

Summary Form for Electronic Document Submittal

2019059120

Form F

Lead agencies may include 15 hardcopies of this document when submitting electronic copies of Environmental Impact Reports, Negative Declarations, Mitigated Negative Declarations, or Notices of Preparation to the State Clearinghouse (SCH). The SCH also accepts other summaries, such as EIR Executive Summaries prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15123. Please include one copy of the Notice of Completion Form (NOC) with your submission and attach the summary to each electronic copy of the document.

SCH #: _____

Project Title: High Desert Solar Project

Lead Agency: City of Victorville

Contact Name: Michael Szarzynski

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Phone Number: 760-955-5135

Project Location: Victorville
City

San Bernardino
County

Project Description (Proposed actions, location, and/or consequences).

The High Desert Solar Project would be a nominal 108-megawatt (MWac) solar photovoltaic (PV) power facility and related substation with an integrated battery energy storage system (BESS), located in the City of Victorville, San Bernardino County, California. The Proposed Project would be developed on a total of approximately 624 acres (project site) consisting of an approximately 581-acre solar PV field, BESS, substation, and balance of system, collectively referred to as the Solar Field Area, and an approximately 35-acre corridor consisting of a 2.3-mile 230-kilovolt (kV) Gen-Tie line that would run east and then south in a defined and studied corridor to connect to the existing Victor-Caldwell 230kV line, upstream of the first pole on the Southern California Edison system. Additionally, a 1.7-mile 12.47kV Service Line would connect to the Victorville Municipal Utility Services (VMUS) system. This line would run as underbuilt with the 230kV line for the first mile and then diverge to the west and run on standard distribution utility poles to connect to the VMUS system at the Victorville Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility south of the Solar Field Area. The Gen-Tie line and Service Line are collectively referred to as the Interconnection Facilities. The Interconnection Facilities would be located within linear corridors, 120 feet and 40 feet wide respectively, covering a total area of approximately 35 acres of which only a small portion would actually be disturbed. An approximately 8-acre Gen-Tie Laydown Area would be located on a vacant parcel of land adjacent and to the west and north of the existing High Desert Power Plant.

Identify the project's significant or potentially significant effects and briefly describe any proposed mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid that effect.

See attachment.

If applicable, describe any of the project's areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public.

None.

Provide a list of the responsible or trustee agencies for the project.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board Lahontan Region, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**High Desert Solar Project
Summary Form for Document Submittal Attachment**

Identify the project's significant or potentially significant effects and briefly describe any proposed mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid that effect.

Air Quality:

Construction of the Proposed Project could result in significant temporary NOx emissions. By requiring the use of Tier 4 construction equipment during the facility installation phase of Proposed Project construction, Mitigation Measure AQ-1 would reduce temporary NOx emissions impacts generated during project construction to a less than significant level.

Biological Resources:

Potentially significant biological effects to Joshua trees, desert tortoise, Mohave ground squirrel, burrowing owl, desert kit fox, American badger, raptors, nesting birds, and jurisdictional resources were identified. Effects to these species and resources include habitat loss, mortality and injury, predation, noise and ground vibrations, habitat fragmentation and degradation, increased human activity and visual disturbances, increased dust, and lighting. Mitigation measures have been included to reduce potentially significant biological effects to a less than significant level. Measures include compliance with the City of Victorville's Joshua tree ordinance, compensatory mitigation for impacts to habitat for listed species, desert tortoise translocation, biological monitoring, worker environmental awareness training, burrowing owl management plan, desert kit fox and American badger management plan, nesting bird management and bird protection plan, and regulatory permitting.

Cultural Resources:

Although no Historical Resources, as defined by CEQA, or Historic Properties, as defined by Section 106 of the NHPA, were identified within the APE, the project site is located 0.5 mile east of the Mojave River, in an area known to have been used by both pre-contact and historic occupants. The potential for the project site to contain subsurface cultural resources is considered high. Therefore, ground-disturbing construction activities could expose unknown subsurface cultural resources. If previously unrecorded cultural resources are encountered during construction that could potentially be affected, implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would reduce impacts to less than significant.

Shallow excavations in the uppermost layers of soil and older Quaternary Alluvium exposed in most of the project site are unlikely to encounter significant fossil vertebrate remains. Deeper excavations that extend down into older Quaternary sediments, or any excavations in the older Quaternary deposits exposed on the slopes in the central eastern portion of the project site, however, may well encounter significant vertebrate fossils. Deep excavations may expose and directly or indirectly destroy fossil remains, which would result in a significant impact. With the implementation of CUL-2 impacts would be less than significant.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials:

There is the potential for asbestos-containing materials (ACM) and lead-based paint (LBP) to be located within the abandoned residences, structures, and dump sites located within the Solar Field Area of the project site. Existing abandoned residences and structures would be demolished and dumps sites removed as part of the Proposed Project, which could expose construction personnel and the public to hazardous materials if ACM/LBP materials are present. This exposure would constitute a significant hazard to the public and the environment. With the implementation of Mitigation Measures HAZ-1 through HAZ-8 impacts would be less than significant.

Tribal Cultural Resources:

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians identified a TCR within the project area, specifically within the location of the Gen-Tie line. The TCR consists the Oro Grande Archaeological Site (P36-000072) and an area of concern which may contain unknown subsurface resources associated with the Oro Grande site. The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians expressed concern that there is unknown subsurface material associated with the identified TCR, currently only known to exist outside of the project area. Ground-disturbing activities associated with the construction of the Gen-Tie line could expose unknown subsurface TCRs. If previously unrecorded TCRs are encountered during construction that could potentially be affected, implementation of Mitigation Measures TCR-1 through TCR-3 would reduce impacts to less than significant.

The Proposed Project is within the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians' Traditional Use Area. As such, the Tribe requested that both archaeological and Tribal monitors be present during all ground disturbing activities for the Proposed Project. Tribal monitoring is included as part of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 and would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT AN INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

In accordance with Section 15072 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, this notice is to inform any responsible agencies, interested parties, and organizations that the City of Victorville (City) has completed a Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the **High Desert Solar Project**.

Project Location: The Proposed Project is located in the City of Victorville, in Township 6 North, Range 5 West, San Bernardino Base and Meridian. The project site would be located mostly east of Helendale Road and west of Floreate Road/Mojave River directly north and east of the Southern California Logistics Airport and to the west of the Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority.

Project Description: The High Desert Solar Project (HDSP or Proposed Project) would be a nominal 108-megawatt (MWac) solar photovoltaic (PV) power facility and related substation with an integrated battery energy storage system (BESS), located in the City of Victorville, San Bernardino County, California. The HDSP would provide renewable energy and critically needed flexibility attributes needed to advance California's Renewable Portfolio Standard goals, climate policies, and to enhance electrical grid reliability. The Proposed Project would be developed on a total of approximately 624 acres (project site) consisting of an approximately 581-acre solar PV field, BESS, substation, and balance of system, collectively referred to as the **Solar Field Area**, and an approximately 35-acre corridor consisting of a 2.3-mile 230-kilovolt (kV) Gen-Tie line that would run east and then south in a defined and studied corridor to connect to the existing Victor-Caldwell 230kV line, upstream of the first pole on the Southern California Edison system. Additionally, a 1.7-mile 12.47kV Service Line would connect to the Victorville Municipal Utility Services (VMUS) system. This line would run as underbuilt with the 230kV line for the first mile and then diverge to the west and run on standard distribution utility poles to connect to the VMUS system at the Victorville Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility south of the Solar Field Area. The Gen-Tie line and Service Line are collectively referred to as the **Interconnection Facilities**. The Interconnection Facilities would be located within linear corridors, 120 feet and 40 feet wide respectively, covering a total area of approximately 35 acres of which only a small portion would actually be disturbed. An approximately 8-acre **Gen-Tie Laydown Area** would be located on a vacant parcel of land adjacent and to the west and north of the existing High Desert Power Plant.

Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts: No potentially significant impacts to resources were identified in the Initial Study. All impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with the incorporation of mitigation measures.

Hazardous Waste Sites: The project site is not located on any known listed toxic sites pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

Public Review Period: In compliance with CEQA, the City has established a 30-day public review period beginning May 28, 2019 to solicit comments and input on the Draft IS/MND. To ensure that all environmental issues are fully identified and adequately addressed, written comments are invited from all interested parties. Written comments regarding the scope and content of information in the Draft IS/MND should be submitted no later than June 26, 2019 to:

Michael Szarzynski
Senior Planner
City of Victorville
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Copies of the Draft IS/MND are available for public review at the following location:

City of Victorville
Development Department
14343 Civic Drive, Victorville, CA 92392

The Draft IS/MND is also available online at:

<https://www.victorvilleca.gov/government/city-departments/development/planning/environmental-review-notice>