were taken from the wrong table in the Final Staff Analysis. The conclusions in this errata do not change from those reached in the original analysis.

The amendment petition to correct noise levels which was originally scheduled to be heard at the Commission's Business Meeting on February 1, 2006, has been postponed to the Business Meeting on March 1, 2006.

(Deleted text is in ~~strikethrough~~, new text is in **bold**:)

Proposed Hospital

The Palomar Energy Project is located within an industrial park known as the Escondido Research and Technology Center (ERTC). The City of Escondido is currently evaluating a Specific Plan Amendment for the ERTC which would allow the construction of a hospital in the ERTC. The proposed location of those facilities is across Citricado Parkway from the power plant. Staff has considered possible noise and vibration impacts of the power plant on a hospital at that location and believes that there will be no significant impacts.

Note that the power plant is now an existing feature of the ERTC. There will be no increase in noise impacts on a future hospital due to the power plant, since the

power plant's noise emissions are now part of the existing noise regime. If a hospital is built in the ERTC, the hospital's designers will be required to take into account existing ambient noise, including that from the power plant.

The Palomar noise impacts were evaluated upon the nearest residential receptors, single-family dwellings 1,800 feet to the west along Live Oak Road and other streets. At this distance, the power plant is expected to produce noise levels no greater than ~~30~~**37** dBA L_{eq}. Staff estimates that the hospital buildings would be located at least 900 feet from the noise-producing portions of the Palomar project**, based on examination of available maps and drawings**. At this distance, power plant noise emissions would not exceed approximately ~~36~~**43** dBA L_{eq}. **(Halving the distance from a noise source to a receptor results in an increase in noise level of 6 dB. In this case, 37 + 6 = 43 dBA.)** This is ~~equivalent to a loud whisper~~**quieter than an office environment**, and represents noise on the exterior of the hospital buildings.

It is generally accepted in the noise control industry that ~~T~~typical residential construction results in noise attenuation, from outside to inside of the building, ~~typically~~ **normally** exceeding 20 dBA. That is, any outside noise is commonly reduced at least 20 dBA on the inside of the dwelling. Hospital construction is more robust than such residential construction, resulting in noise attenuation significantly exceeding 20 dBA, perhaps as much as 30 dBA. The expected power plant noise level of ~~36~~**43** dBA on the outside of the hospital buildings would likely be attenuated to between ~~6~~**13** and ~~16~~ **23**dBA on the inside. Such a level is ~~right at~~**near** the threshold of hearing or, in effect, inaudible. Therefore, staff believes the Palomar project would not cause any adverse noise impacts on a hospital constructed nearby.