

October 20, 1998

Pittsburg District Energy Facility Siting Committee

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October 20, 1998, PITTSBURG DISTRICT ENERGY FACILITY STATUS REPORT

Since the September 3, 1998, Informational Hearing, staff conducted a data request workshop in Pittsburg on September 4, 1998. The workshop's purpose was to discuss and explain the staff's data requests and to provide the applicant, Pittsburg District Energy Facility (PDEF), and the public an opportunity to ask clarifying questions. Data requests were submitted in the areas of air quality, noise, water resources, visual resources, biological resources, worker safety and fire, socioeconomics, and transmission line safety and nuisance. About five local citizens attended. In addition, staff from the City of Pittsburg City Manager, Planning, and Economic Development Departments, City of Antioch, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Delta Diablo Wastewater Treatment Facility, Contra Costa County Hazardous Material Commission/ West County Toxics Coalition, Calpine Corporation, and CH2M Hill were also in attendance.

The applicant, responded to all but one data request area on September 24, 1998. The remaining area, transmission line safety and nuisance, was the subject of a data request item from the applicant dated September 8, 1998. The applicant stated that this information will not be available until PG&E's transmission interconnection study is complete in mid-October. As of October 20, 1998 the applicant had just received its copy of the the study, and is currently reviewing the pertinent material. The applicant intends to respond to this data request in mid-November. Another workshop on water, transmission lines, noise, socioeconomics and air quality may be held in November.

Regarding the project schedule, it is uncertain at this time whether staff will be able to publish the Preliminary Staff Assessment by January 11, 1998, and the Final Staff Assessment by March 12, 1998, as proposed in the suggested schedule contained in the Issue Identification Report. The applicant has informed us that the preliminary results of the interconnection study indicate a new point of interconnection is needed, rather than the one identified in the AFC. Consequently, PDEF has told us that it intends to file an AFC supplement in November, which would have a description of the new route and related transmission facilities.

Below is a summary status of the significant issues currently being addressed by the public, local, state, federal agencies, and Energy Commission staff.

Air Quality: The applicant provided a number of data responses on September 24, 1998 which the staff is reviewing. The issue of the applicant providing offsets in a timely manner consistent with Energy Commission licensing requirements is still unresolved, although we understand that the applicant is negotiating with potential sources.

Staff's August 24, 1998 Issue Identification Report stated that documentation of PM10 levels is an issue, along with air dispersion modeling, and an air quality cumulative impact analysis. These issues have not changed since August 24, although the applicant has told staff informally that it is considering some project changes which may result in the need to purchase PM10 offsets. When and if these offsets are purchased, staff's concern about PM10 levels will be alleviated. The applicant's request for flexibility regarding best available control technology (BACT) is still being considered by staff and the Bay Area Area Quality Management District (BAAQMD).

Biological Resources: Staff was looking at an area that appeared to be a "relictual wetland" southwest of the project site. The applicant stated in its September 24, 1998 data responses that it has moved the construction laydown area so that the relictual wetland area will not be affected by the project.

The applicant also stated in its September 24, 1998 data responses that it has dropped alternate route 5 (Reclaimed Water Line) and has selected proposed Route 4 for implementation. Route 4 avoids any impact to Dowest Slough. Therefore, permits and/or authorizations from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and California Department of Fish and Game will not be needed.

Transmission System Engineering: Staff is continuing to work with the California Independent System Operator on coordination of transmission system interconnection requirements. The applicant is reviewing a preliminary interconnection study by PG&E which it received in mid-October.

Water Resources: The applicant stated in its September 24, 1998 data responses that it is dropping the zero discharge wastewater treatment option. The applicant has told staff that it plans to meet in October with Delta Diablo Wastewater Treatment Facility staff and Regional Water Quality Control Board staff to discuss options for returning the project's wastewater to the Treatment Facility. This area continues to be ambiguous regarding who would be responsible for eventual discharge of the treated wastewater to New York Slough, uncertainties over the Regional Board's permit requirements, and whether any other agency permits will be required. Staff is working to schedule an issue workshop in November to discuss these items.

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Noise

In response to public comments, including comments on noise concerns, the applicant committed at the Commission's September 3, 1998 Informational Hearing to modify the arrangement of plant facilities within the existing site boundary to help mitigate project impacts. Related to the plant facility modification, the applicant has told the staff informally that it is looking at some plant design changes that could change the projected noise estimates. The applicant stated in its September 24, 1998 data responses that any new AFC information resulting from the facility modification would be submitted to the Commission in mid-November 1998. The applicant submitted noise measurement data in its September 24, 1998 data responses which the staff is reviewing.

Public Health

Staff is reviewing the potential public health concern related to the facility's use of tertiary treated reclaimed wastewater for cooling. As stated in our August 24, 1998 issue report, preliminary indications are that there will be no major health concerns.

Policy Issues

As noted in the August 24, 1998 Issue Identification Report and the September 10, 1998 Response to Committee Scheduling Questions, staff plans to address the cumulative impacts of the proposed project by looking at existing and reasonably foreseeable projects in the vicinity. The Calpine Corporation has told staff that it plans to file an AFC in late December 1998 for its 850-900 megawatt Delta Energy Center (DEC) project in Pittsburg. If filed in December, DEC's complete AFC information would be included in the PDEF Final Staff Assessment.

Staff submitted comments on September 21, 1998 on the California Public Utilities Commission's Draft Environmental Impact Report on PG&E's Proposed Sale of Certain Generating Plants, including its Pittsburg and Contra Costa facilities.

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