

Notice of Determination

To:

Office of Planning and Research
CEQA Submit

From:

Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
Inland Deserts Region
3602 Inland Empire Blvd., Suite C-220
Contact: Rose Banks
Rose.Banks@wildlife.ca.gov

Lead Agency (if different than CDFW)
County of Riverside
4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor
Contact: Tim Wheeler
Phone: (915) 955-6060

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

State Clearinghouse Number: 2022110240

Project Title: Easley Renewable Energy Project (California Endangered Species Act Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2024-028-06 (ITP))

Project Location (include county): the Project is located in the central part of the Chuckwalla Valley in Riverside County, approximately two miles north of Interstate 10 and the town of Desert Center, California. The Project is located within the Desert Center, Victory Pass, East of Victory Pass, and Corn Spring 7.5 USGS topographic quadrangles, with the northwest corner of the Project at approximately 33.775386, -115.389987.

Project Description: This proposed project involves construction, operation and maintenance (O&M), and decommissioning of a utility-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) electrical generating and battery energy storage system (BESS) and associated infrastructure facilities on approximately 3,735 acres of private and Bureau of Land Management (BLM)-administered land. The Project will generate up to 390 megawatts (MW) of renewable electricity via arrays of solar PV panels and store up to 650 MW in a BESS.

The Project will result in impacts to 1,475.3 acres of desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) habitat. The project is expected to result in incidental take of desert tortoise which is designated as a threatened and candidate endangered 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 November 22, 2024 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 (check one):
 - 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.

DocuSigned by:
Heidi Calvert
Signature
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Date: 11/22/2024

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____