



Los Angeles County  
Department of Regional Planning

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*



Richard J. Bruckner  
Director

**HEARING EXAMINER STAFF SUMMARY**

**COUNTY PROJECT NO.: R2013-03397-(5)**  
**CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO.: 201300170**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO.: 201300290**  
**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NO. 2007121054**

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant, Antelope Valley Solar, LLC (“Applicant”), is proposing to develop a 7.45-Wac solar photovoltaic (“PV”) project (the proposed “Project”) in two phases. The first phase (“Phase 1”) will generate approximately 4.45 megawatts of alternating current (“MWac”), and will be located on the northerly 35 to 40 acres of the Site. The second phase (“Phase 2”) will generate approximately 3 MWac and will be constructed on the southerly portion of the Site. Applicant currently has a power purchase agreement only for Phase 1 of the Project. Each Phase of the Project will interconnect to Southern California Edison’s (“SCE”) distribution circuits located near the eastern boundary of the Site.

The major components of the Project are summarized and described as follows: (a) a solar field of north-south rows of PV panels, mounted on either fixed-tilt or single-axis tracking systems on steel support structures; (b) an electrical collection and inverter-transformer system that aggregates the output from the PV panels, inverts the electricity from direct current (DC) to alternating current (AC), and transforms the output voltage to 12.47 kilovolts (“kV”); (c) circuits, meters, relays, circuit breakers, fuses, surge protectors, poles, and other interconnection facilities, equipment, and distribution upgrades required to connect the Project to SCE’s distribution circuits, whether at the Site or SCE’s Redman Substation located on Avenue E and 90th Street East, (d) a meteorological data collection system(s) configured to collect meteorological information for the Project; and (e) civil infrastructure, including driveways, internal access roads, secure fencing, landscaping, retention basins, and water tank(s) for fire protection.

**REQUIRED ENTITLEMENTS**

Conditional Use Permit to construct an electric generating facility in the A-2-1 (Heavy Agricultural – One Acre Minimum Required Lot Area) Zone. A Yard Modification to allow a 7-foot fence in lieu of a 3.5-foot fence in the front yard.

**LOCATION AND ACCESS**

The project site (“Site”) is located west of 90th Street East between East Avenue F and East Avenue F-8. Access to the site will be from Avenue F and Avenue F-8.

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The vacant, rectangular-shaped property totals approximately 80 (gross) acres. The Site consists of disturbed, vacant land, and contains no habitable buildings, structures, or development of any kind. The site was formerly agricultural land that was last farmed on or before 1974. Approximately 40 to 50 percent of the site is denuded of vegetation.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

The Los Angeles County (“County”) Department of Regional Planning (“Department”) determined by way of an Initial Study that a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was necessary for the project. The areas of potential environmental impact analyzed in the draft IS-MND (draft IS-MND) include the following:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Utilities and Service Systems

The following areas were determined to be insignificant and required no further environmental review as described in the Initial Study:

- Agricultural and Forest Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hydrology & Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation/Traffic

As identified in the draft IS-MND, after implementation of the required mitigation measures as would be enforced by the project’s Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), the project would not result in significant and unavoidable impacts to the environment. A summary of the areas analyzed that have less than significant impacts to the environment after implementation of mitigation measures is included below:

### Aesthetic

Aesthetic impacts are mitigated by incorporating drought tolerant vegetation along portions of the eastern and western boundaries of the Site, and requiring that any lighting installed around the periphery of the Site be low intensity, downward-shielded fixtures that are motion-activated.

### Air Quality, Health Risks and Climate Change

A number of mitigation measures have been identified to reduce the air quality impacts from above to less than significant levels, including: (1) minimizing grading and ground disturbance during construction, (2) watering disturbed areas as required by AVAQMD, and (3) limiting ground disturbing activities to low wind (less than 25 mph) time periods.

### Biological Resources

Mitigation measures include methods to minimize the take of sensitive species.

### Cultural Resources

Mitigation measures include methods of identifying any culturally significant artifacts during construction of the project.

### Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Mitigation measures include testing soil samples for agricultural chemicals prior to ground disturbing activities.

### Utility and Service Systems

Mitigation measures include compliance with the County Recycling and Reuse Plan.

## **LEGAL NOTIFICATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH**

Pursuant to the provisions of Sections 22.60.174 and 22.60.175 of the County Code, the community was appropriately notified of the Hearing Examiner hearing by mail, newspaper, property posting, library posting and on the Department's website. Newspaper notices were published in the *Antelope Valley Press* and *La Opinion* on November 12, 2014.

## **STAFF EVALUATION**

Project consistency with the County General Plan, Antelope Valley Areawide General Plan, compliance with the County zoning ordinance and development standards, compatibility regarding land use and neighborhood impact evaluation of the applicant's ability to meet all requirements for a Conditional Use Permit will be determined subsequent to the Hearing Examiner public hearing. The Hearing Examiner hearing is established to receive public testimony on the adequacy of the draft IS-MND prior to preparation of the final IS-MND and subsequent project consideration by the Regional Planning Commission ("Planning Commission") at a later date.

## **COUNTY DEPARTMENT AND AGENCY COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

County Department and applicable agency comments and conditions will be finalized subsequent to the Hearing Examiner public hearing and prior to the consideration by the Planning Commission.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Staff has not received any comments at this time.

## **REMAINING PROCEDURES**

Once the draft IS-MND comment period closes, the Department will review public comments received, will draft responses to those comments, and draft the final IS-MND and MMRP. A Response to Comments will be included within the final IS-MND prior to its submittal to the Planning Commission.

Staff will also prepare CEQA Findings, draft Findings, and Conditions pertaining to the project-related entitlements, and submit documentation to the Planning Commission for consideration prior to the Planning Commission hearing to be set at a future date.

Once the public hearing before the Planning Commission is scheduled and completed, the Planning Commission will certify or reject the draft IS-MND and approve or deny the Conditional Use Permit.

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AMC:PMC  
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