

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 6**

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

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STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

06-TUL-65-12.72
MND
DEER CREEK SOLAR FACILITY
SCH# 2019089012
REF: PSP 18011

Mr. Hector Guerra
Chief Environmental Planner
Tulare County Resource Management Agency
5961 S Mooney Blvd.
Visalia, CA 93277

Dear Mr. Guerra:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), proposing a 70-Megawatt Solar Facility located on 2 parcels totaling approximately 378 acres. The project site is located on the west side of State Route (SR) 65, south of Deer Creek Ditch (Avenue 104 alignment), north of Avenue 96 and the community of Terra Bella.

The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability. To ensure a safe and efficient transportation system, we encourage early consultation and coordination with local jurisdictions and project proponents on all development projects that utilize the multimodal transportation network. Caltrans provides the following comments consistent with the State's smart mobility goals that support a vibrant economy and sustainable communities:

1. Page 11, Section 1.3.9. Site Access and Security: indicates that project access would be from Avenue 96. Caltrans concurs with this proposal to minimize interference with regular commute traffic. Caltrans concurs that direct access to/from SR 65 will not be permitted for the project.
 - a. Caltrans recommends that northbound trips be minimized, especially trucks and construction related vehicles, during the peak construction period. Caltrans suggests that Road 208 can be used as an alternative route for northbound access.
 - b. Caltrans recommends that trucks/construction equipment trips should be staged 5 to 10 minutes apart to avoid a long platoon of large, slow moving vehicles which would interfere with normal commute traffic in the vicinity.
2. Page 13, Section 1.4.2 Pre-construction Activities: Caltrans recommends that water trucks be present on site and utilized during the construction activities, especially grading and/or earth work to minimize dust in the area.
3. Page 18, Section 1.4.5 Traffic and Deliveries: indicates, "Concrete used in construction-related activities would require approximately 25 concrete trucks...". Would this be 25 delivery trucks for the entire construction period or 25 concrete trucks per day? Please clarify this statement.

- a. Caltrans recommends that trips for the concrete delivery trucks be staged 5 to 10 minutes, as referenced in comment 1b.
4. Page 107, Section 2.17 Transportation, Discussion a): The discussion states this road segment has a LOS "A" but does not provides any calculation or analysis. The discussion also states the capacity of a typical two-lane highway is 3,200 passenger cars per hour (pcph). Please be advised that 3,200 pcph is not the same as 3,200 vehicle per hour. As a point of information, a value of 3,200 pcph is the base or ideal condition for a two-lane highway segment (excluding truck traffic, geometric condition, passing/no-passing zones, etc.).
 - a. Caltrans requests that the Level of Service (LOS) analysis (calculations) for the SR 65 road segment within the project limits be provided for review.
 - b. Caltrans requests that the LOS analysis be prepared using the Highway Capacity method or Highway Capacity Software (HCS). The analysis should include the proper input parameters (percentage of truck traffic, geometric conditions, peak hour factor, access point density, percentage No-passing zones).
5. According to the SR 65 Transportation Concept Report (TCR), this segment of SR 65 adjacent to the project site is planned as a 4-lane expressway in the future. Caltrans is developing plans to widen SR 65 to a 4-lane divided expressway in 4-phased segments from the SR 65/SR 190 interchange south to the Tulare/Kern county line.
6. Segment #1 of the widening project (approximately 3 miles north of the project site) is in construction phase and will widen SR 65 with 2 new lanes on the west side of the current highway alignment. This will result in the current lanes of SR 65 becoming the northbound lanes and the 2 new lanes will be the southbound lanes.
7. Segment #2, of the widening project is adjacent to the proposed solar facility Project. Segment #2 is in the Project Specification/Estimates and Right of Way acquisition phase and is estimated to begin construction in 2024.
8. **Please note:** If Segment #2 of the widening project follows the same alignment as Segment #1, Caltrans will need approximately 120 feet of additional ROW on the west side of SR 65. Therefore, Caltrans recommends that no permanent structures (i.e.: solar arrays or panels or buildings) be located within 120 feet from the existing SR 65 right-of-way.

If you have any other questions, please call me at (559) 488-7396.

Sincerely,



DAVID DEEL
Associate Transportation Planner
Transportation Planning - North