

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, California 95814Main website: www.energy.ca.gov

Notice of BLM and Energy Commission Staff Second Data Response Workshop for the SES Solar Two Project (08-AFC-5)

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the California Energy Commission (Energy Commission) staff will conduct a second data response workshop for the Stirling Energy Systems Solar Two Project (SES Solar Two) on May 7, 2009. The purpose of the workshop is to discuss Stirling Energy Systems Solar Two, LLC's responses to the BLM and Energy Commission staff's data requests received since the December 18, 2008 data response workshop. All interested agencies and members of the public are invited to participate. The workshop will be held:

***Thursday, May 7, 2009
2:00 p.m.***

**Fairfield Inn and Suites
503 Danenburg Drive
El Centro, CA 92243**

**DOCKET
08-AFC-5**

DATE APR 21 2009

RECD. APR 22 2009

Purpose

The BLM and Energy Commission are currently reviewing Stirling Energy Systems Solar Two, LLC's (SES Solar Two, LLC's) Application for Certification for the proposed development of the SES Solar Two Project. To facilitate its review of the joint Application for Certification and Environmental Impact Statement process, the BLM and Energy Commission staff published part one of the first set of joint data requests for the following technical areas on November 14, 2008: biological resources, land use, socioeconomics, soil and water resources, traffic and transportation, transmission system engineering, visual resources, waste management, and worker safety/fire protection. Part two of the first set of data requests was issued for the technical areas of air quality and cultural resources on December 2, 2008. Energy Commission staff will be available to address public questions and comments.

Project Description

The proposed project would utilize SunCatcher technology, consisting of approximately 30,000 25-kilowatt solar power dishes with a generating capacity of approximately 750 megawatts (MW) to be built in two phases. The first phase would consist up to 12,000 SunCatchers configured in 200 1.5 MW solar groups of 60 SunCatchers per group and have a net nominal generating capacity of 300 MW. The second phase would consist of approximately 18,000 SunCatchers configured in 500 1.5 MW groups with a net generating capacity of 450 MW. Each SunCatcher system consists of an approximate 38-foot high by 40-foot wide solar concentrator dish that supports an array of curved glass mirror facets designed to automatically track the sun and focus solar energy onto a Power Conversion Unit which generates electricity. Related structures would include a main services complex, assembly buildings, a 230-kilovolt (kV) electrical substation, access roads, water supply line, and a 10-mile double circuit 230-kV transmission line from the project site to San Diego Gas and Electric's existing Imperial Valley electrical substation interconnecting the project to the existing 500-kV transmission system. The 450 MW Phase II is dependent on construction of the proposed Sunrise Powerlink 500-kV transmission line that would also interconnect with the Imperial Valley electrical substation.

Background

On October 8, 2008, the Energy Commission began review of the project. The Energy Commission has the exclusive authority to certify the construction, modification, and operation of thermal electric power plants 50 MW or larger. The Energy Commission certification is in lieu of any permit required by state, regional, or local agencies and federal agencies to the extent permitted by federal law (Pub. Resources Code, Sec. 25500). The Energy Commission must review thermal power plant applications for certification (AFC) to assess potential measures to mitigate those impacts, and compliance with applicable governmental laws or standards (Pub. Resources Code, Sec. 25519 and Sec. 25523(d)). The Energy Commission is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), but produces several environmental and decision documents rather than an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). If approved by the Energy Commission, the decision will establish the conditions under which the project shall be constructed, operated, and decommissioned.

Under federal law, the BLM is responsible for processing applications for rights-of-way to authorize the proposed project and associated transmission lines and other facilities to be constructed and operated on land it manages. In processing applications, the BLM must comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which requires that federal agencies consider the environmental impacts associated with the projects they approve.

The purpose of the BLM action is to provide the applicant a decision in processing its application for a right-of-way (ROW) grant for legal use and access of the public lands in

Imperial County, California managed by the BLM. The need for BLM action is established by the BLM's responsibility under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), NEPA and other federal laws to respond to SES's request for a ROW for legal access to construct, operate and decommission a proposed concentrated solar thermal generation plant and related facilities on the public lands. BLM will decide whether or not to grant a ROW, and if so, under what terms and conditions.

The proposal would also create the need for amending the BLM California Desert Conservation Plan 1980 (CDCP). The purpose of the CDCP amendment is to ensure the public lands are managed according to the principles of multiple use identified in FLPMA while managing valid existing rights and other obligations established. The proposed amendment is necessary to address changing resource demands and technological development proposals on public lands. The CDCP as amended requires (page 95) that "Sites associated with power generation or transmission not identified in the Plan (as is this case) will be considered through the Plan Amendment process."

Pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the BLM and the Energy Commission staff intend to conduct a joint environmental review of the SES Solar Two Project in a NEPA/ CEQA process. It is in the interest of the BLM and the Energy Commission to share in the preparation of a joint environmental analysis of the proposed project to avoid duplication of staff efforts, to share staff expertise and information, to promote intergovernmental coordination at the local, state, and federal levels, and to facilitate public review by providing a joint document and a more efficient environmental review process.

Public Participation

The Energy Commission's Public Adviser's Office provides the public with assistance in participating in Commission activities. If you want information on how to participate in this proceeding, please contact the Associate Public Adviser, Loreen McMahon, at: (916) 654-4489, toll free at (800) 822-6228, by FAX at (916) 654-4493, or by e-mail at public.adviser@energy.state.ca.us. If you have a disability and require assistance to participate, please contact Lourdes Quiroz at lquiroz@energy.state.ca.us or at (916) 654-5146 at least five days in advance of the workshop. If you need Spanish translation services, please contact Christopher Meyer, the Energy Commission Project Manager, at least five days in advance of the workshop.

Questions

General information about the proposed generating facility and related documents are available on the Energy Commission's website at:

<http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/solartwo/index.html>

or the BLM's website at: <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/elcentro/nepa/stirling.html>.

Please direct all news media inquiries to the Energy Commission's media office at (916)

654-4989 or e-mail at mediaoffice@energy.state.ca.us. For technical questions on the

subject matter, please contact Christopher Meyer, the Energy Commission Project

Manager, at (916) 653-1639 or by e-mail at: cmeyer@energy.state.ca.us or Jim

Stobaugh, the BLM Project Manager, at (775) 861-6478 or by e-mail at:

jim_stobaugh@blm.gov. If you are unable to attend the workshop, written comments may

be sent to the Energy Commission Project Manager electronically or to the Energy

Commission's street address shown on the letterhead of this notice by May 20, 2009 for

consideration in the Preliminary Staff Assessment/Draft Environmental Impact Statement currently being prepared.

Date: _____

Original Signature in Dockets

Terrence O'Brien, Deputy Director

Siting, Transmission, and Environmental Protection Division

Proof of Service List

Mail Lists: 7302, 7303, 7304, 7305