

Notice of Determination**- 1 -****To:**

Office of Planning and Research
 For U.S. Mail:
 P.O. Box 3044

Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

Street Address:

1400 Tenth Street
 Sacramento, CA 95814

From:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
 Department of Fish and Wildlife
 3602 Inland Empire Blvd., Suite C-220
 Ontario, CA 91764
 Contact: Dr. Shankar Sharma
 Phone: (909) 228-3692

Lead Agency
 County of Riverside
 4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor
 Contact: Russell Brady
 Phone: (951) 955-3025

SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21108

State Clearinghouse Number: 2015031066

Project Title: Desert Quartzite Solar Project (California Endangered Species Act Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2021-063-06 (ITP))

Project Location: Desert Quartzite LLC, a subsidiary of EDF Renewables, has proposed development of the Desert Quartzite Solar Project (Project), which is located in the Palo Verde Mesa region of eastern Riverside County, California, at southwest of the City of Blythe, and south of the Interstate 10 freeway. The Project site is situated on the Roosevelt Mine and Ripley 7.5' U.S. Geological Survey Topographic Quadrangles within Sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 22, 23, and 24 of Township 7S, Range 21E, San Bernardino Base and Meridian.

Project Description: The Project consists of a utility-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) electrical generating and battery energy storage system (BESS) and associated infrastructure facilities, and a proposed 230-kilovolt (kV) generator-tie line (gen-tie) connecting to the Southern California Edison (SCE) Colorado River Substation. The Project is expected to generate 450 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy.

The Project will result in impacts 2,953 acres of Agassiz's Desert Tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) habitat; the Project will permanently remove 2,953 acres of Agassiz's Desert Tortoise habitat. The project is expected to result in incidental take of Agassiz's Desert Tortoise, which is designated as a threatened and candidate species under the California Endangered Species Act. The ITP referenced above as issued by CDFW authorizes incidental take of species listed under CESA that may occur as a result of Project implementation.

This is to advise that CDFW, acting as [the lead agency / a responsible agency] approved the above-described project on March 14, 2022 and made the following determinations regarding the above described project:

1. The project will / will not have a significant effect on the environment (This determination is limited to effects within CDFW's permitting jurisdiction as a responsible agency).
 2. An environmental impact report / A negative declaration was prepared by the lead agency for the original project.
 3. Additional mitigation measures were / were not made a condition of CDFW's approval of the project.
 4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan was / was not adopted by CDFW for this project.
 5. A Statement of Overriding Considerations was / was not adopted by CDFW for this project.
 6. Findings were / were not made by CDFW pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21081(a).
 7. Compliance with the environmental filing fee requirement at Fish and Game Code § 711.4:
 - Payment is submitted with this notice.
 - A copy of a receipt showing prior payment was submitted to CDFW.
- Responsible Agency statement: The EIR prepared by the lead agency for the Project is available to the general public at the office location listed above for the lead agency. CDFW's administrative record of proceedings related to the incidental take permit is available to the public for review at CDFW's regional office.

Notice of Determination

DocuSigned by:

Richard Burg

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Signature

Date: 3/14/2022

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Richard Burg, *Acting Regional Manager*

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____