



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

DIVISION OF LAND RESOURCE PROTECTION

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September 23, 2009

VIA EMAIL: jkessler@energy.state.ca.us

John Kessler

Project Manager

Siting, Transmission and Environmental Protection Division

California Energy Commission

1516 Ninth Street, MS-15

Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Kessler:

Subject: Carrizo Energy Solar Farm Project - **DOCKET 07-AFC-8**

The Department of Conservation's (Department) Division of Land Resource Protection (Division) has reviewed the Preliminary Staff Report and other supporting documents for the Carrizo Energy Solar Farm (CESF). The Division monitors farmland conversion on a statewide basis and administers the California Land Conservation (Williamson) Act and other agricultural land conservation programs. We offer the following comments with respect to the project's impacts on agricultural land and resources.

Project Description

The proposed 640-acre CESF site is located in an unincorporated area of eastern San Luis Obispo County, and consists of one Assessor Parcel Number (APN 072-091-001). The proposed project site is immediately north of California State Route 58/Carrisa Highway (SR-58) and west of the communities of Simmler and California Valley. The CESF site currently consists of disturbed ranchland and abandoned farm structures, which would be demolished prior to proposed project construction. It is in an area zoned for agricultural uses as specified in the San Luis Obispo County General Land Use Plan and the property is not subject to a Williamson Act contract.

Comments

The Division has read the Preliminary Staff Assessment and concurs with the California Energy Commission's (CEC) recommendation of the following mitigation measure:

The CEC recommends Condition of Certification **LAND-1**, which requires the project owner to mitigate for the conversion of 640 acres of agricultural land to non-agricultural use by requiring the project to mitigate for loss of

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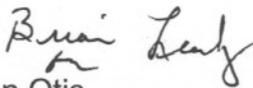
Mr. John Kessler, Project Manager
September 23, 2009
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agricultural lands at a level not to exceed a one-to-one ratio, which will help ensure that agricultural lands of the same or higher quality are conserved within the county. The components included in Condition of Certification **LAND-1** are based on: 1) similar conditions of certification used on other Energy Commission siting projects (e.g., Starwood, Panoche, and East Altamont) where agricultural land was converted to nonagricultural uses; 2) the Agricultural Land Conservation Program encouraged by the San Luis Obispo County in General Plan Policy AGP16 (SLOC, 2007b, p. 2-34); and 3) coordination with the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County (LCSLO 2008). Staff believes that with the adoption and implementation of **LAND-1**, the impacts of agricultural land conversion would be reduced to less than significant levels, and there would be no net loss of productive agricultural land within San Luis Obispo County. Land use staff considers the effects of the 380-acre construction laydown area on land uses to be temporary, because the area would be restored to pre-construction conditions following the 35 months of CESF construction.

We highly recommend and would like to see this mitigation measure in the Final Staff Assessment and conditions of approval.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on this project. Please provide this Department with the date of any hearings for this particular action, and any staff reports pertaining to it. If you have questions regarding our comments, or require technical assistance or information on agricultural land conservation, please contact Meri Meraz, Environmental Planner, at 801 K Street, MS 18-01, Sacramento, California 95814, or by phone at (916) 445-9411.

Sincerely,



Dan Otis
Program Manager
Williamson Act Program

cc: State Clearinghouse



**BEFORE THE ENERGY RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
1516 NINTH STREET, SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
1-800-822-6228 – WWW.ENERGY.CA.GOV**

**APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION
FOR THE *CARRIZO ENERGY
SOLAR FARM PROJECT***

**Docket No. 07-AFC-8
PROOF OF SERVICE
(Revised 7/27/2009)**

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DECLARATION OF SERVICE

I, Teraja Golston, declare that on September 24, 2009, I served and filed copies of the attached CA Dept of Conservation's PSA Comments Re Land Use. The original document, filed with the Docket Unit, is accompanied by a copy of the most recent Proof of Service list, located on the web page for this project at: **[<http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/carrizo/index.html>]**. The document has been sent to both the other parties in this proceeding (as shown on the Proof of Service list) and to the Commission's Docket Unit, in the following manner:

(Check all that Apply)

For service to all other parties:

X sent electronically to all email addresses on the Proof of Service list;

X by personal delivery or by depositing in the United States mail at Sacramento, California with first-class postage thereon fully prepaid and addressed as provided on the Proof of Service list above to those addresses **NOT** marked "email preferred."

AND

For filing with the Energy Commission:

X sending an original paper copy and one electronic copy, mailed and emailed respectively, to the address below **(preferred method)**;

OR

 depositing in the mail an original and 12 paper copies, as follows:

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

Attn: Docket No. 07-AFC-8
1516 Ninth Street, MS-4
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512
docket@energy.state.ca.us

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Original Signature in Dockets
Teraja` Golston