

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

**STATE ENERGY RESOURCES
CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

IN THE MATTER OF:

RUSSELL CITY ENERGY CENTER

Docket No. 01-AFC-07C

**[Proposed] ORDER APPROVING POST
CERTIFICATION PETITION FOR
MODIFICATION**

On June 3, 2021, Russell City Energy Company, LLC (project owner) filed a post certification petition with the California Energy Commission (CEC) to modify the Russell City Energy Center (RCEC). The project owner is requesting temporary safety modifications to the steam turbine condenser, which would allow the facility to operate in simple-cycle mode. RCEC is a nominal 600 megawatt (MW) natural gas-fired, wet cooled, combined cycle electric generating facility that was certified by the CEC in September 2002 and began commercial operation in August 2013.

BACKGROUND

On Thursday, May 27, 2021, RCEC experienced a mechanical failure of the steam turbine generator that resulted in an explosion and fire. The steam turbine and generator experienced extensive damage. As a result, there will be an extended production outage for the entire facility until damaged equipment can be repaired or replaced. Estimates of the time required for resumption of combined-cycle mode operations requiring use of the steam turbine are up to a year, or more.

This petition for temporary safety modifications seeks to allow the facility to return to service at its simple-cycle generation capacity, provide frequency and voltage services, and support local and system grid reliability needs in the summer and fall of 2021. In simple-cycle mode, RCEC can provide approximately 300 to 350 MW of generation capacity and frequency and voltage support to the applicable resource area. The proposed temporary modification would also ensure that the facility can continue to provide Black Start service to the California Independent System Operator (CAISO).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

CEC staff has reviewed the petition pursuant to Title 20, California Code of Regulations, section 1769 (Post Certification Amendments and Changes) and concluded in its staff analysis titled, *Statement of Staff Approval of Post Certification Change Russell City Energy Center*, that the temporary modifications to allow for operation in simple cycle mode would not result in a significant impact on the environment, or cause the project to not comply with applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards. No changes to any Conditions of Certification are required as the facility will be operating within its existing license.

ENERGY COMMISSION FINDINGS

Based on the record, including staff's analysis, the Commission concludes that the proposed modifications will not result in any significant impacts to public health and safety, or to the environment. The Commission finds that:

- The petition meets all the filing criteria of Title 20, California Code of Regulations, section 1769 (a), concerning post-certification project modifications.
- The modifications will not change the findings in the Commission's Final Decision, pursuant to Title 20, California Code of Regulations, section 1748;
- The facility will remain in compliance with all applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards, subject to the provisions of Public Resources Code section 25525;
- The facility's operation in simple cycle mode is within the existing license and no changes to any Conditions of Certification are required;
- The facility will return to combined cycle operations when repairs and testing are completed.

CONCLUSION AND ORDER

The CEC hereby adopts staff's recommendations and approves the petition allowing for the facility to operate in simple cycle mode as set forth in staff analysis.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned Secretariat to the Commission does hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of an Order duly and regularly adopted at a meeting of the CEC held on July 15, 2021.

AYE:

NAY:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Liza Lopez
Secretariat

July 15, 2021 California Energy Commission Business Meeting, Item #3; Russell City Energy Center Petition For Temporary Safety Modifications (01-AFC-07C)

Russell City Energy Center Petition for Temporary Safety Modifications (TN 238126)

<https://ww2.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/russellcity/>

Russell City Energy Center Petition for Temporary Safety Modifications Statement of Staff Approval of Post Certification Change (TN 238292)

<https://ww2.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/russellcity/>