CH2M HILL
2485 Natomas Park Drive
Suite 600
Sacramento, CA 95833-2937
Tel 916.920.0300
Fax 916.920.8463

CH2MHILL

DOCKET	
09-AFC-10	
DATE	JUL 23 2010
RECD.	JUL 23 2010

July 23, 2010

Mr. John Kessler
Siting Project Manager
California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Rice Solar Energy Project (09-AFC-10)
Letter from Western Area Power Administration dated July 13, 2010 to the California Office of Historic Preservation regarding Plans to Construct the 150 Megawatt Rice Solar Energy Project (RSEP) Riverside County, CA

Dear Mr. Kessler:

Attached please find one hardcopy of the letter from Western Area Power Administration dated July 13, 2010 to the California Office of Historic Preservation regarding Plans to Construct the 150 Megawatt Rice Solar Energy Project (RSEP) Riverside County, CA.

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact me at (916) 286-0278 or Sarah Madams at (916) 286-0249.

Sincerely,

Douglas M. Davy, Ph.D.
AFC Project Manager

cc: POS List
Project File

Department of Energy
Western Area Power Administration
Desert Southwest Customer Service Region
P.O. Box 6457
Phoenix, AZ 85005-6457

JUL 13 2010

Mr. Milford Wayne Donaldson
State Historic Preservation Officer
California Department of Parks and Recreation
Office of Historic Preservation
1416 9th Street, Room 1442-7
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Rice Solar Energy, LLC plans to construct the 150 Megawatt Rice Solar Energy Project (RSEP) Riverside County, California.

Dear Mr. Donaldson,

Western Area Power Administration (Western), a power-marketing agency of the Department of Energy, has received a request from Rice Solar Energy, LLC (RSE) to interconnect a proposed 150 megawatt (MW) concentrating solar power (CSP) facility within Riverside County, California. Part of this project will be located on the Bureau of Land Management's Palm Springs Field Office (BLM) lands so they are a joint lead agency for the purposes of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Western is the lead federal agency for Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of this proposed project, provide notice that Western and the BLM will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed project and to initiate consultation, in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

The information presented in this letter includes a brief project description, the Area of Potential Effect (APE) and map. Since this is the early planning stages of the proposed project, additional information will continue to be provided to you and your designated staff as it becomes available.

Background

The Project is near the town of Rice, CA, immediately south of Highway 62 The project is located on the Rice, CA and Grommet, CA 7.5 Minute USGS quadrangle in Township 1 South, Range 20 East, Sections 24 and 25; Township 1 South, Range 21 East, Sections 19, 20, 29, 30, 33, 34, 35; Township 2 South, Range 21 East, Sections 1 and 2; Township 2 South, Range 22 East, Sections 6, 7, 8, 16, 17, 21, and 22.

Cultural resource work for this project has been conducted. Copies of the report are attached for your review.

Western initiated Tribal consultation and conducted a Tribal meeting and site visit on April 8, 2010. Tribes invited were based on a list from the California Heritage Commission and others that expressed interest in the proposed project. The three Tribes that attended were the Ft. Mojave Indian Tribe, Ft. Yuma Quechan Tribe, and Twenty-nine Palms Band of Mission Indians. These three Tribes expressed interest in conducting an ethno history study for the proposed project area. Western sent a Scope of Work for the study to the three tribes on April 12, 2010. To date we have not received a proposal for the ethno history work. Consultation with the Tribes is ongoing.

Project Site

The Project Site is comprised of 1,410 acres of private land. The Project Site would contain the power block, solar fields, thermal energy storage system, technical and non-technical buildings, storm water system, water supply and treatment systems, and a wastewater system, as well as other ancillary supporting facilities.

Project Area of Potential Effect

Major project components include:

- A solar collector (heliostat) field that covers 1,410 acres. An additional 200 foot buffer around the entire 1,410 acre solar field.
- A concrete central receiver tower with an overall structure height of 653 feet within the 1,410 acre solar field.
- A liquid salt storage system featuring insulated "hot" and "cold" salt storage tanks within the 1,410 acre solar field.
- A steam turbine generator system rated at 150 MW (net) within the 1,410 acre solar field.
- Approximately 10-mile, 230-kilovolt (kV) generator tie-line to connect the RSEP with the existing Western Area Power Administration (Western) Parker Dam – Blythe 161-kV transmission line. The tie-line right-of-way is 200 feet wide. The access road for this new tie-line will be within the 10 mile by 200 foot right-of-way.
- Two onsite water wells to provide water for heliostat washing, steam cycle makeup and other process uses in an amount not expected to exceed 180 acre-feet per year within the 1,410 acre solar field.

Three lined evaporation ponds of approximately 5 acres each to capture all process wastewater discharge from the project's water treatment system, process blow down, and stormwater drainage from within equipment areas within the 1,410 acre solar field.

- A fiber optic line attached to Western's existing Line. This Parker Dam – Blythe 161-kV transmission line has previously been surveyed (see attached report; ASM Affiliates, Inc; 1998). Project would replace approximately 64 miles of existing ground wire on the existing Parker Dam – Blythe 161-kV transmission line with optical ground wire for communications to the inter-connecting substation. Land status for this existing transmission line is the BLM Palm Springs Field Office, the BLM Lake Havasu Field Office, the BLM Needles Field Office, the Colorado River Indian Tribe, the Bureau of Reclamation, and private. It is located starting at Parker Dam and ending just west of the city of Blythe.

Recommendations

Western recommends the following for the proposed project:

1) To avoid all known resources during fiber-optic work on the Parker Dam – Blythe 161-kV Transmission line. This is based on the recommendations in the *Cultural Resources Inventory and Evaluation of the Parker-Blythe 161kv Transmission Line No. 2 Riverside & San Bernardino Counties California. Eighty-one sites are located along this transmission line with 29 recommended as eligible, 14 previously recorded sites not found, and 21 as indeterminate. All eligible and indeterminate sites will be avoided by project impacts.*

2) Avoid all known cultural resources within the approximately 10 mile 200 foot wide new transmission corridor from the proposed plant site to the Parker Dam – Blythe 161-kV interconnection.

3) The 1,410 acre solar field is located within the historic Rice Army Airfield. This airfield is a contributing element of the National Register of Historic Places listed historic Desert Training Center and associated with World War II training. The Airfield is no longer in use and has been recorded in the Cultural Resources Inventory for the RSEP (see attached). The proposed project will have an adverse effect on the Rice Army Airfield. Therefore, Western, the BLM and the California Energy Commission are presently working on a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to address mitigation. Your office and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation will be officially contacted in the near future for involvement in the MOA process.

4) Develop a monitoring plan for avoiding known sites for the Parker Dam – Blythe 161-kV fiber-optic work and approximately 10 mile-long new transmission line. Any monitoring for the 1,410 acre solar field will be addressed within an MOA.

Western and the BLM are seeking your concurrence with the defined APE, review and comments of the cultural resource reports and interest in the MOA process and monitoring plan.

For questions related to the project please contact Western staff, Liana Reilly at 720-962-7253; reilly@wapa.gov, Steve Tromly, 720-962-7256; tromly@wapa.gov, or me at 602-6-5-2592; holt@wapa.gov . This letter will be followed by a telephone call to your office.

I look forward to working with you as this process moves forward.

Sincerely,

John Holt
Environmental Manager

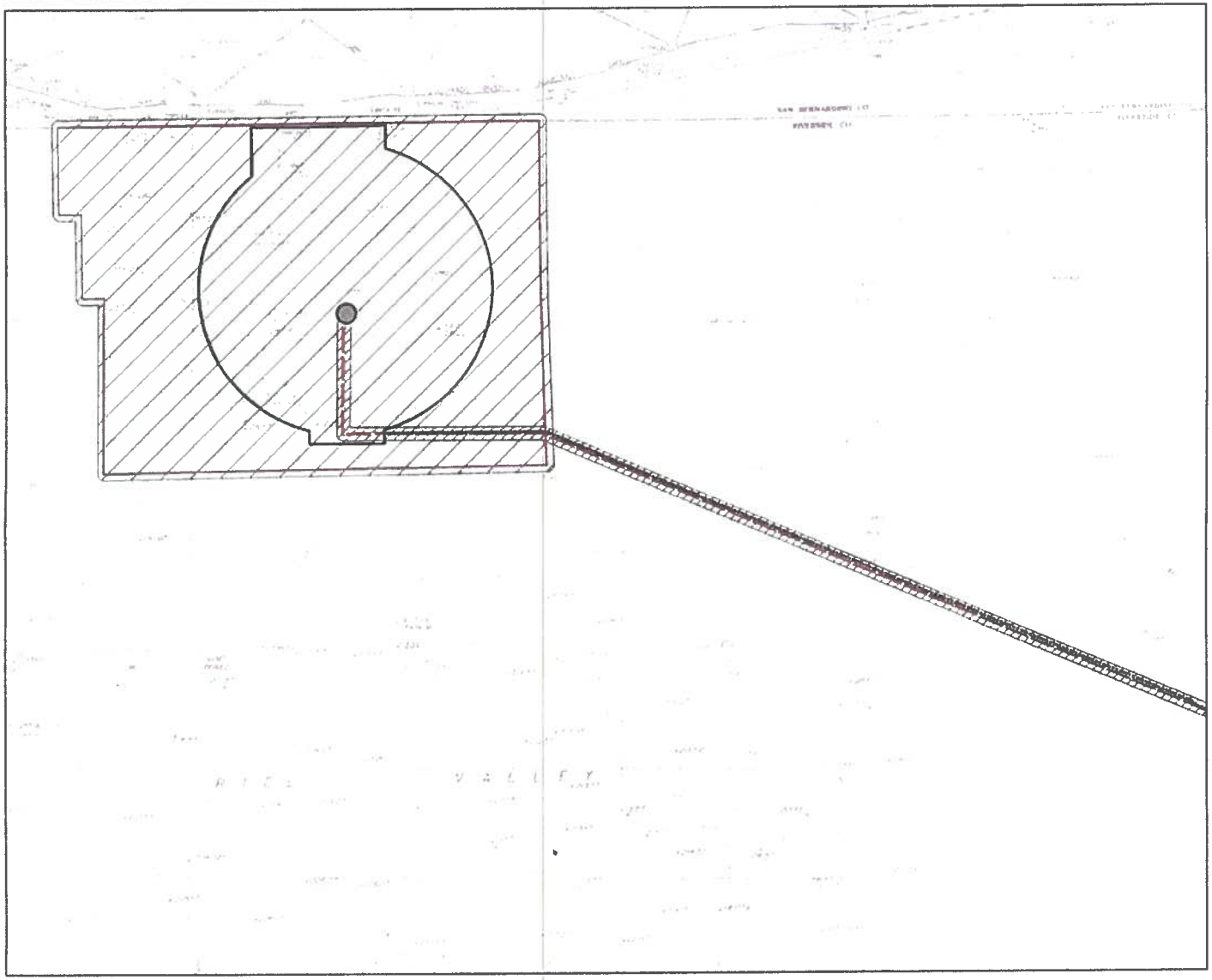
Attachments

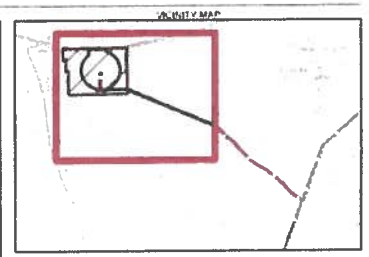
Cc:

Bureau of Land Management
Palm Springs South Coast Field Office
1201 Bird Center Drive
Palm Springs, California 92262

Bureau of Land Management
Lake Havasu Field Office
2610 Sweetwater Avenue
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86406

Bureau of Land Management
Needles Field Office
1303 S. Hwy 95
Needles, CA 92363





LEGEND

- TRANSMISSION LINE ACCESS ROAD
- RSEP PROPOSED TRANSMISSION LINE
- PARKER-BLYTHE TRANSMISSION LINE
- OWNERSHIP PROPERTY
- PROJECT FENCELINE BOUNDARY
- PROPOSED SUBSTATION
- POWER BLOCK/RECEIVER

SURVEY FOR ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- ROW BUFFER - 200 FEET
- SUBSTATION BUFFER - 100 FEET
- PROPERTY BUFFER - 200 FEET

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

FIGURE 4-1A
AREAS SURVEYED FOR CULTURAL RESOURCES
RICE SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT
RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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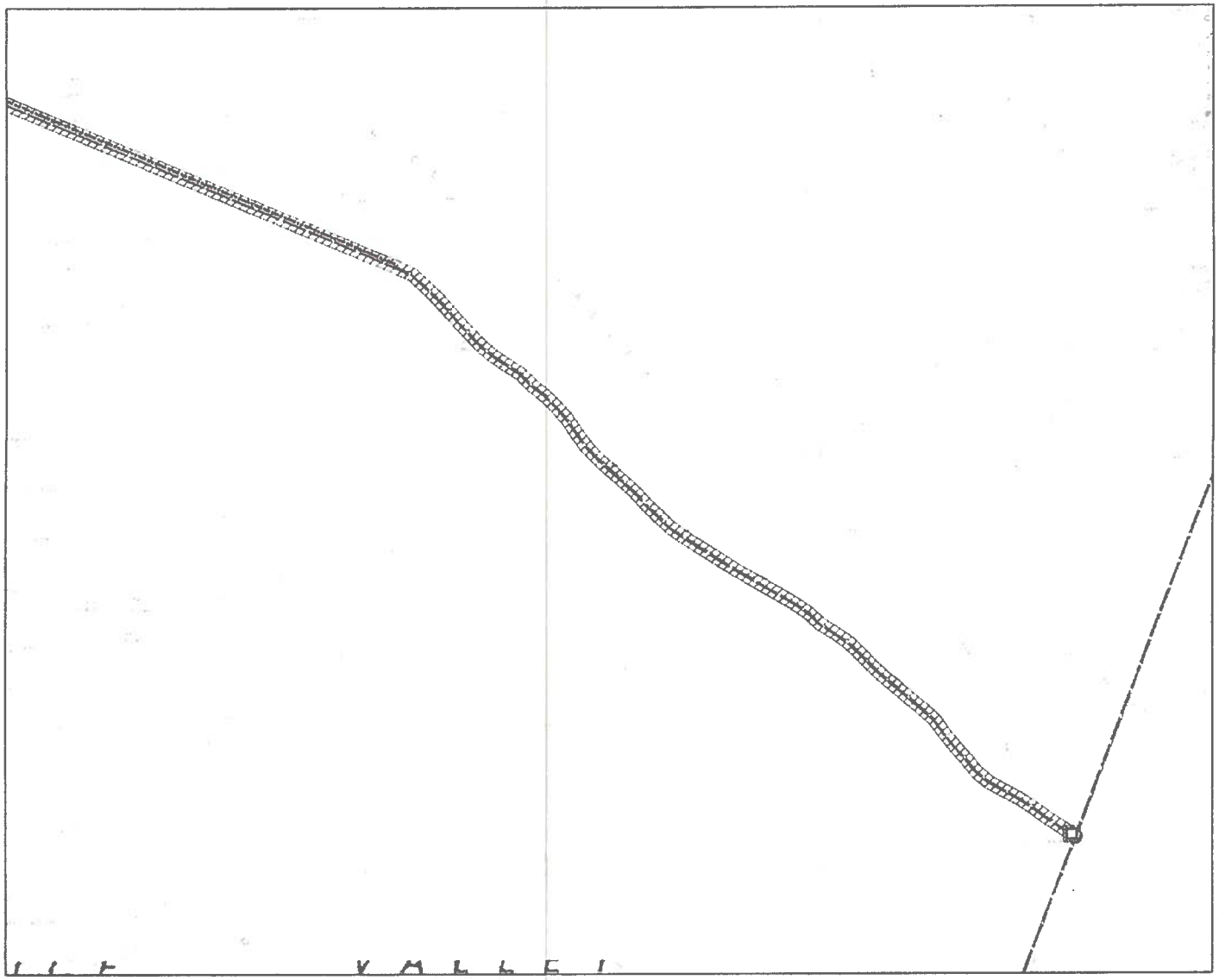

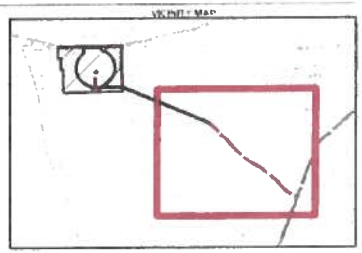

LEGEND

- TRANSMISSION LINE ACCESS ROAD
- RSEP PROPOSED TRANSMISSION LINE
- PARKER-BLYTHE TRANSMISSION LINE
- OWNERSHIP PROPERTY
- PROJECT FENCELINE BOUNDARY
- PROPOSED SUBSTATION
- POWER BLOCK/RECEIVER

SURVEY FOR ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- ROW BUFFER - 200 FEET
- SUBSTATION BUFFER - 100 FEET
- PROPERTY BUFFER - 200 FEET

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

FIGURE 4-1B
AREAS SURVEYED FOR CULTURAL RESOURCES
RICE SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT
RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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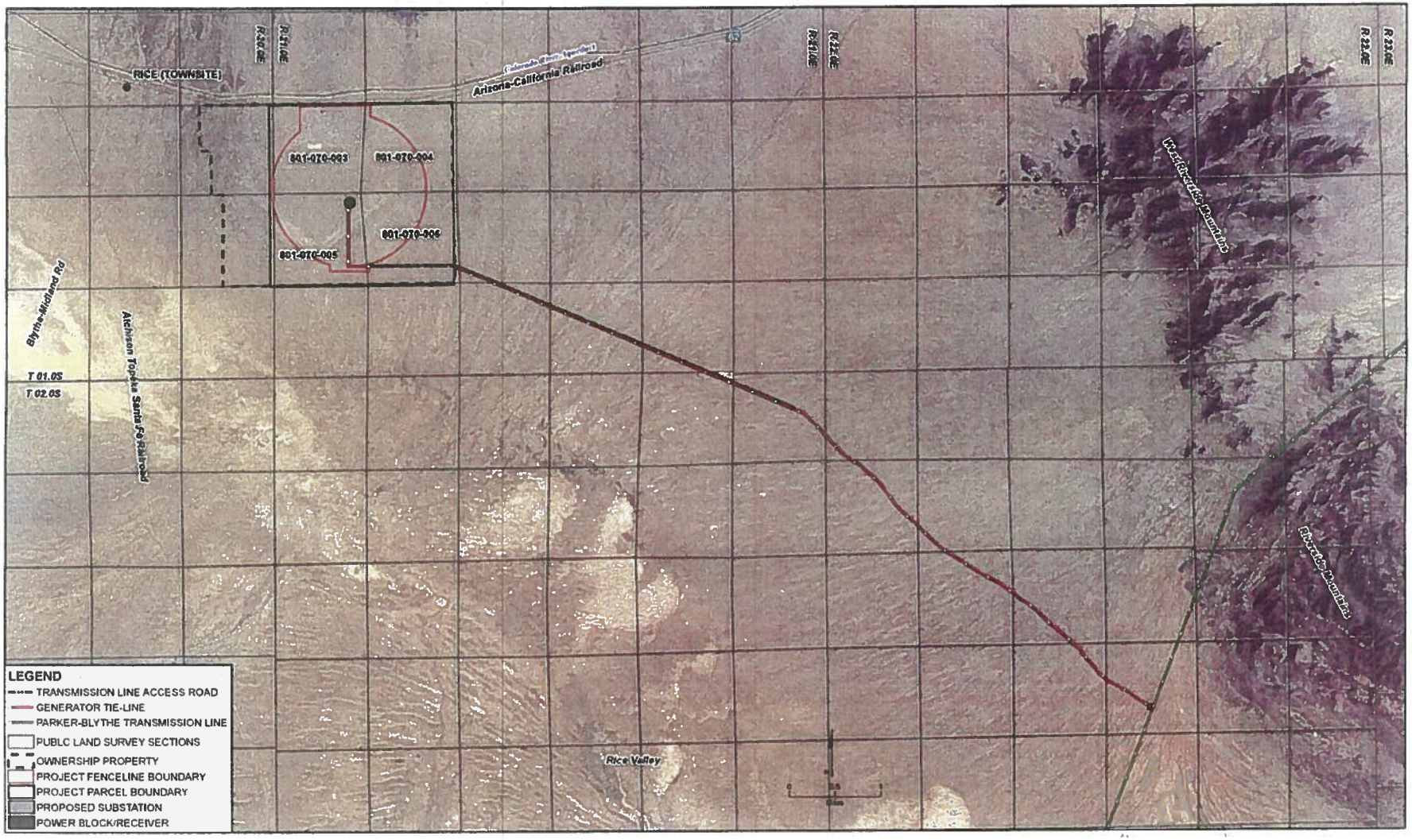

FIGURE 1.0-2
SITE LOCATION
RICE SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT
RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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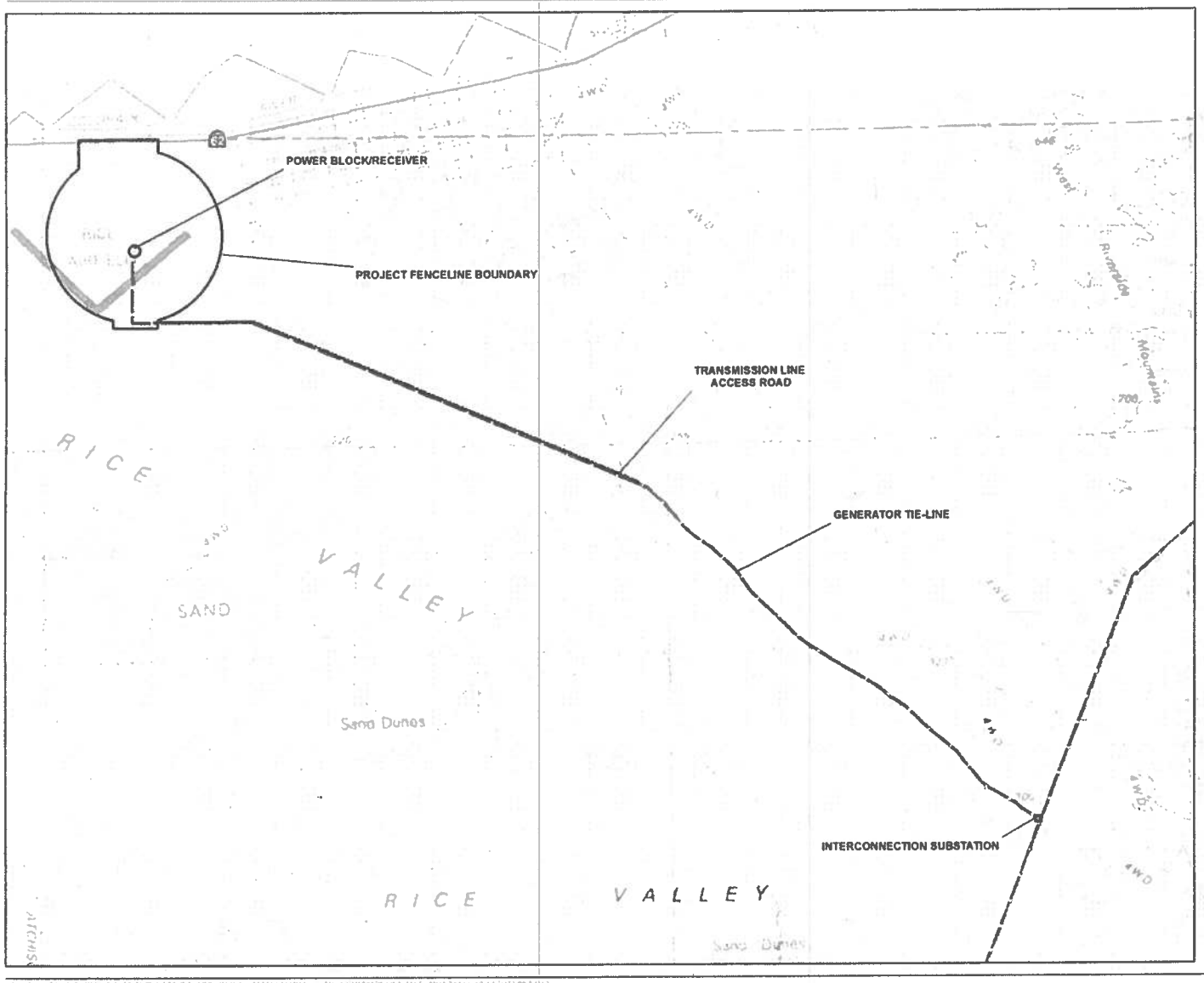

LEGEND
- TRANSMISSION LINE ACCESS ROAD
- GENERATOR TIE-LINE
- PARKER-BLYTHE TRANSMISSION LINE
- INTERCONNECTION SUBSTATION
- POWER BLOCK/RECEIVER
- PROJECT FENCELINE BOUNDARY

RICE SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT
RICE SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT
RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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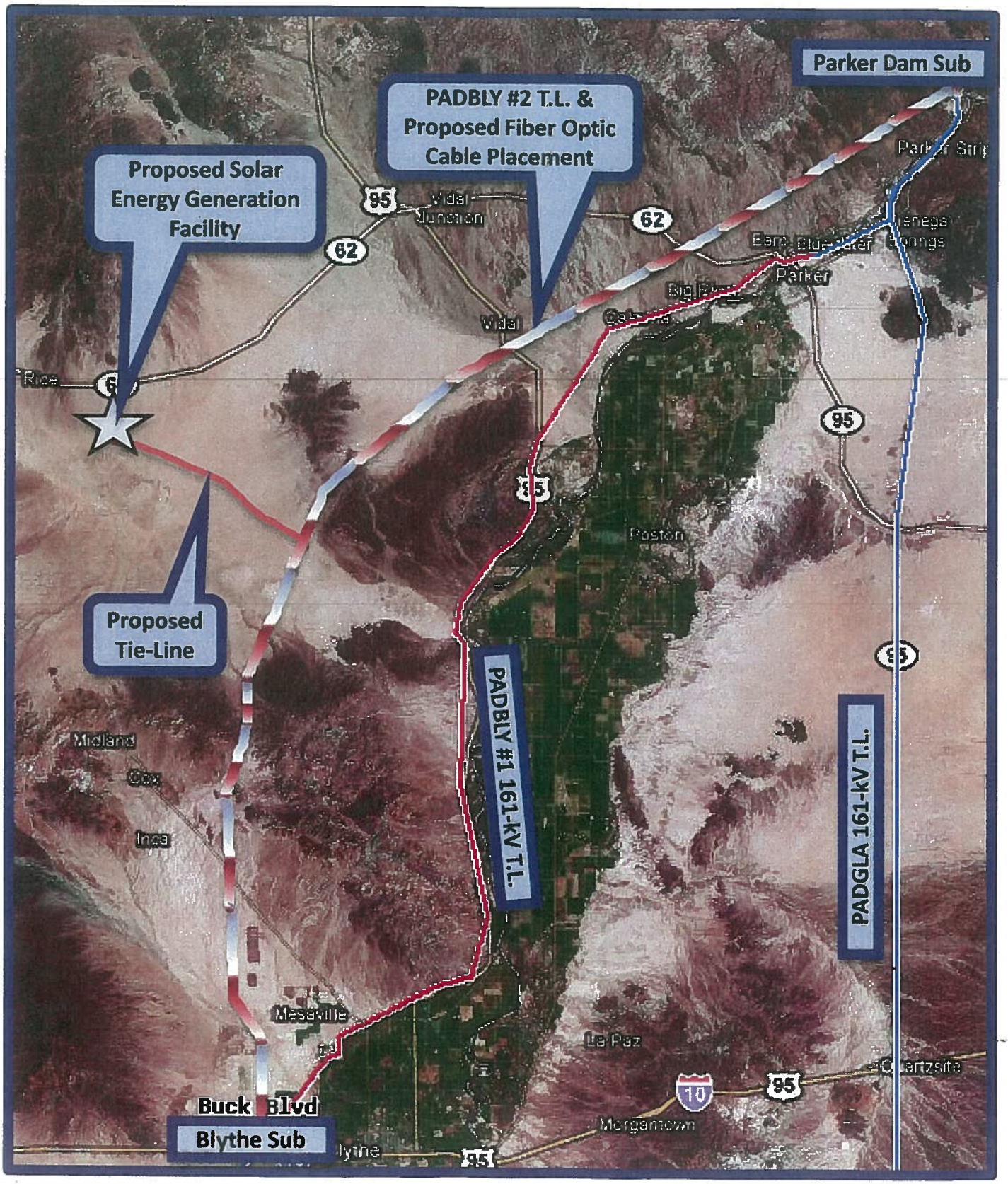
Rice Solar Energy Project

Proposed Solar Generation Facility, Tie-Line, Access Road & Fiber Optic Cable Addition



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 *RICE SOLAR ENERGY POWER PLANT PROJECT*

Docket No. 09-AFC-10

PROOF OF SERVICE
(Revised 3/4/2010)

APPLICANT
Jeffrey Benoit
Project Manager
Solar Reserve
2425 Olympic Boulevard, Ste. 500 East
Santa Monica, CA 90404
Jeffrey.Benoit@solarreserve.com

APPLICANT'S CONSULTANTS
Andrea Grenier
Grenier and Associates
1420 East Roseville Parkway, Ste. 140-377
Roseville, CA 95661
andrea@agrenier.com

Douglas Davy
CH2MHILL
2485 Natomas Park Drive, Ste. 600
Sacramento, CA 95833
ddavy@ch2m.com

COUNSEL FOR APPLICANT
Scott Galati
Galati & Blek, LLP
455 Capitol Mall, Suite 350
Sacramento, CA 95814
sgalati@gb-llp.com

INTERESTED AGENCIES
California ISO
e-recipient@caiso.com

Liana Reilly
Western Area Power Administration
PO Box 281213
Lakewood CO 80228-8213
reilly@wapa.gov

Allison Shaffer
Bureau of Land Management
Palm Springs/South Coast Field Office
1201 Bird Center Drive
Palm Springs, Ca 92262
allison_shaffer@blm.gov

INTERVENORS

ENERGY COMMISSION
***ROBERT WEISENMILLER**
Commissioner and Presiding Member
rweisenm@energy.state.ca.us

***KAREN DOUGLAS**
Chairman and Associate Member
kldougla@energy.state.ca.us

Kourtney Vaccaro
Hearing Officer
kvaccaro@energy.state.ca.us

John Kessler
Siting Project Manager
jkessler@energy.state.ca.us

Deborah Dyer
Staff Counsel
ddyer@energy.state.ca.us

***Jennifer Jennings**
Public Adviser's Office
publicadviser@energy.state.ca.us

*indicates change

DECLARATION OF SERVICE

I, Mary Finn, declare that on July 23, 2010 , I served and filed copies of the attached, RSEP Rice SHPO letter dated 071310. 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/ricesolar].**

The documents have 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;

_____by personal delivery

_____by delivering on this date for mailing with the United States Postal Service with first-class postage thereon fully prepaid, to the name and address of the person served, for the mailing that same day in the ordinary course of business; that the envelope was sealed and placed for collection and mailing on that date 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. 09-AFC-10
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.

Mary Finn