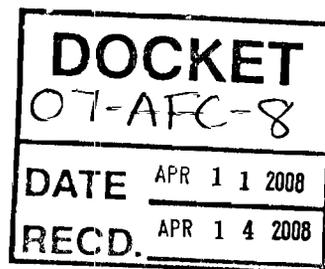




Community Environmental Council



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April 11, 2008

California Energy Commission
1516 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Community Environmental Council comments on proposed Carrizo Plain solar project

Dear California Energy Commission,

The Community Environmental Council is a non-profit environmental organization founded in 1970 in the wake of the infamous oil spill off the coast of Santa Barbara. Since 2005, our mission has been exclusively focused on energy, climate change and transportation policy. Our flagship campaign is to wean the tri-counties region (which includes Santa Barbara County, San Luis Obispo County and Ventura County) off fossil fuels by 2033 or sooner (more information is available at www.fossilfreeby33.org). Renewable energy will play a starring role in this effort.

Concentrating solar power is a very promising technology, with 354 megawatts of trough-based systems installed near Barstow. By all accounts, these systems have produced power reliably and cleanly (80% solar and 20% natural gas, due to the natural gas backups these systems have, resulting in over 100% of nameplate capacity production over the last twenty years).

Ausra's new concentrating solar power technology holds much promise as a potentially lower cost technology than the traditional trough-based systems. Moreover, with their plans for vertical integration (a manufacturing facility is being constructed in Las Vegas), there is more certainty regarding equipment production and meeting deadlines for construction.

Our New Energy Direction document, a blueprint for achieving the fossil free goal in Santa Barbara County (available at www.fossilfreeby33.org) highlights the solar potential at the Carrizo Plain site. We were pleased to find that companies like Ausra agree that this site is suitable for solar and we fully support investigating the merits of a large solar facility at this site.

Our support is not, however, unconditional. We await the completion of the AFC process by the Commission, at which time, we shall decide whether to support the actual project or not.

Sincerely,

Tam Hunt
Energy Program Director / Attorney

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