



RIVERSIDE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE – NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE IP ATHOS RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Date: March 9, 2019

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Project: IP Athos Renewable Energy Project Draft Environmental Impact Report
(CEQ180007/CUP180001/PUP180001/TPM37700/TPM37701/TPM37702/TPM37703/TPM37704/TPM37705/VAR190001/SCH 2018051021)

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

To: Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

Lead Agencies: County of Riverside
TLMA Planning Department
4080 Lemon Street 12th Floor
Riverside, California 92502-1409

Contact Person: Jason Killebrew
Phone Number: (951) 955-0314
Email: jkillebr@rivco.org
Website: <http://planning.rctlma.org>

Transmittal Date: March 9, 2019

ALL COMMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN APRIL 23, 2019.

A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (Draft EIR) for the Athos Renewable Energy Project (Athos or Project) proposed by IP Athos LLC (Applicant), as described below, has been completed and is now available for public review. The Draft EIR evaluates potentially significant adverse environmental impacts that could be associated with the Project and identifies project components, mitigation measures, and project alternatives that would avoid, reduce, or eliminate significant impacts. The Draft EIR does not set forth policy for the County of Riverside (County) about the proposed Project's desirability. Rather, it is an information document to be used by decision-makers, public agencies, and the public.

Project Location: East and west of Rice Road, approximately 4 miles north of Interstate 10. South and west of Desert Center Airport.

Project Description: The Applicant is proposing the Project to generate up to 500 megawatts (MW) of electricity from solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on approximately 3,400 acres in Unincorporated Riverside County. The solar facility, electrical storage equipment, and portions of a generation intertie line (gen-tie) would be sited on 3,228 acres within the County of Riverside's jurisdiction that would require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for construction, operation, and decommissioning. A Public Use Permit (PUP) and a height Variance (VAR) from the County would also be required for portions of the gen-tie line on County-owned lands. In addition to the CUP180001 and PUP180001, the Applicant is seeking to vacate the facility's interior roadways and merge contiguous Project parcels within the Project area into a contiguous area (TPM37700-37705). Roads along the Project perimeter on the solar facility lands would remain dedicated public access.

If approved, the Project would interconnect to the electrical grid at Southern California Edison's (SCE) Red Bluff Substation. Approximately seven miles of the Project's gen-tie line leading to Red Bluff Substation would traverse federal lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management

(BLM) and require a Right-of-Way (ROW) Grant. However the EIR will consider the environmental impacts of the project as a whole, including components outside State and local agency jurisdiction, the BLM will prepare and rely on its own environmental review document in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. Maps and project information may be viewed online <http://planning.rctlma.org/>.

Significant Impacts on the Environment Anticipated as a Result of the Proposed Project:

The Draft EIR identifies the following issues as having one or more significant effects on the environment, despite the incorporation of all feasible mitigation. As a result, adoption of a Statement of Overriding Considerations will be required pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) in order for the project to be approved.

- Cumulative and Project Specific: Visual Resources
- Cumulative: Cultural Resources

Public Review Period: The County of Riverside is the Lead Agency under CEQA and is holding a 45-day public review period of the Draft EIR, during which time the public and interested parties are invited to comment on the Draft EIR for the Project. Comments on the adequacy of the analysis and the appropriateness of the Project may be made in writing or email, indicating the section of concern. Comments may include additional or alternative mitigation measures to those proposed in the document. The project name and number should be noted on all correspondence and the comments should indicate if you would like to be notified of public hearings. At this time, public hearings have not yet been scheduled.

Please note that the public comment period for the Draft EIR is March 9, 2019 to April 24, 2019. All comments must be submitted or emailed to the County of Riverside at the address indicated below, and must be received no later than 5:00 pm on April 24, 2019.

Riverside County Planning Department
Attn: Jason Killebrew, Project Planner
4080 Lemon Street 12th Floor
P.O. Box 1409
Riverside, CA 92502
(951) 955-0314
Email: jkillebr@rivco.org

Locations Where the Draft EIR May be Reviewed: The Draft EIR and its technical appendices may be reviewed online at: <http://planning.rctlma.org/> or viewed in-person at the Riverside County Planning Department, 4080 Lemon Street 12th Floor, Riverside, CA 92501 or in the eastern Riverside County office, 77-588 El Duna Court Suite H, Palm Desert, CA 92211. The following library will also have a copy of the Draft EIR available for public review:

Lake Tamarisk Branch Library
43880 Lake Tamarisk Drive.
Desert Center, CA 92239

For directions on obtaining copies of project documents, environmental impact report, and technical appendices, see project website at: <http://planning.rctlma.org/>