

6.2 TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

The following sections discuss the Modified Project's impacts to traffic and transportation as compared to the Approved Project.

6.2.1 Project Changes Related to Traffic and Transportation

The following aspects of the Modified Project would affect the analysis and Conditions of Certification for Traffic and Transportation.

- The construction traffic is slightly less for the Modified Project;
- The operation traffic is reduced significantly for the Modified Project; and
- The BSPP will no longer have solar trough mirrors that the Commission determined interfered with airport operations at the Blythe Airport.

6.2.2 Changes in Environmental Impacts

6.2.2.1 Construction Traffic

The Modified Project has a slightly reduced peak construction workforce. However, the reduction in workforce is not enough to warrant reduction of any of the requirements contained in the Final Decision designed to reduce impacts during the construction period.

6.2.2.2 Operations Traffic

The operations workforce is proposed to be reduced from 221 workers for the Approved Project to between 20 and 30 for the Modified Project. Therefore, traffic impacts associated with this workforce are less than those identified in the Final Decision.

6.2.2.3 Blythe Airport

The Final Decision identified potential effects on the Blythe Airport due to upward thermal plumes from the cooling towers and due to glint and glare of the reflective surface of the mirrors during low sun angle hours. First, the Modified Project will no longer require cooling towers and therefore upward thermal plumes have been eliminated. Second, since the PV panels are not as reflective as mirrors and are distant from the Blythe Airport, glint and glare should no longer be an issue for pilots using the

Blythe Airport. Additionally, the Commission should note that Riverside County recently permitted a solar PV project on the Blythe Airport property itself.⁷

6.2.3 Compliance With LORS

In its Final Decision, the Commission concluded that, with the implementation of the Conditions, the Approved Project would comply with all applicable LORS. As with the Approved Project, the Modified Project would comply with all applicable LORS, and no new or additional LORS have been identified.

6.2.4 Conditions of Certification

Since the Modified Project will not have an effect on the Blythe Airport for reasons discussed in Section 6.2.2 above, PVSI recommends that Conditions of Certification **TRANS-7, TRANS-9** and **TRANS-10** be deleted as unnecessary.

⁷ On December 10, 2010 Riverside County Board of Supervisors agreed to lease 829 acres of Blythe Airport Property to NRG for construction and operation of a PV solar facility.