

OCT 10 2019

From: [Boyd, Ian@Wildlife](mailto:Boyd.Ian@Wildlife)
To: "Kent Johanns"
Cc: [Wildlife R2 CEQA](#); [OPR State Clearinghouse](#)
Subject: CDFW comments on the Initial Study for the ACC, Inc. Rice Hull Biomass Energy Production Project (SCH#2019099073)
Date: Thursday, October 10, 2019 10:58:05 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Hi Kent,

Thanks again for sending the Initial Study ahead of the State Clearinghouse for review. I was able to take a look at it and only have a couple general comments/recommendations for your consideration.

The rice hull powerplant will be built on previously disturbed land that is actively being used for farm production, it is adjacent to an existing irrigation canal and active rice fields that could be utilized by giant garter snake (*Thamnophis gigas*)[GGS] during their active season (generally April 1 to October 1). CDFW recommends that the project include exclusionary fencing adjacent to the rice fields and canal during construction to minimize the potential for GGS from entering the site. Exclusionary fencing could include silt fencing that would also provide a benefit to the water quality by preventing sediments from entering the canal.

After performing a quick review on BIOS, I identified a couple special-status bird species near the project site. Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) occurrences exist within ½-mile and tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*) occurrences exist within 1.25 miles. Although the project site does not contain nesting or foraging habitat for either species and there are no trees or vegetation proposed for removal, CDFW would recommend that a qualified biologist perform a nesting bird survey within 500 feet of the project site within 15 days prior to the start construction if work is to occur between February 1 and August 31 (general nesting bird season). There may be a potential for these species to nest adjacent to the site in trees located on the canal (Swainson's hawk) or in emergent vegetation (tricolored blackbird) if it becomes established. If nests are discovered during a pre-construction survey the qualified biologist should recommend a suitable buffer size to avoid disturbance or coordinate with CDFW to determine the appropriate course of action.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Initial Study for the ACC, Inc. Rice Hull Biomass Energy Production Project. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact me at (916) 358-1134 or ian.boyd@wildlife.ca.gov.

Thank you,

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