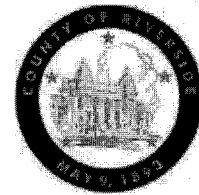


SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA



ITEM  
21.1  
(ID # 8900)


FROM : TLMA-PLANNING:

MEETING DATE:  
Tuesday, February 5, 2019

**SUBJECT:** TRANSPORTATION & LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY/PLANNING: PUBLIC HEARING ON THE APPEAL OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S APPROVAL OF COMMERCIAL WECS PERMIT NO. 180001 (WCS180001) & VARIANCE CASE NO. 180003 (VAR180003) – Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration - CEQ180059 – Applicant: Painted Hills Wind, LLC – Engineer/Representative: Westwood Professional Services - Fifth Supervisorial District – Western Coachella Valley Area Plan – Open Space: Rural (OS:RUR) – Zoning: Wind Energy (W-E) – 600-Acres – Location: The site is located in Painted Hills north of Interstate 10, west of Highway 62; more specifically, north of 16th Avenue, east of Whitewater Canyon Road, west of Windhaven Road at terminus of Painted Hills Road – REQUEST: WCS180001 proposes to decommission and remove approximately 291 existing commercial wind turbines and install up to 14 new commercial wind turbines up to 499 feet in height with a per turbine generating capacity of between 2.0 megawatts (MW) and 4.2 MW on land within the Wind Energy Resource (W-E) Zone (herein the "Project"). The existing wind turbines were originally installed and have been operating since the mid-1980's. The Project also proposes to install ancillary equipment, including three (3) temporary, guyed meteorological towers up to 309 feet in height, two (2) permanent, self-supported meteorological towers up to 309 feet in height, a temporary expansion of an existing laydown yard, construction of new temporary and permanent internal access roads, and a new electrical collection system integrating the proposed wind turbines to the electrical grid via one of two options. VAR180003 proposes reductions in WECS safety setbacks along the Colorado River Aqueduct, internal lot lines associated with W-E zoned land, along the Southern California Edison transmission line easement on the southern boundary, and eliminate wind access setbacks along the northern, southern, and eastern lot lines of the Project Parcels. [Applicant fees 100%.]

Continued on page 2

**ACTION:Policy**


  
Charles Leach, Assistant TLMA Director 1/31/2019

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**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

On motion of Supervisor Hewitt, seconded by Supervisor Perez and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is approved as recommended to deny the appeal and uphold Planning Commission's decisions.

Ayes: Jeffries, Spiegel, Washington, Perez and Hewitt  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Date: February 5, 2019  
xc: Planning

Kecia Harper-Ihem  
Clerk of the Board  
By:   
Deputy

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,  
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**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** That the Board of Supervisors:

1. **DENY THE APPEAL** of the Planning Commission's approval of Commercial WECS Permit No. 180001 and Variance Case No. 180003 on November 28, 2018; and,
2. **UPHOLD THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S ADOPTION OF A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** for **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. 180059**, based on the findings incorporated in the initial study and the conclusion that the project will have a less than significant effect on the environment with mitigation measures, and the attachments to the submittal to the Board of Supervisors; and,
3. **UPHOLD THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S APPROVAL OF VARIANCE CASE NO. 180003**, subject to the attached Advisory Notification Document, the conditions of approval, the attachments to the submittal to the Board of Supervisors, and based upon the findings and conclusions incorporated in the staff report; and,
4. **UPHOLD THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S APPROVAL OF COMMERCIAL WECS PERMIT NO. 180001**, subject to the attached Advisory Notification Document, the conditions of approval, the attachments to the submittal to the Board of Supervisors, and based upon the findings and conclusions incorporated in the staff report.

<b>FINANCIAL DATA</b>	<b>Current Fiscal Year:</b>	<b>Next Fiscal Year:</b>	<b>Total Cost:</b>	<b>Ongoing Cost</b>
<b>COST</b>	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A
<b>NET COUNTY COST</b>	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A
<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS:</b> Applicant Fees 100%			<b>Budget Adjustment:</b> No	
			<b>For Fiscal Year:</b> 2018	

**C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:** Approve

**BACKGROUND:**

**Summary**

**PROJECT HISTORY:**

The current project site contains existing wind turbines proposed to be decommissioned under proposed WCS180001. The existing wind turbines were previously approved under Commercial WECS Permit No. 52 (WCS 52). Commercial WECS Permit No. 52 (**WCS 52**) was originally approved in 1985 with 231 turbines.

Commercial WECS Permit No. 52, Revised Permit No. 1 (**WCS 52R1**) was subsequently approved in 1999 to install and operate up to 18 additional wind turbines at 296 feet in height. The 18 additional turbines were not constructed and 291 existing turbines have remained in place.

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The life of permit for WCS 52R1 expired on May 7, 2015. However, WCS 52R2 was applied for in 2011 prior to the expiration date of 2015, and requested a 10-year permit life extension and removal of certain condition language as described above. WCS 52R2 was originally filed in 2011 in conjunction with a separate WCS project application (WCS 129) on same property for nine (9) additional 1.5 Megawatt wind turbines which application for WCS 129 was withdrawn in 2015. Proposed WECS 52R2 is superseded by proposed WCS180001 and VAR180003.

Also, the north half of Section 1 was permitted under WCS 25 for 39 turbines and WCS53 for 36 turbines. WECS 25 Revised Permit #2, Variance 01707, EA 38139 added 5 additional wind turbine generators to this area and combined the old WCS 25 and WCS 53 into one revised WECS 25 permit.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION:**

**Commercial WECS Permit No. 180001** proposes to decommission and remove approximately 291 existing commercial wind turbines (WECS) and install up to 14 new commercial wind turbines up to 499 feet in height with a per turbine generating capacity of between 2.0 megawatts (MW) and 4.2 MW on land within the Wind Energy Resource (W-E) Zone. The existing wind turbines were originally installed and have been operating since the mid-1980's. The Project also proposes to install ancillary equipment, including up to three (3) temporary, guyed meteorological towers up to 309 feet in height, up to two (2) permanent, self-supported meteorological towers up to 309 feet in height, a temporary expansion of an existing laydown yard, construction of new temporary and permanent internal access roads, and a new electrical collection system integrating the proposed wind turbines to the electrical grid via one of two options. Option 1 would include the installation of new 12-kilovolt (kV) underground collector circuits from each wind turbine to an existing, on-site, SCE-owned 12 kV distribution system and 12 kV to 115 kV collector substation. Option 2 would include the installation of new 34.5 kV underground collector circuits from each wind turbine to a new Project-owned 34.5 kV to 115 kV collector substation that would connect to the electric grid on-site by way of a new, Project-owned 115 kV tie line.

**Variance Case No. 180003** proposed reductions in WECS safety setbacks from 1.1 times total WECS height from lot lines abutting the Colorado River Aqueduct to between 325 feet and 515 feet, reduce WECS safety setbacks from 1.1 times total WECS height to 0 feet from all internal lot lines associated with W-E zoned land, reduce WECS safety setbacks from 1.25 times total WECS height to 555 feet from the northern boundary of the Southern California Edison transmission line easement located along the southern lot line of APN 516-030-014 and eliminate wind access setbacks along the northern, southern and eastern lot lines of the Project parcels.

The above discretionary actions are herein identified as the "Project".

The project site is located in Painted Hills north of Interstate 10, west of Highway 62; more specifically, north of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, east of Whitewater Canyon Road, west of Windhaven Road on a 600-acre site.

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**Planning Commission**

The Planning Commission considered the project during a regularly scheduled public hearing on November 28, 2018.

Prior to the public hearing, Adams Broadwell Joseph & Cardozo, representing CA Unions for Reliable Energy (CURE) submitted two (2) opposition letters dated November 26, 2018 and November 27, 2018, and also spoke in opposition to the project at the public hearing (Attachment).

Prior to the public hearing, Painted Hills Wind, LLC, and their representatives submitted three (3) response letters dated November 27, 2018 and November 28, 2018, to address the opposition letters (Attachment).

Additionally, prior to the Planning Commission hearing on November 28, 2018, a comment letter was received from the Sierra Club dated November 27, 2018 (Attachment).

At the public hearing on November 28, 2019, Painted Hills Wind, LLC spoke in favor of the project. Approximately four (4) persons from the applicant's team spoke in favor which included a PowerPoint Presentation.

Another person spoke in favor of repowering, requested the Planning Commission to require BBCS to deal with uncertainty and allow for adaptive management, and post construction monitoring.

At the public hearing, a Sierra Club representative provided comments supporting repowering but voiced concern about avian impacts.

Additionally, Adams Broadwell Adams Broadwell Joseph & Cardozo representing CA Unions for Reliable Energy (CURE) spoke in opposition to the project including allegations that the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) fails to comply with the requirements of CEQA.

However, based on staff's presentation at the Planning Commission hearing, applicant testimony, public testimony, and discussion by the Planning Commission, and based upon the Planning Commission staff report with recommended environmental determination and findings, the Planning Commission approved the Project.

Subsequently, the Planning Commission's approval decision was received and filed by the Board of Supervisors by a 5-0 vote on December 11, 2018 (Attachment).

**Appeal of Planning Commission Decision**

On December 17, 2018, Adams Broadwell Joseph & Cardozo, representing CA Union for Reliable Energy (CURE) appealed the approval of the Painted Hills Wind Energy Repowering Project (WCS180001/VAR18003). The appeal is in opposition to the Planning Commission's



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approval on November 28, 2018, and the Board of Supervisor's Receive and File of the Planning Commission's approval decision on December 11, 2018.

The appeal application dated and received on December 17, 2018, with associated appeal letter dated December 14, 2018, and attached background documents, including Exhibits A, B, C, D & E, are attached hereto as an Attachment. Appellant alleges that the IS/MND and associated documents fails to comply with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act, and more specifically alleges that the IS/MND fails to describe the existing setting upon which to measure impacts, fails to disclose and analyze the Project's potentially significant environmental impacts and fails to identify enforceable measures that can reduce those impacts to a less than significant level (Attachment).

**Applicant Responses to Appeal**

To address the appeal in opposition to the Project, the applicant for the Painted Hills Wind Energy Repowering Project has submitted Responses to CURE's Appeal Letter, dated December 14, 2018 (Attachment).

The applicant's response letter includes responses to individual appeal comments in numbered brackets (Response to Comments 3-1 through 3-109).

For example, in Response to Comment 3-9, the applicant explains that CURE's allegations regarding the IS/MND fail to support CURE's argument that an EIR is required. Dr. Fox and Ms. Owens fail to provide substantial evidence to support a fair argument this project will result in significant air quality and public health impacts, and instead their arguments are based on speculation and unsupported opinion. As such, CURE has not met the fair argument standard. Under these circumstances an EIR is not required to be prepared.

Staff agrees that CURE has failed to provide any substantial evidence supporting a fair argument that the Project may have a significant effect on the environment. CURE's evidence is based upon argument, speculation, unsubstantiated opinion, clearly inaccurate or erroneous evidence, and evidence that is not credible. Accordingly, CURE's assertion that an EIR is required lacks merit.

In regards to Response to Comment 3-10, the comment states that the IS/MND fails to provide a complete project description. Under CEQA Guidelines sections 15603(d) (1) and 15071(a), an IS/MND must include a brief description of the project. The IS/MND provides a detailed project description including discussion of all Project components associated with decommissioning, construction, and operation of the wind turbines, as well as description of the transportation of the new turbine blades to the Project site, decommissioning of the existing wind turbines, and installation of the new turbines on the site.

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In regards to Response to Comment 3-11, the applicant addresses CURE's statement that the IS/MND fails to describe the transportation of turbine blades to the Project site. Total annual average daily traffic (AADT) for the project during construction is estimated to be 105 per day at its peak. The annual average daily traffic represents only a nominal percentage of the AADT on nearby highways such as Hwy. 10 which supports 88,000 trips and Hwy. 62 which supports 20,000 trips. The vendor trips were assumed to be diesel, which is utilized within CalEEMod. Standard trucks can also be used to transport turbine blades. The IS/MND therefore adequately discussed transportation of Project materials to the Project site, including turbine components. CURE's speculation to the contrary is unfounded.

The applicant's response letter contains 109 bracketed responses to the appeal letter (Attachment). Staff has reviewed these responses and agrees that CURE has not met the fair argument standard with respect to the issues raised.

Additionally, the applicant has provided additional air quality analysis, including the Health Risk Assessment Data and Supporting Materials.

**USFWS/CDFW Comments & Responses**

Based on Joint Project Review (JPR) with the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service submitted comments regarding the Project via email communication dated November 30, 2018. The email requested clarification of JPR application materials and certain measures prior to grading permit.

Additionally, based on the JPR, the California Department of Fish & Game submitted comments via email communication dated December 3, 2018.

To address these email communications from the wildlife agencies, the Planning Department has incorporated mitigation measures as outlined in the IS/MND and recommended conditions of approval.

Furthermore, the applicant has provided detailed responses to these email communications as outlined in "Responses to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Comments on the Joint Project Review, Dated November 30, 2018" (Attachment) and in "Responses to California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Comments on the Joint Project Review, Dated December 3, 2018" (Attachment).

**Additional Comment Letter**

Additionally, the Sierra Club, along with the Center for Biological Diversity submitted a comment letter dated January 15, 2019, regarding the Project (Attachment).

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The letter indicates, in summary, that while supportive of re-powering wind farms, as being preferable to new projects on pristine lands, the IS/MND for the above project does not adequately identify, analyze or mitigate the project's potential significant impacts to bats and resident and migratory birds.

To address the Sierra Club's comments, the applicant provided detailed responses as outlined in "Responses to the Sierra Club and Center for Biological Diversity's Comment Letter on WECS 180001, dated January 15, 2019" (Attachment).

The Planning Commission, with staff input, also added a recommended condition COA AND Planning. 7 to address avian impacts as follows:

"The project proponent or its representatives shall perform appropriate monitoring as part of a Post-Construction Avian and Bat Mortality Monitoring Plan in the first three years following the initial operation of the project to demonstrate to the Riverside County Planning Department Environmental Program Division (EPD) that the level of incidental injury and mortality does not result in an unanticipated long-term decline in populations of avian or bat species in the vicinity of the project site. The plan shall be consistent with guidance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife on development of appropriate avian and bat protection/monitoring plans. As part of this monitoring plan, the project proponent shall provide the results of this annual survey to EPD within two weeks after each project operating year. The monitoring data shall be utilized to inform an adaptive management program, if needed, that would avoid and/or minimize project-related impacts to avian and bat species. If after three years of monitoring under the plan, the EPD determines that the project is resulting in unanticipated significant adverse impacts on the population of an avian or bat species, the project proponent shall work with EPD to determine appropriate adaptive management measures to reduce such impacts."

**Staff's Response to the Appeal**

1. As detailed in the response to comment letters, Planning Commission staff report including the IS/MND, and during the Planning Commission public hearing, the Project was found to have less than significant environmental impacts with mitigation measures incorporated, and a site design that is appropriate for the decommissioning of 291 existing turbines and installation of up to 14 wind turbines at maximum height of 499 feet.
2. As detailed in the Planning Commission staff report, the Project proposes to remove 291 existing turbines constructed in the mid-1980s thereby reducing visual clutter on approximately 600 acres and replacing with up to 14 new wind turbines with greater energy efficiency and less equipment.

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3. As detailed in the Planning Commission staff report, the Project is sensitive to the land since wind farms, including the Project, disturb less land due to minimal required maintenance areas and less permanent disturbance than other land uses. With permanent disturbed acres proposed at 36.33 acres and temporary disturbed acreage at 3.74 acres, approximately 560 acres would remain undisturbed and protected.
4. Utilization of wind energy resources of Riverside County are a recognized and acceptable land use within Riverside County since 1982 when the initial general plan and zoning regulations for wind energy were adopted by the Board of Supervisors by Resolution No. 82-326.
5. The subject land is highly compatible with surrounding land which includes extensive utility related land uses such as the Colorado River Aqueduct which transects the 600-acre Project Site and surrounding wind farms to the west, south, southeast, and east.
6. Geotechnical issues were fully reviewed and vetted under County Geologic Report No. 180021 with recommended conditions prior to grading permit issuance such as final slope stability report.
7. The Project complies with the County Noise standards for Commercial WECS Projects.
8. The Project was reviewed by the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) and was found "consistent" with the 2004 Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, and found to comply with FAA Determination of No Hazard to Air Navigation with conditions incorporated as outlined in the ALUC letter dated October 22, 2018.
9. As detailed in the response letters, Planning Commission staff report, which includes the IS/MND with Appendix C-Biological Resources Assessment, impacts to biological resources have been addressed with mitigation measures and recommended conditions for approval. These measures include, but are not necessarily limited to, an ACOE 404 Permit, Burrowing owl pre-construction survey, CDFW 1600 permit, MBTA Nesting Bird Survey, Restoration Plan, and Post-Construction Avian and Bat Mortality Monitoring Plan in the first three years following the initial operation of the project.
10. Additionally, the Project provides construction jobs and contributes to local and statewide renewable energy goals such as the statewide goal of 50% renewable energy sources by 2030.

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11. The project is located within the sphere of influence of the City of Desert Hot Springs. No comments or objections have been received based on the county transmittal dated October 2, 2018.

For these reasons, staff recommends that the appeal be denied.

**Impact on Residents and Businesses**

The impacts of this project have been evaluated through the environmental review and public hearing process by the Planning Department and the Planning Commission.

**SUPPLEMENTAL:**

**Additional Fiscal Information**

All fees are paid by the applicant. There is no General Fund obligation.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- A. **Planning Commission Hearing Report of Actions**
- B. **Planning Commission Staff Report**
- C. **Memorandum to Planning Commission**
- D. **Board of Supervisors Receive & File Minute Order**
- E. **Appeal of the Planning Commission Decision**
- F. **Responses to CURE's Appeal Letter (3-1 thru 3-75)**
- G. **Responses to CURE's Appeal Letter (3-76 thru 3-109)**
- H. **Health Risk Assessment Data**
- I. **Responses to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**
- J. **Responses to CA Department of Fish & Game**
- K. **Responses to Sierra Club and CBD Letter**



Jason Farin, Senior Management Analyst

1/31/2019



Gregory P. Priamos, Director County Counsel

1/31/2019



**PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING  
REPORT OF ACTIONS  
NOVEMBER 28, 2018**

**1.0 CONSENT CALENDAR**

**1.1 ADOPTION OF THE 2019 PLANNING COMMISSION CALENDAR**

**ADOPTED** the revised 2019 Planning Commission Calendar.

**2.0 GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT INITIATION PROCEEDINGS**

**NONE**

**3.0 PUBLIC HEARINGS – CONTINUED ITEMS:**

**3.1 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 180017 – Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) – Intent to Approve a Determination of Public Convenience and Necessity –**  
Applicant: Los Panchos Market and Restaurant, Inc. –  
Engineer/Representative: Ross Accounting and Advisory Services –  
First Supervisorial District – Lakeland Village Zoning District – Elsinore Area Plan: Community Development: Commercial Retail (CD-CR) –  
Location: Northerly of Lorimer Street, westerly of Grand Avenue, and southerly of Pederson Street – 0.14 Gross Acres – Zoning: General Commercial (C-1 & C-P) – **REQUEST:** CUP180017 is a request to establish a Type 20 (Off-Sale Beer & Wine) ABC license in conjunction with the existing Los Panchos Market. Continued from November 7, 2018. Project Planner: John Hildebrand at (951) 955-1888 or email at [jhildebr@rivco.org](mailto:jhildebr@rivco.org).

**Planning Commission Action:**

Public Comments: Closed

By a vote of 5-0

**FOUND** the project exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and

**APPROVED** the Determination of Public Convenience and Necessity; and

**APPROVED** Conditional Use Permit No. 180017, subject to the conditions of approval.

**4.0 PUBLIC HEARINGS – NEW ITEMS:**

**4.1 COMMERCIAL WECS PERMIT NO. 180001/VARIANCE CASE NO. 180003 – Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration –**  
CEQ180059 – Applicant: Painted Hills Wind, LLC –  
Engineer/Representative: Westwood Professional Services – Fifth Supervisorial District – Western Coachella Valley Area Plan – Open Space: Rural (OS-RUR) – Zoning: Wind Energy (W-E) – 600-Acres –  
Location: The site is located in Painted Hills northerly of Interstate 10 and westerly of Highway 62; more specifically, northerly of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, easterly of Whitewater Canyon Road, and westerly of Windhaven Road at terminus of Painted Hills Road– **REQUEST: Commercial WECS Permit No. 180001** proposes to decommission and remove approximately 291 existing commercial wind turbines and install up to 14 new commercial wind turbines up to 499-feet in height with a per turbine generating capacity of between 2.0 megawatts (MW) and 4.2 MW on land within the Wind Energy Resource (W-E) Zone ("Project"). The existing wind turbines were originally installed and have been operating since the mid-1980's. The Project also proposes to install ancillary equipment, including three (3) temporary, guyed meteorological towers up to 309-feet in height, two (2) permanent, self-supported meteorological towers up to 309-feet in height, a temporary expansion of an existing laydown yard, construction of new temporary and permanent internal access roads, and a new electrical collection system integrating the proposed wind turbines to the electrical grid via one of two options. Option 1 would include the installation of new 12-kilovolt (kV) underground collector circuits from each wind turbine to an existing, on-site, SCE-owned 12 kV distribution system and 12 kV to 115 kV collector substation. Option 2 would include the installation of new 34.5 kV underground collector circuits from each wind turbine to a new Project-owned 34.5 kV to 115 kV collector substation that would connect to the electric grid on-site by way of a new, Project-owned 115 kV tie line. **Variance Case No. 180003** proposes reductions in WECS safety setbacks from 1.1 times total WECS height from lot lines abutting the Colorado River Aqueduct to between 325 feet and 515 feet, reduce WECS safety setbacks from 1.1 times total WECS height to 0 feet from all internal lot lines associated with W-E zoned land, reduce WECS

**Planning Commission Action:**

Public Comments: Closed

By a vote of 5-0

**ADOPTED** a Mitigated Negative Declaration for Environmental Assessment No. 180059; and

**APPROVED** Variance Case No. 180003; and

**APPROVED** Commercial WECS Permit No. 180001, subject to the conditions of approval as modified at hearing.

A



**PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING  
REPORT OF ACTIONS  
NOVEMBER 28, 2018**

safety setbacks from 1.25 time total WECS height to 555 feet from the northern boundary of the Southern California Edison transmission line easement located along the southern lot line of APN 516-030-014 and eliminate wind access setbacks along the northern, southern and eastern lot lines of the Project parcels. Project Planner: Jay Olivas at (760) 863-7050 or email at [jolivas@rivco.org](mailto:jolivas@rivco.org).

- 4.2 SPECIFIC PLAN NO. 339, GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 686, CHANGE OF ZONE NO. 6915 – Intent to Certify an Environmental Impact Report – EIR00506 – Applicant: GLC Enterprises, LLC – Specific Plan Representative: Danielan Associates – CEQA Consultant: Envicom Corporation – Engineer: KWC Engineers – Fourth Supervisorial District – Chuckwalla Zoning Area – Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan – Open Space: Rural (OS-RUR) – Location: Westerly of Cotton Springs Road, northerly of Box Canyon Road, easterly of Interstate 10 Cactus City Rest Area, and southerly of Joshua Tree National Park, on either side of Interstate 10 – Zoning: Controlled Development Areas – 10 Acre Minimum (W-2-10) – Natural Assets (N-A) – REQUEST: Specific Plan No. 339 is a proposal to establish a Specific Plan which would allow for a maximum of 8,490 sq. ft. dwelling units and up to 1.38 million sq. ft. of non-residential uses within an approximately 1,848 acre development footprint divided between six (6) Villages within an overall 5,000 acres Specific Plan area. General Plan Amendment No. 686 is a proposal for a General Plan Foundation Component Amendment and General Plan Entitlement/Policy Amendment to change the underlying Foundation from Open Space to Community Development and change the land use designation from Open Space: Rural (OS-RUR) to those as reflected in the Specific Plan land use plan, which include Open Space-Conservation Habitat (OS-CH), Open Space-Recreation (OS-R), Mixed Use (MU), Commercial Retail (CR), Medium Density Residential (MDR), Medium High Density Residential (MHDR), High Density Residential (HDR), Highest Density Residential (HHDR), and Public Facilities (PF) designations. Change of Zone No. 6915 is a proposal to change the zoning classification of the subject site from a mix of Controlled Development Areas, 10 Acre Minimum (W-2-10) and Natural Assets (N-A) to Specific Plan (SP) and adopt a Specific Plan zoning ordinance to establish the permitted uses and development standards for the Specific Plan Planning Areas. Environmental Impact Report No. 506 studies the impacts of the project. Project Planner: Russell Brady at (951) 955-3025 or email at [rbrady@rivco.org](mailto:rbrady@rivco.org).**

**Planning Commission Action:**

Public Comments: Open

By a vote of 5-0

**CONTINUED** to December 5, 2018.

**5.0 WORKSHOP**

**NONE**

**6.0 ORAL COMMUNICATION ON ANY MATTER NOT ON THE AGENDA**

**7.0 DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**8.0 COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS**

**Riverside County Board of Supervisors  
Request to Speak**

Submit request to Clerk of Board (right of podium),  
Speakers are entitled to three (3) minutes, subject  
Board Rules listed on the reverse side of this form.

**SPEAKER'S NAME:** BRAD ADAMS

P.O. Box 580777  
**Address:** 17550 KAREN AVE  
(only if follow-up mail response requested)

**City:** NO PALM SPRINGS **Zip:** 92258

**Phone #:** (760) 251-1907

**Date:** 2/5/19 **Agenda #** 21.1

**PLEASE STATE YOUR POSITION BELOW:**

**Position on "Regular" (non-appealed) Agenda Item:**

☒ **Support**      ☐ **Oppose**      ☐ **Neutral**

**Note:** If you are here for an agenda item that is filed  
for "Appeal", please state separately your position on  
the appeal below:

☐ **Support**      ☐ **Oppose**      ☐ **Neutral**

**I give my 3 minutes to:** \_\_\_\_\_



## **BOARD RULES**

### **Requests to Address Board on "Agenda" Items:**

You may request to be heard on a published agenda item. Requests to be heard must be submitted to the Clerk of the Board before the scheduled meeting time.

### **Requests to Address Board on items that are "NOT" on the Agenda:**

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these rules, member of the public shall have the right to address the Board during the mid-morning "Oral Communications" segment of the published agenda. Said purpose for address must pertain to issues which are under the direct jurisdiction of the Board of Supervisors. YOUR TIME WILL BE LIMITED TO THREE (3) MINUTES.

### **Power Point Presentations/Printed Material:**

Speakers who intend to conduct a formalized Power Point presentation or provide printed material must notify the Clerk of the Board's Office by 12 noon on the Monday preceding the Tuesday Board meeting, insuring that the Clerk's Office has sufficient copies of all printed materials and at least one (1) copy of the Power Point CD. Copies of printed material given to the Clerk (by Monday noon deadline) will be provided to each Supervisor. If you have the need to use the overhead "Elmo" projector at the Board meeting, please insure your material is clear and with proper contrast, notifying the Clerk well ahead of the meeting, of your intent to use the Elmo.

### **Individual Speaker Limits:**

**Individual speakers are limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes.** Please step up to the podium when the Chairman calls your name and begin speaking immediately. Pull the microphone to your mouth so that the Board, audience, and audio recording system hear you clearly. Once you start speaking, the "green" podium light will light. The "yellow" light will come on when you have one (1) minute remaining. When you have 30 seconds remaining, the "yellow" light will begin flash, indicating you must quickly wrap up your comments. Your time is up when the "red" light flashes. The Chairman adheres to a strict three (3) minutes per speaker. ***Note: If you intend to give your time to a "Group/Organized Presentation", please state so clearly at the very bottom of the reverse side of this form.***

### **Group/Organized Presentations:**

Group/organized presentations with more than one (1) speaker will be limited to nine (9) minutes at the Chairman's discretion. The organizer of the presentation will automatically receive the first three (3) minutes, with the remaining six (6) minutes relinquished by other speakers, as requested by them on a completed "Request to Speak" form, and clearly indicated at the front bottom of the form.

### **Addressing the Board & Acknowledgement by Chairman:**

The Chairman will determine what order the speakers will address the Board, and will call on all speakers in pairs. The first speaker should immediately step to the podium and begin addressing the Board. The second speaker should take up a position in one of the chamber aisles in order to quickly step up to the podium after the preceding speaker. This is to afford an efficient and timely Board meeting, giving all attendees the opportunity to make their case. Speakers are prohibited from making personal attacks, and/or using coarse, crude, profane or vulgar language while speaking to the Board members, staff, the general public and/or meeting participants. Such behavior, at the discretion of the Board Chairman may result in removal from the Board Chambers by Sheriff Deputies.

**Riverside County Board of Supervisors  
Request to Speak**

Submit request to Clerk of Board (right of podium),  
Speakers are entitled to three (3) minutes, subject  
Board Rules listed on the reverse side of this form.

**SPEAKER'S NAME:** Kyle Jones

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(only if follow-up mail response requested)

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** 2/5 **Agenda #** 21.1

**PLEASE STATE YOUR POSITION BELOW:**

**Position on "Regular" (non-appealed) Agenda Item:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Support**      \_\_\_\_\_ **Oppose**      \_\_\_\_\_ **Neutral**

**Note:** If you are here for an agenda item that is filed  
for "Appeal", please state separately your position on  
the appeal below:

\_\_\_\_\_ **Support**      \_\_\_\_\_ **Oppose**      \_\_\_\_\_ **Neutral**

**I give my 3 minutes to:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **BOARD RULES**

### **Requests to Address Board on "Agenda" Items:**

You may request to be heard on a published agenda item. Requests to be heard must be submitted to the Clerk of the Board before the scheduled meeting time.

### **Requests to Address Board on items that are "NOT" on the Agenda:**

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these rules, member of the public shall have the right to address the Board during the mid-morning "Oral Communications" segment of the published agenda. Said purpose for address must pertain to issues which are under the direct jurisdiction of the Board of Supervisors. YOUR TIME WILL BE LIMITED TO THREE (3) MINUTES.

### **Power Point Presentations/Printed Material:**

Speakers who intend to conduct a formalized Power Point presentation or provide printed material must notify the Clerk of the Board's Office by 12 noon on the Monday preceding the Tuesday Board meeting, insuring that the Clerk's Office has sufficient copies of all printed materials and at least one (1) copy of the Power Point CD. Copies of printed material given to the Clerk (by Monday noon deadline) will be provided to each Supervisor. If you have the need to use the overhead "Elmo" projector at the Board meeting, please insure your material is clear and with proper contrast, notifying the Clerk well ahead of the meeting, of your intent to use the Elmo.

### **Individual Speaker Limits:**

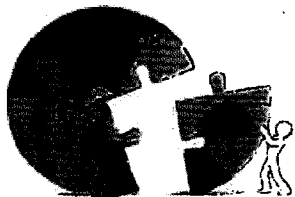
**Individual speakers are limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes.** Please step up to the podium when the Chairman calls your name and begin speaking immediately. Pull the microphone to your mouth so that the Board, audience, and audio recording system hear you clearly. Once you start speaking, the "green" podium light will light. The "yellow" light will come on when you have one (1) minute remaining. When you have 30 seconds remaining, the "yellow" light will begin flash, indicating you must quickly wrap up your comments. Your time is up when the "red" light flashes. The Chairman adheres to a strict three (3) minutes per speaker. ***Note: If you intend to give your time to a "Group/Organized Presentation", please state so clearly at the very bottom of the reverse side of this form.***

### **Group/Organized Presentations:**

Group/organized presentations with more than one (1) speaker will be limited to nine (9) minutes at the Chairman's discretion. The organizer of the presentation will automatically receive the first three (3) minutes, with the remaining six (6) minutes relinquished by other speakers, as requested by them on a completed "Request to Speak" form, and clearly indicated at the front bottom of the form.

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# COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE PLANNING DEPARTMENT STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item No.:

4.1

Planning Commission Hearing: November 28, 2018

## PROPOSED PROJECT

Case Number(s): WCS180001; VAR180003

Applicant: Painted Hills Wind, LLC

Select Environ. Type Mitigated Negative Declaration

Area Plan: Western Coachella Valley

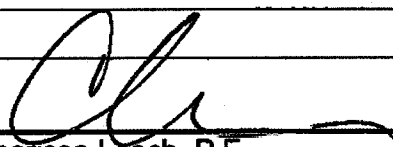
Representative: Robert Skaggs

Zoning Area/District: Painted Hills District

Supervisory District: Fifth District

Project Planner: Jay Olivas

Project APN(s): 516-030-004, 516-030-008,  
516-030-014, and 516-030-015

  
Charissa Leach, P.E.  
Assistant TLMA Director

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

**Commercial WECS Permit No. 180001** proposes to decommission and remove approximately 291 existing commercial wind turbines (WECS) and install up to 14-new commercial wind turbines up to 499-feet in height with a per turbine generating capacity of between 2.0 megawatts (MW) and 4.2 MW on land within the Wind Energy Resource (W-E) Zone. The existing wind turbines were originally installed and have been operating since the mid-1980's. The Project also proposes to install ancillary equipment, including up to three (3) temporary, guyed meteorological towers up to 309- feet in height, up to two (2) permanent, self-supported meteorological towers up to 309- feet in height, a temporary expansion of an existing laydown yard, construction of new temporary and permanent internal access roads, and a new electrical collection system integrating the proposed wind turbines to the electrical grid via one of two options. Option 1 would include the installation of new 12-kilovolt (kV) underground collector circuits from each wind turbine to an existing, on-site, SCE-owned 12 kV distribution system and 12 kV to 115 kV collector substation. Option 2 would include the installation of new 34.5 kV underground collector circuits from each wind turbine to a new Project-owned 34.5 kV to 115 kV collector substation that would connect to the electric grid on-site by way of a new, Project-owned 115 kV tie line.

**Variance Case No. 180003** proposed reductions in WECS safety setbacks from 1.1 times total WECS height from lot lines abutting the Colorado River Aqueduct to between 325 feet and 515 feet, reduce WECS safety setbacks from 1.1 times total WECS height to 0 feet from all internal lot lines associated with W-E zoned land, reduce WECS safety setbacks from 1.25 time total WECS height to 555 feet from the northern boundary of the Southern California Edison transmission line easement located along the southern lot line of APN 516-030-014 and eliminate wind access setbacks along the northern, southern and eastern lot lines of the Project parcels.

The above discretionary actions are herein identified as the "project".

The project site is located in Painted Hills north of Interstate 10, west of Highway 62; more specifically, north of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, east of Whitewater Canyon Road, west of Windhaven Road on a 600-acre site.

B

## PROJECT RECOMMENDATION

### STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

**THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:**

**ADOPT a MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION for ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. 180059,** based on the findings and conclusions provided in the initial study, attached hereto, and the conclusion that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment; and,

**APPROVE VARIANCE CASE NO. 180003,** subject to the attached advisory notification document and the conditions of approval, and based upon the findings and conclusions provided in this staff report; and,

**APPROVE COMMERCIAL WECS PERMIT NO. 180001,** subject to the attached advisory notification document and the conditions of approval, and based upon the findings and conclusions provided in this staff report.

## PROJECT DATA

### Land Use and Zoning:

Specific Plan:	N/A
Specific Plan Land Use:	N/A
Existing General Plan Foundation Component:	Open-Space
Proposed General Plan Foundation Component:	N/A
Existing General Plan Land Use Designation:	Open Space-Rural (OS-RUR)
Proposed General Plan Land Use Designation:	N/A
Policy / Overlay Area:	N/A
Surrounding General Plan Land Use Designations	
North:	City of Desert Hot Springs
East:	Open-Space Rural; Rural Residential
South:	Rural Desert; Open Space Conservation Habitat
West:	Open Space Conservation Habitat
Existing Zoning Classification:	Wind Energy (W-E)
Proposed Zoning Classification:	Not applicable
Surrounding Zoning Classifications	
North:	City of Desert Hot Springs
East:	Controlled Development Areas (W-2); One-Family Dwellings (R-1)
South:	Rural Residential (R-R)

West:	Rural Residential (R-R)
Existing Use:	Existing wind turbines (WECS)
Surrounding Uses	
North:	City of Desert Hot Springs
South:	Vacant land; existing WECS
East:	Vacant land; scattered dwellings
West:	Existing WECS

**Project Site Details:**

Item	Value	Min./Max. Development Standard
Project Site (Acres):	600	20 Acre minimum
Existing Building Area (SQFT):	None-existing WECS	No Maximum Lot Coverage
Proposed Building Area (SQFT):	None-proposed WECS	Not applicable
Floor Area Ratio:	Not applicable	Not applicable
Building Height (FT):	499-feet WECS	500-feet WECS
Proposed Minimum Lot Size:	N/A	N/A
Total Proposed Number of Lots:	N/A	N/A
Map Schedule:	N/A	

**Parking:**

Item	Value	Min./Max. Development Standard
Wind turbines	N/A	1-space per 2-employees
		2
		2

**Located Within:**

City's Sphere of Influence:	City of Desert Hot Springs
Community Service Area ("CSA"):	No
Recreation and Parks District:	No
Special Flood Hazard Zone:	Yes
Area Drainage Plan:	No
Dam Inundation Area:	No
Agricultural Preserve	No
Liquefaction Area:	Yes (Moderate) – Painted Hills
Fault Zone:	Yes-San Andreas

Fire Zone:	Yes-High/Moderate
Mount Palomar Observatory Lighting Zone:	Yes (Zone B) – Thousand Palms
CVMSHCP Conservation Boundary:	Yes – Upper Mission Creek/Whitewater Canyon
Airport Influence Area ("AIA"):	No – WECS over 200-feet in height

#### PROJECT LOCATION MAP

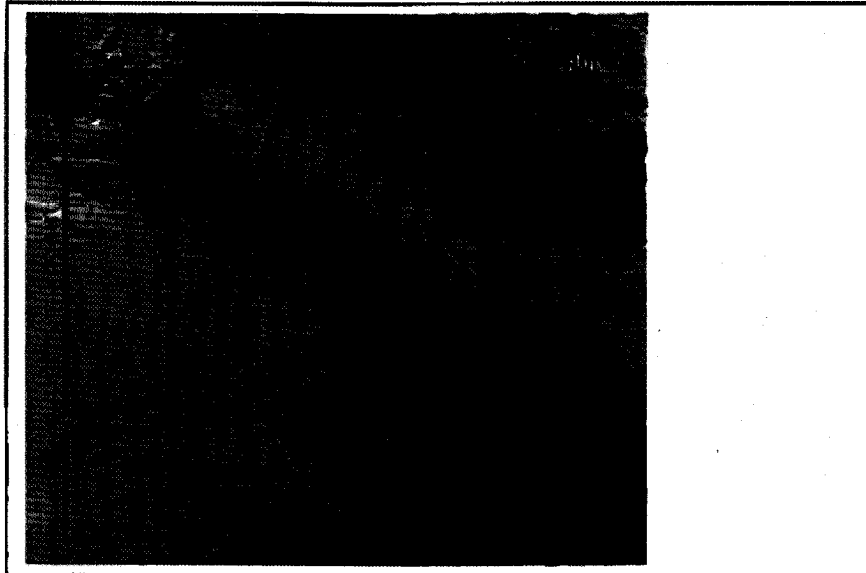


Figure 1: Project Location Map

**Background:** The current project site contains existing wind turbines proposed to be decommissioned under proposed WCS180001. The existing wind turbines were previously approved under Commercial WECS Permit No. 52 (WCS 52).

Commercial WECS Permit No. 52 (**WCS 52**) was originally approved in 1985 with 231 turbines.

Commercial WECS Permit No. 52, Revised Permit No. 1 (**WCS 52R1**) was originally approved in 1999 to install and operate up to 18 additional wind turbines at 296 feet in height. The 18 additional turbines were not constructed and 219 existing turbines have remained in place.

The life of permit for WCS 52R1 expired on May 7, 2015. However, WCS 52R2 was applied for in 2011 prior to the expiration date of 2015, and requested a 10-year permit life extension and removal of certain condition language as described above. WCS 52R2 was originally filed in 2011 in conjunction with a separate WCS project application (WCS 129) on same property for nine (9) additional 1.5 Megawatt wind turbines which application for WCS 129 was withdrawn in 2015. Proposed WECS 52R2 is superseded by proposed WCS180001 and VAR180003.

The north half of Section 1 was permitted under WCS 25 for 39 turbines and WCS53 for 36 turbines. WECS 25 Rev Permit #2, Variance 01707, EA 38139 added 5 additional WTGs to this area and combined the old WCS 25 and WCS 53 into one revised WECS 25 permit.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND FINDINGS**

An Initial Study (IS), CEQ180059, and Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) were prepared for this project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The IS represents the independent judgment of Riverside County and determines that the proposed project could not have a significant effect on the environment. A Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared, and the Mitigated Negative Declaration was made available for public review per the CEQA Statute and Guidelines Section 15105 for at least 30 days. The project as proposed and conditioned will not result in any potentially significant environmental impacts, with mitigation incorporated.

The Project's Initial Study was circulated with the State Clearinghouse for a 30-day review period between October 25, 2018 and November 26, 2018 in advance of the public hearing scheduled for November 28, 2018. As of this writing (11/7/18), one public agency comment letter dated October 8, 2018 was received from the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) of Southern California in regards to the existing license agreement for access across the Colorado River Aqueduct and proposed wind turbine setbacks, and is attached to this report for reference purposes.

The MWD letter of October 8, 2018 stated that all structures including wind turbines must be setback a minimum of 500-feet from Metropolitan's existing aqueduct right-of-way. Based on telephone conference call with the Metropolitan Water District on November 14, 2018, and submitted information from the developer including plan detail near the aqueduct with wind rose data (Exhibit S), it was determined that proposed wind turbines T5, T6, T9, T10 complied with 500-setback from the existing aqueduct. It was also found that proposed wind turbine T1 setback of 462 would be acceptable due to the following:

- This wind rose data as illustrated by Exhibit S was developed using on site, historical wind data. It shows that historically, the dominant wind direction by far is from the west. The wind rarely blows from the other directions. And, when it does it rarely blows at high speeds.
- In the exceedingly rare event that a turbine would actually fall, it would most likely fall at the time the wind is blowing at high speeds from the dominant direction. In other words, the turbines south of the aqueduct would fall eastward and away from the aqueduct. The turbines north of the aqueduct would fall eastward and parallel to the aqueduct.
- On the very rare occasion that a turbine does topple, it rarely falls down like a tree. It generally buckles at a point along the tower and thus impacts the ground at a distance less than the overall turbine height.
- All but Turbine T-1 are located more than 500 feet away from the pipeline.
- Turbine T-1 is located 462 feet away from the pipeline. At this particular location, turbine would be less than 462 feet in height.
- Variance setbacks ranging between 325 feet and 515 feet from the aqueduct property line to provide some micro-siting flexibility for the turbine locations shown on the map.
  - For example, the 325 foot variance is associated with the closest turbine, T-1, which is actually sited 350 feet away from the property line, providing 25 feet of micro-siting flexibility.
  - For example, the 515 foot variance is associated with the furthest turbine, T-10, which is actually sited 537 feet away from the property line, providing 22 feet of micro-siting flexibility.



To further address, the following recommended Condition of Approval was added to address any equipment transport across Metropolitan's right-of-way as follows:

"Prior to the approval of any grading or building permits, whichever comes first, for any part of the Project requiring access across the Metropolitan Water District's property per Road License No. 659 ("RL 659"), the Applicant shall provide Riverside County proof that RL 659 is in effect. The Applicant shall also provide proof of written approval by Metropolitan Water District for Applicant's use of any equipment or engagement of any activity across its property associated with RL 659 which would impose loads greater than AASHTO H-20."

No other letters from state agencies have been received to date as of this writing with November 26, 2018 deadline from state the clearinghouse.

## **FINDINGS**

**In order for the County to approve the proposed project, the following findings are required to be made:**

1. The proposed use conforms to all the requirements of the General Plan and with all applicable requirements of State law and the ordinances of Riverside County.
2. The overall development of the land will not be detrimental to the public health, safety or general welfare of the community, since as detailed in the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for the project, the project would not have a significant impact on the environment.
3. The proposed use conforms to the logical development of the land and is compatible with the present and future logical development of the surrounding property since the project is located in a rural area containing commercial wind turbines, vacant land, and scattered one family dwellings.
4. The project is located at the intersection of Painted Hills Road (50-foot right-of-way) and Windhaven Road (50-foot right-of-way). Windhaven Road (50-foot right-of-way) is partially graded and improved. To address partial improvements, Windhaven Road has been conditioned to be further improved between 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue northerly to project's entrance to 24-feet in width as indicated by recommended Condition of Approval (COA) 80.TRANS.3.
5. All use permits which permit the construction of more than one structure on a single legally divided parcel shall, in addition to all other requirements, be subject to a condition which prohibits the sale of any existing or subsequently constructed structures on the parcel until the parcel is divided and a final map recorded in accordance with Ordinance No. 460 in such a manner that each building is located on a separate legally divided parcel. The project does not propose sale of multiple buildings or other structures on existing parcels, but the project is conditioned under Advisory Notification Document (AND) PLANNING-Land Division required should any future land divisions be proposed.
6. The site is located within the Garnet Wash Master Drainage Plan. Due to existing topography and drainage patterns, no further drainage improvements are required since the Project will be designed in a manner that ensures that all water courses remain natural and unobstructed.

7. The project was reviewed under County Geologic Report No. 180021 to address geotechnical concerns due to sloping topography and potential fault hazards within the north central portion of the Project site where new wind turbines are proposed (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T13, T14). The Project adequately addresses geology concerns based on the following facts and requirements:

Leighton Consulting, Inc. is the geotechnical engineer of record on this project and Earth Consultants, Inc. is the geologic consultant of record for their fault trenching work and geologic findings and recommendations. 2. The site is located within a State of California Earthquake Fault Zone for the active Banning strand of the San Andreas Fault system. 3. The surface fault rupture hazard to the project was investigated by geologic and geomorphic mapping, supplemented by two exploratory trenches located to screen the proposed turbine locations that are closest to the fault trace. 4. Based on these studies, it is concluded that the proposed turbine locations are adequately removed from the active Banning fault and from any of the minor secondary faults observed. 5. It is apparent that considerable sediment can be carried by some of the streams that bisect the site and therefore protection from flood and debris flow should be considered in the final design. 6. Due to the absence of shallow groundwater, liquefaction-induced settlement is not considered a geologic hazard on the site. 7. The estimated dry settlement is expected to be less than 1-inch, with the differential settlement expected to be minimal or not a significant design concern. 8. Based on review of previous laboratory testing results, the near surface site soils (3 to 5 feet) generally possess a low collapse potential. Furthermore, remedial grading is recommended to further reduce the potential effects of collapsible soils in the near surface layers. 9. Landslide or debris flow materials were not encountered during the field investigation or in review of geologic maps. The potential for rock fall to affect proposed towers is considered non-existent. 10. Slope stability analyses performed for the steepest and highest slopes indicate that whether in cut or fill condition, slopes are expected to be grossly stable under both static and pseudo static conditions, respectively. 11. The site is not within a flood plain and potential for flooding is considered very low for this site due to general lack of seasonal precipitation. However, water erosion along defined drainage courses should be anticipated. 12. Results of prior laboratory testing indicate the site soils in the near surface soils possess a very low expansion potential. 13. A geophysical study was performed that collected in-situ seismic measurements over the site using active surface wave techniques. The results indicate that the area in the vicinity of the surface wave arrays is classified as Class C, very dense soil and soft rock.

County Geological Report No. 180021 requires: 1. Detailed geological mapping should be conducted during grading/construction specifically to confirm the fault locations as they are exposed. 2. Prior to grading, at the foundation design stage, additional slope stability analyses will be provided to show adequate code based factors of safety. Higher or steeper slopes in the conglomerate bedrock maybe considered subject to further review and evaluation. Such slopes should be observed by an engineering geologist during grading to verify jointing or fracture patterns and recommend remedial measures, if needed. 3. Prior to grading, the site should be cleared of surface and subsurface obstructions, heavy vegetation and boulders. Roots and debris should be disposed of offsite. 4. The near surface soils (including topsoil, residual soil and alluvium) are potentially compressible in their present state and may settle under the surcharge of fills or foundation loading. As such, these materials should be removed in all settlement-sensitive areas including tower pads/foundations and access roads, as described in the report. 5. Structural fill soils should be placed at a minimum of 93 percent relative compaction and near or above optimum moisture content. 6. No rock in excess of 12 inches in maximum dimension may be

placed in any fill within 10 feet of finish grade. GEO No. 180021 satisfies the requirement for a geologic/geotechnical study for Planning/CEQA purposes. GEO No. 180021 is hereby accepted for planning purposes. Engineering and other Building Code parameters were not included as a part of this review or approval. This approval is not intended and should not be misconstrued as approval for grading permit. Engineering and other building code parameters should be reviewed and additional comments and/or conditions may be imposed by the County upon application for grading and/or building permits.

8. The proposed land use, as an proposed WECS project, is consistent with the development standards set forth in Section 17.3 of the Wind Energy Zone (W-E) Zone in that:
  - I. Height Limits - No commercial WECS shall exceed 500 feet in height. The project proposes WECS of 499-feet in height and is therefore in compliance with Section 17.3A.
  - II. Setbacks – No building or structure shall be closer than 50-feet from any lot line. The Project proposes no structure within 50-feet from any lot line and is therefore in compliance with Section 17.3B.

**Variance Findings pursuant to Section 18.27, Ordinance No. 348:**

9. Variance Case No. 180003 requests a modification to Section 18.41d of Ordinance No. 348 as follows: reductions in WECS safety setbacks from 1.1 times total WECS height from lot lines abutting the Colorado River Aqueduct to between 325 feet and 515 feet, reduce WECS safety setbacks from 1.1 times total WECS height to 0 feet from all internal lot lines associated with W-E zoned land, reduce WECS safety setbacks from 1.25 times total WECS height to 555 feet from the northern boundary of the Southern California Edison ("SCE") transmission line easement located along the southern lot line of APN 516-030-014 and eliminate wind access setbacks along the northern, southern and eastern lot lines of the Project parcels.

Special circumstances support the reduction or elimination of safety and wind access setbacks with respect to the Project property including shape, topography, location and surroundings. These circumstances include the bisection of the site by the Colorado River Aqueduct, the existence of Jerusalem Cricket habitat within the southwest portion of the Project property, a SCE power transmission line easement along the southern border of the Project property, and the existence of Federal and State jurisdictional drainages.

Due to size, surroundings, special features and topography, opportunities for turbine development on this W-E zoned parcel are much more limited than other parcels zoned W-E within Riverside County, depriving this property of privileges enjoyed by other WE-zoned property. The Colorado River Aqueduct winds through the flatter, central portion of the Project property, bisecting the property and creating significant development constraints. In addition, a large delineated body of Federal and State jurisdictional drainages pass from North to South through the center of the Project property. Combined with the more mountainous terrain to the North, these property features adversely impact the Project by significantly reducing the land that would normally be available for wind turbine placement. Lastly, turbine development potential is further limited by the Jerusalem Cricket habitat within the southwest portion of the Project area and the Southern California power transmission line easement which runs along the southern border of the Project property.

A variance from the wind access setback would not adversely impact surrounding properties. Property to the North is mountainous, lacks access and is not zoned for wind energy. Properties to the east are largely consumed by the Colorado River Aqueduct, lack access in some cases and are not zoned for wind energy. In addition, the areas within these properties that are impacted by the wind access setback reduction would not be conducive for wind turbine development. Properties to the South contain existing wind turbines which are not impacted by the elimination of the wind access setback. Without this variance, development of wind turbines on this Project property would be severely constrained.

A reduction in internal lot line safety setbacks from 1.1 x Total WECS height to 0 feet is justified given that the Project property is comprised entirely of single-owner, private, fenced-in land, containing only energy infrastructure equipment, including the 291 existing turbines to be decommissioned and removed, and it contains no habitable structure. Without this variance from internal lot lines, development of wind turbines on this Project property would be severely constrained.

A reduction in the safety setbacks from the proposed wind turbine locations to the Colorado River Aqueduct property boundary is justified given that the property bisects the Project property creating severe development constraints, the proposed turbine heights are less than their distances to the underground aqueduct pipeline and the owner of the property, Metropolitan Water District, has agreed to these setback reductions.

The reduction in safety setback from the proposed wind turbine location to the SCE transmission line easement is justified given that the proposed turbine height is less than the distance to the easement and, thus, abides by Section 4.3.1(a) of the SCE Interconnection Handbook which states "The Producer shall locate its wind-driven generating unit such that it does not encroach onto SCE transmission right of way or edge of any electric operating property."

No variance is requested for reduction of scenic setbacks since proposed Project is more than 1000 feet from Interstate 10 and greater than ¼ miles from State Highway 62.

Therefore, **Variance Case No. 180003** is justified in accordance with Section 18.27 and recommended for approval.

**Other Findings:**

10. The project site is designated Open Space – Rural (OS: RUR) on the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan and is also located within the San Geronio Pass Wind Energy Policy Area.
11. The OS-RUR land use designation encourages alternative energy land uses. The proposed project, which is a wind energy conversion system, is therefore an appropriate use for that land use designation.
12. The zoning for the subject site is Wind Energy (W-E); the project is bordered by property zoned Rural Residential (R-R) to the south and west, One-Family Dwellings (R-1), Controlled Development Areas (W-2), and Wind Energy (W-E) to the east, and city zoning to the north within the City of Desert Hot Springs. The wind energy conversion system is an allowed use in the WE Zone with an approved commercial WECS permit.

13. The project consists of an existing WECS arrays to be decommissioned and replaced with up to 14 new wind turbines and associated facilities such as pad mounted transformers and underground distribution lines.
14. The existing WECS arrays are surrounded by other WECS arrays and vacant land to the south, west, north and northeast, scattered single family residential to the east and southeast across Windhaven Road and Painted Hills Road, all which are common land uses in the area.
15. Utilization of wind energy resources of Riverside County are a recognized and acceptable land use within Riverside County since 1982 when the initial general plan and zoning regulations for wind energy were adopted by the Board of Supervisors by Resolution No. 82-326.
16. The proposed project is consistent with the Development Standards and Development Criteria as provided in Section 18.41(D.), respectively, of Ordinance No. 348 in that:
  - I. Safety and security measures, such as fencing to prevent unauthorized access, are in place via the existing perimeter chain link fence. Meteorological tower guy wires will be distinctly marked and warning signs will be in English and Spanish at the base of each existing and proposed WECS tower and perimeter fence warning of electrical and other hazards (Conditions of Approvals 90.Planning. - Perimeter Fence and AND.Planning.- Warning Signs).
  - II. Seismic Safety measures for the tower, foundation will be in compliance with the California Building Code per prior building permit issuance for the 14 proposed wind turbines.
  - III. Fire Protection measures will be in place the project will be is required to comply with fire prevention maintenance measure such as fire breaks, fire extinguishers on service vehicles, and equipment enclosures being equipped with automatic fire extinguishing systems, as outlined in AND FIRE.1.
  - IV. Electrical Distribution facilities will be in place connecting the project to the Southern California Edison electrical grid in conformance with California Building Codes and existing utility interconnection agreement.
  - V. Interference with navigational systems is addressed in that no navigational clutter exists with current and modernized radar systems in the San Gorgonio Pass area. Additionally, the Project is required to comply with FAA requirements as outlined in AND Planning.
  - VI. The proposed wind turbines including foundation, tower, rotor system, electrical system, and rotor over speed will be certified and in conformance with good engineering practices per prior building permit issuance and compliance with conditions of approval such as requirements to certify structures and certify mechanical equipment.
  - VII. Noise standards are complied with in that the acoustical analysis demonstrated no noise decibel levels dB(A) exceeding 55 dB(A) to the nearest residential dwellings would occur as indicated by AND PLANNING.18. Additionally, the proposed commercial WECS shall not be operated so an impulsive sound below 20 Hz adversely affects the habitability or use of any sensitive receptor such as a habitable dwelling.

- VIII. New electrical distribution lines will be undergrounded up to the point they tie in to the existing, on-site, SCE-owned 12 kV distribution system, if Option 1 is selected, or up to the low voltage side of the transformer, if Option 2 is selected.
  - IX. Height limits are complied with in that new proposed turbines will be up to 499-feet in height and do not exceed 500 feet in height.
  - X. Color and finish of proposed WECS will be light grey with matte finish. The proposed project has also provided a Visual Resource Study to further address visual impacts.
  - XI. Off-Street Vehicle Parking is will be provided along existing graveled service roads immediately adjacent to the existing wind turbine rows and proposed turbine rows with 1 parking space per 2 employees in compliance with Section 18.41 of Zoning Ordinance No. 348. Due to 600-acre site with 14 proposed wind turbines, only 2 or 3 employees are expected to maintain the site at any given time limiting the need for parking spaces.
17. The project is located within the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, and is located within the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area. New construction is proposed with 14 new turbines and service roads on north portion of the project and includes new total permanent disturbed acreage of up to 36.33 acres and temporary disturbed acreage of 3.74 acres or less. The Project went through Joint Project Review (JPR) with the wildlife agencies. To address biological impacts the proposed Project was analyzed in the Initial Study based on supporting studies and analysis, and impacts were found less than significant with mitigation measures incorporated. The Project has been conditioned for streambed permits, nesting bird surveys and Restoration Plan to cover the restoration of the Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket habitat on the site as outlined in Conditions of Approval (COAs) 60.Planning-EPD.
18. The project for new WECS shall be required to pay CV-MSHCP fees in accordance with Ordinance No. 875 in order to be consistent with the plan and is a standard requirement.
19. Archaeological resources were not located on this subject land based on completed field surveys and records review. Additionally, notification letters regarding AB 52 were mailed to various local tribes on August 30, 2018. Letters were received from Soboba Band of Luisano Indians and Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians requesting further consultation. Consultation was subsequently concluded and resolved based on further communications with the tribal representatives and County Archaeologist with recommended project conditions such as AND Planning-CUL.2-PDA06072R2 Accepted, Planning-CUL. 3-Unanticipated Resources, and COA 60.Planning-CUL.1 Native American Monitor Required.
20. The permit holder shall remain in compliance with the attached Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) letter dated October 11, 2018, summarized as follows: 1) WECS shall not generate electrical interference; 2) WECS rotor blades shall utilize flat or matte non glossy finish; 3) WECS shall not generate smoke or water vapor; 4) combined height of each WECS and foundation will be less than 500 feet above ground level; 5) any new structures taller than 200-feet not part of this WECS permit will require review by ALUC and FAA as outlined in AND PLANNING.4ALUC Letter.

21. The project will not be detrimental to the health, safety or general welfare of the community since the project is conditioned to comply with codes and ordinances, such as the California Building Code, local fire prevention and transportation ordinances.
22. The project site is or will be adequately served by public roads and other public or private service facilities such as Painted Hills Road and Windhaven Road with 24-foot width paving improvement of Windhaven Road.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING NOTIFICATION AND OUTREACH**

The project applicant participated in a public outreach presentation at the West Desert Municipal Advisory Council's monthly meeting on September 11, 2018 held at the Cabazon Community Center. Approximately 30 people attended the meeting, and the project was well received.

Public hearing notices were mailed to property owners within ½ mile of the proposed project site. The Notice of Hearing was also published in the Desert Sun and Press Enterprise on October 28, 2018. Additionally, local and regional agencies such as the Metropolitan Water District, Southern California Edison, and the Bureau of Land Management were notified by email communication letter on October 2, 2018. As of the writing of this report (11/7/18), Planning Staff has received two (2) communications from the general public with general information questions addressed via telephone.

The project is located within the Sphere of Influence (SOI) of the City of Desert Hot Springs. Project information was forwarded to the City of Desert Hot Springs on October 2, 2018, and no comments have been received as of this writing.

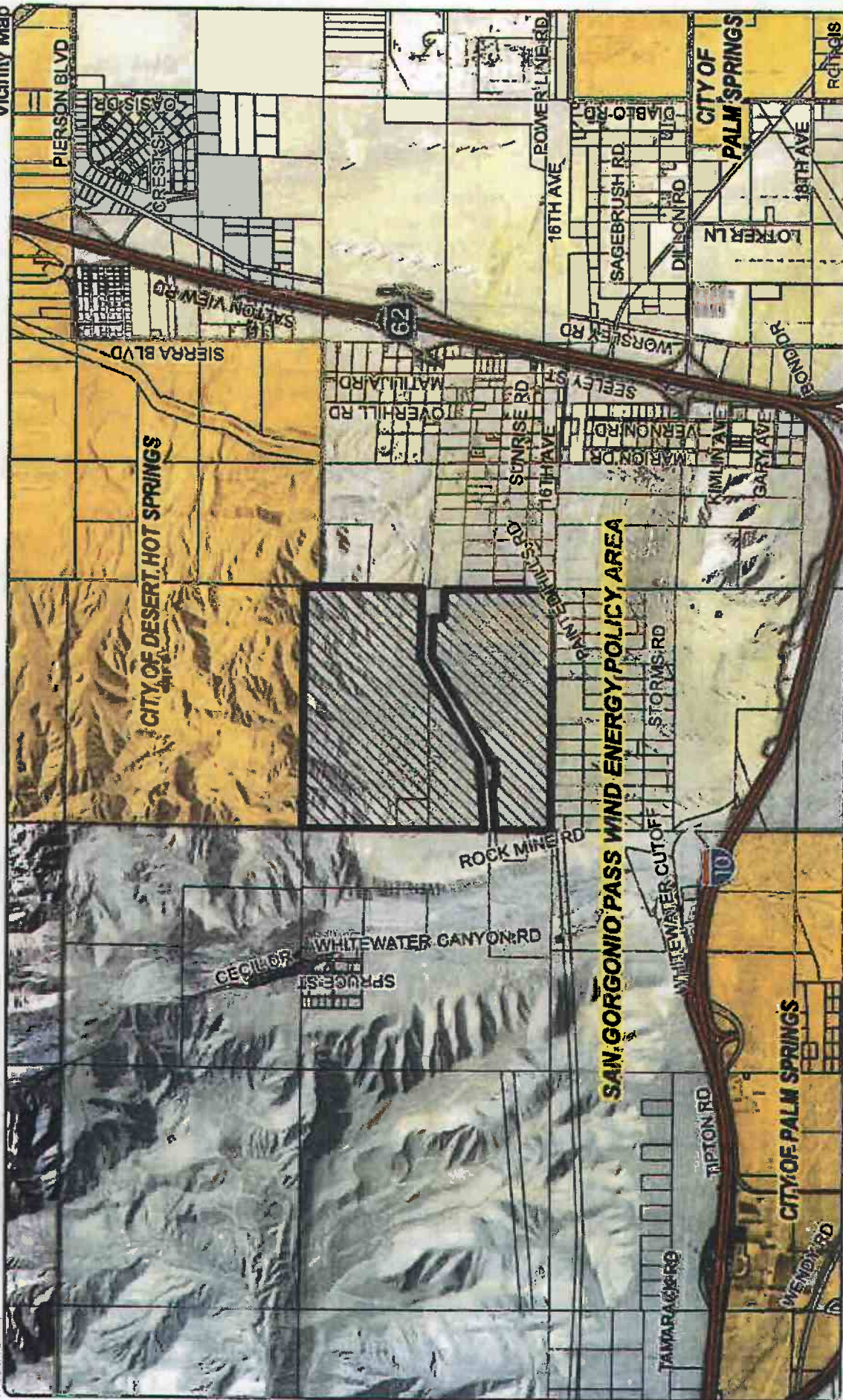
#### **APPEALS INFORMATION**

The Planning Commission's decision may be appealed to the Board of Supervisors. Such appeals shall be submitted to the Clerk of the Board within ten days after the notice of decision appears on the Board's agenda, accompanied by the fee set forth in Ordinance No. 671



**Supervisor. Ashley  
District 5**

**Date Drawn: 10/19/2018**  
**Vicinity Map**



**Zoning Area: Whitewater**

**Author: Vinnie Nguyen**



**REPORT ABUSE.** On October 9, 1993, the Pasadena Humane adopted a new Standard that providing care had its jurisdiction for volunteer-run Humane County projects. This new standard can now ensure that all volunteers are provided with the proper training and supervision. The new standard also states that all volunteers must be properly supervised by the staff. The new standard also states that all volunteers must be properly supervised by the staff. The new standard also states that all volunteers must be properly supervised by the staff.



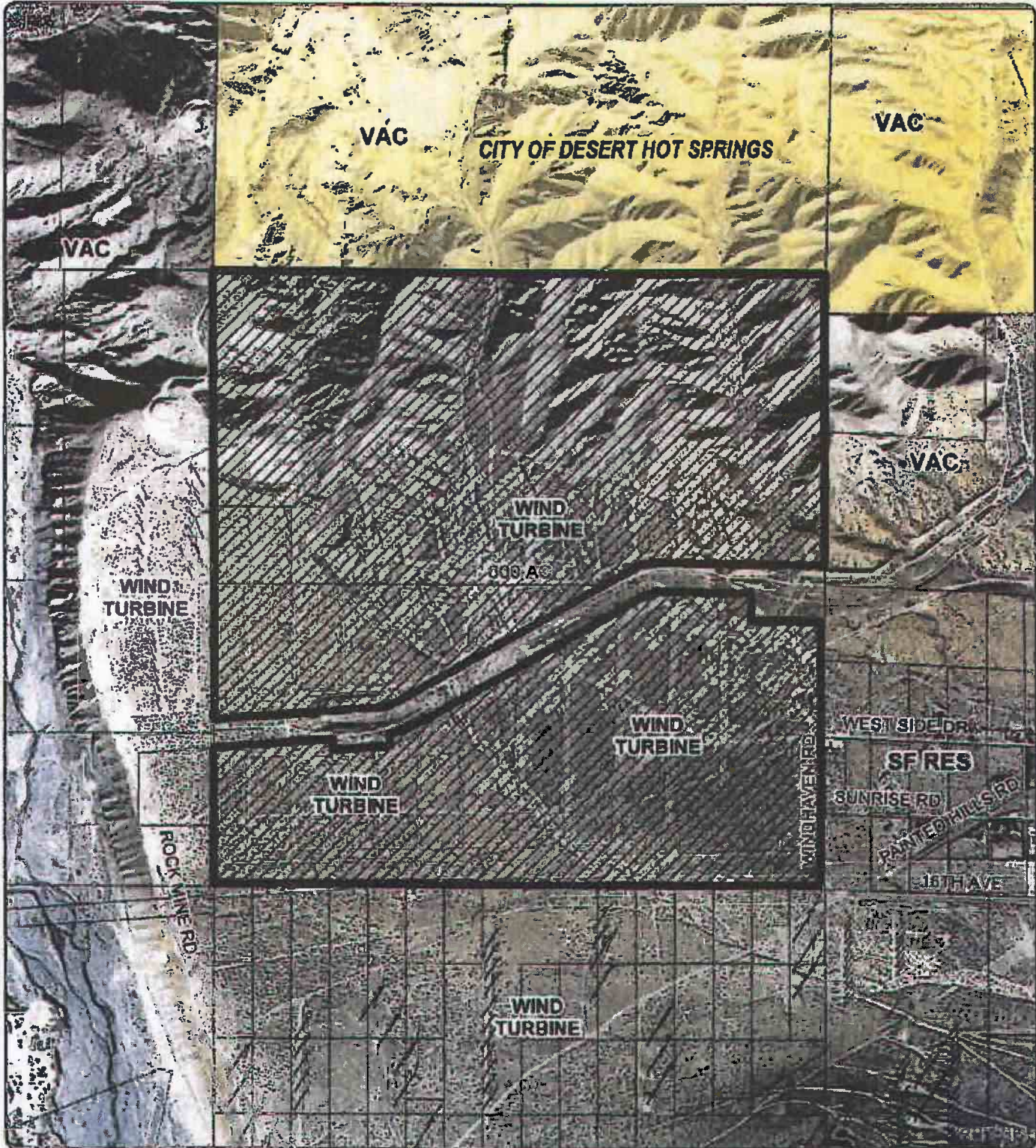
# RIVERSIDE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

## WCS180001 VAR180003

Supervisor: Ashley  
District 5

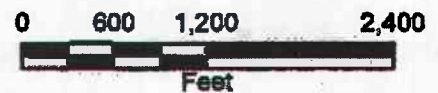
Date Drawn: 10/19/2018  
Exhibit 1

### LAND USE



Zoning Area: Whitewater

Author: Vinnie Nguyen



DISCLAIMER: On October 7, 2008, the County of Riverside adopted a new General Plan providing new land use designations for unincorporated Riverside County parcels. The new General Plan may contain different type of land use than is provided for under existing zoning. For further information, please contact the Riverside County Planning Department: offices in Riverside at (951)953-3200 (Western County) or in Palm Desert at (760)853-4277 (Southern County) or Website <http://planning.riverside.ca.gov>



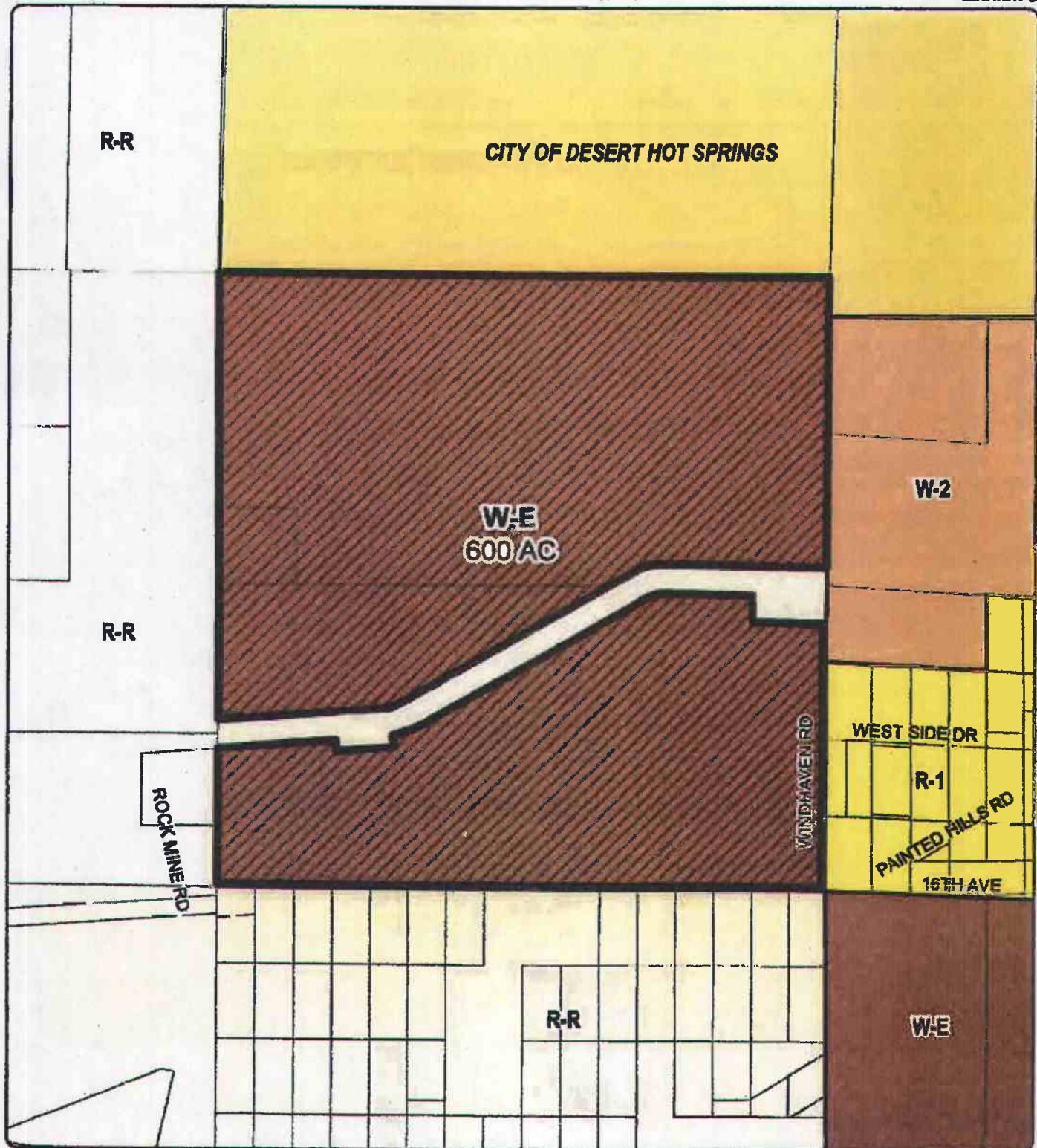
# RIVERSIDE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

## WCS180001 VAR180003

### EXISTING ZONING

Supervisor: Ashley  
District 5

Date Drawn: 10/19/2018  
Exhibit 2



Zoning Area: Whitewater

Author: Vinnie Nguyen



DISCLAIMER: On October 7, 2005, the County of Riverside adopted a new General Plan providing new land use designations for unincorporated Riverside County parcels. The new General Plan may contain different type of land use than is provided for under existing zoning. For further information, please contact the Riverside County Planning Department office in Riverside at (951)953-8200 (Western County) or in Palm Desert at (760)953-8277 (Eastern County) or Website <http://info.riverside.net/gap>



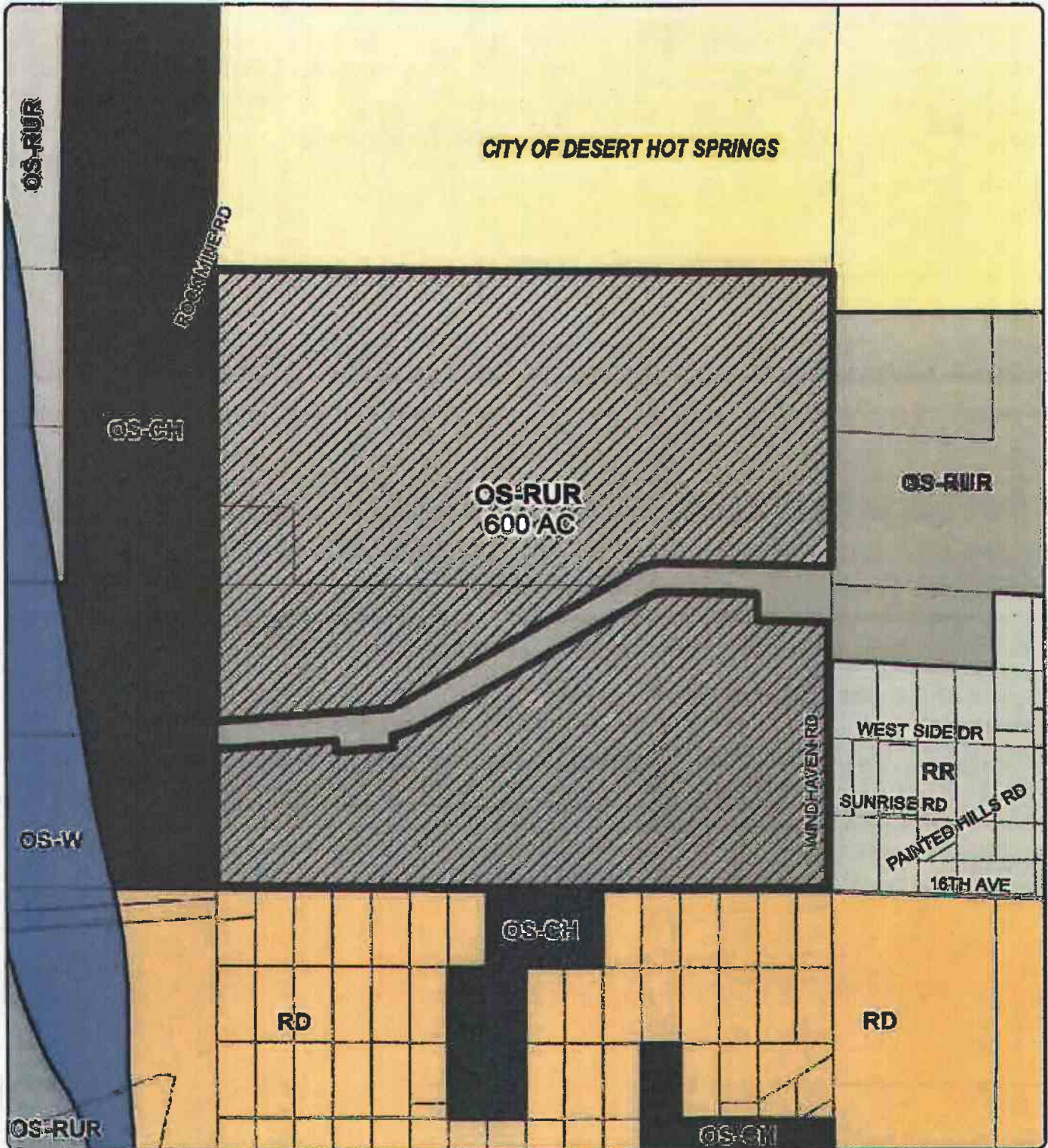
# RIVERSIDE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

## WCS180001 VAR180003

### EXISTING GENERAL PLAN

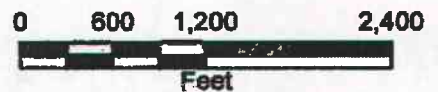
Supervisor: Ashley  
District 5

Date Drawn: 10/19/2018  
Exhibit 5



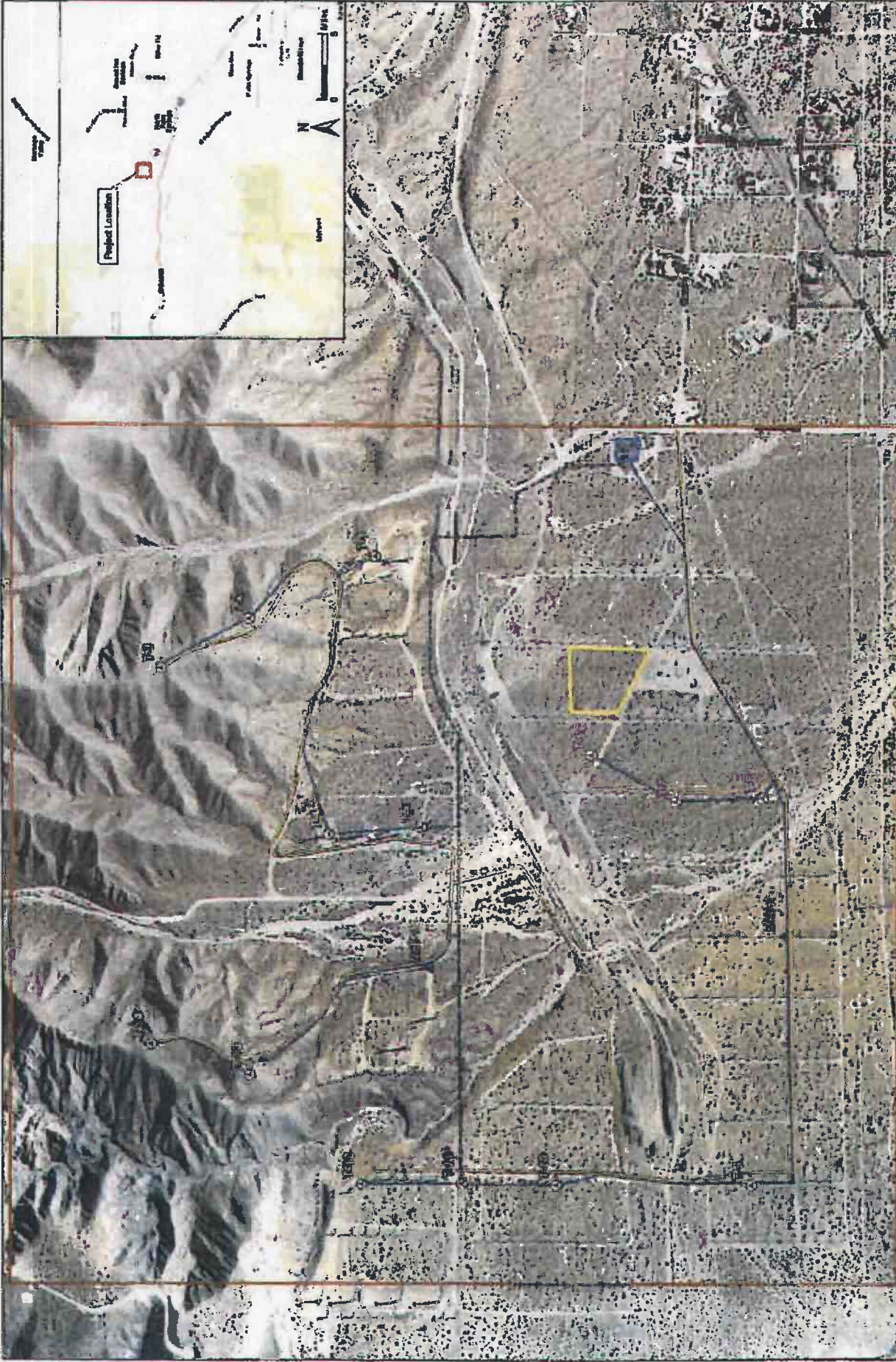
Zoning Area: Whitewater

Author: Vinnie Nguyen



DISCLAIMER: On October 7, 2008, the County of Riverside adopted a new General Plan providing new land use designations for unincorporated Riverside County parcels. The new General Plan may contain different type of land use than is provided for under existing zoning. For further information, please contact the Riverside County Planning Department offices in Riverside at (951)965-3200 (Western County) or in Palm Desert at (760)965-9277 (Eastern County) or Website <http://planning.riverside.ca.gov>





# Legend

- ▲ MET Towers
- ⊙ Proposed Turbines
- Existing Overhead Collection Line
- UG Collection Line
- Project Boundary
- Project Access Roads
- Existing Laydown Yard to Remain
- Laydown Yard Expansion
- Existing Substation to Remain

## Painted Hills Wind Energy Repowering Project

Riverside County, California



Site Layout

July 2, 2018

THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY FLOOD RISK MAP FOR COMMUNITY NO. 000555, PANEL N08 D8700, 08995 AND 08905, DATED AUGUST 28, 2004, SHOWS THAT THE PROJECT SITE FALLS WITHIN ZONE X, WHICH IS OUTSIDE THE 0.2% ANNUAL CHANCE FLOODPLAIN.



## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**The Project comprises the following components and activities:**

- **Decommission and remove the approximately 291 existing, antiquated turbines from the Project site.**
- **Install up to 14 new wind turbines and related infrastructure with a per-turbine generating capacity of between 2.0 MW and 4.2 MW on land within the County's Wind Energy Resource (W-E) Zone.**
- **Install up to 2 new permanent, lattice meteorological towers to support operations of the wind development.**
- **Install up to 3 new temporary, guyed lattice meteorological towers to support the power curve testing of the wind development.**
- **Installation of WECS and met tower foundations and erection of the WECS and met towers.**
- **Construct pad areas for individual turbines and met towers to accommodate cranes and heavy equipment needed for turbine and met tower installation.**
- **Construct a temporary expansion of the existing laydown yard for use during the decommissioning of existing turbines and the construction of the Project.**
- **Temporarily widen and improve portions of the existing internal road system.**
- **Construct new, temporary and permanent roads outside of the existing road system footprint to accommodate cranes and heavy equipment needed for turbine and met tower installations and access to the proposed turbine and met tower foundations. Temporary new roads and existing roads that will not be used by the Project will be restored after the construction phase and permanent new roads will be reduced to a width of 16 feet.**
- **Install new 12 kV underground and/or overhead electrical collection lines to collect energy from the Project's new turbines. All, or a portion of these lines may interconnect directly into the Southern California Edison (SCE) 115 kV Venwind substation located inside the Project boundary. Alternatively, one or more of these collection lines may tie directly into the existing, SCE-owned, 12 kV overhead collection lines inside the Project boundary that are used by the existing wind farm to interconnect into Venwind.**
- **Decommissioning and removing the new wind turbines at the end of their useful life cycle.**

# Exhibit A

## Site Plan

### Issued for Permit

for  
**Painted Hills Wind Energy**  
**Repowering Project**  
**Riverside County, California**

**Based On Table**

Sheet Number	Sheet Title
1	Cover
2	General Conditions
3	General Note
4	Project-Specific Map
5	Project-Specific Map
6	Project-Specific Map
7	Project-Specific Map
8	Project-Specific Map
9	Project-Specific Map
10	Project-Specific Map
11	Project-Specific Map
12	Project-Specific Map
13	Project-Specific Map
14	Project-Specific Map
15	Project-Specific Map
16	Project-Specific Map
17	Project-Specific Map
18	Project-Specific Map
19	Project-Specific Map
20	Project-Specific Map

PROJECT INFORMATION REFER TO THIS APPLICATION

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**Painted Hills**  
**Wind, LLC**  
 1000 Westwood Blvd., Suite 100  
 Westwood, CA 91361

**Painted Hills Wind**  
**Energy Repowering**  
**Project**  
 Riverside County, California

Cover

**ISSUED FOR PERMITTING**  
**NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION**

Date: 04/15/2020  
 Sheet: 1 of 2

04/15/2020

PROJECT INFORMATION REFER TO THIS APPLICATION

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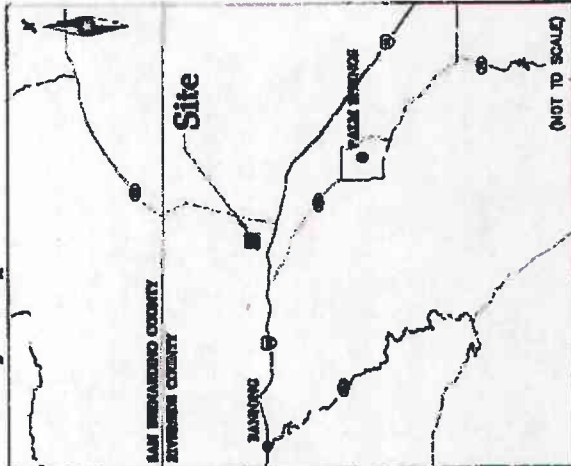
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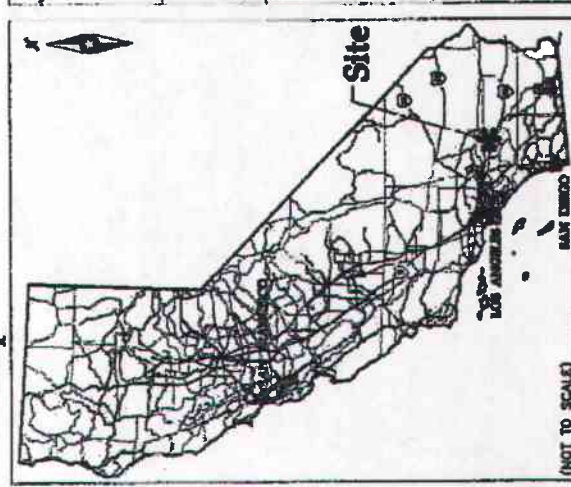
PROJECT INFORMATION REFER TO THIS APPLICATION

PROJECT INFORMATION REFER TO THIS APPLICATION

**Vicinity Map**



**State Map**



PROJECT INFORMATION REFER TO THIS APPLICATION

TITLE	COMPANY	NAME	CERTIFICATE NUMBER	DATE
APPLICANT	PAINTED HILLS WIND, LLC	PAINTED HILLS WIND, LLC	200-100-1272	04/15/2020
PROJECT MANAGER	WESTWOOD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	WESTWOOD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	200-100-1408	04/15/2020
ENGINEER OF RECORD	WESTWOOD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	WESTWOOD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	200-100-1408	04/15/2020
COMMISSIONER				



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**Painted Hills  
Wind, LLC**

১৯৭৩



**Painted Hills Wind  
Energy Repowering  
Project**

**Riverside County, California**

### Existing Conditions

**ISSUED FOR PERMITTING  
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION**

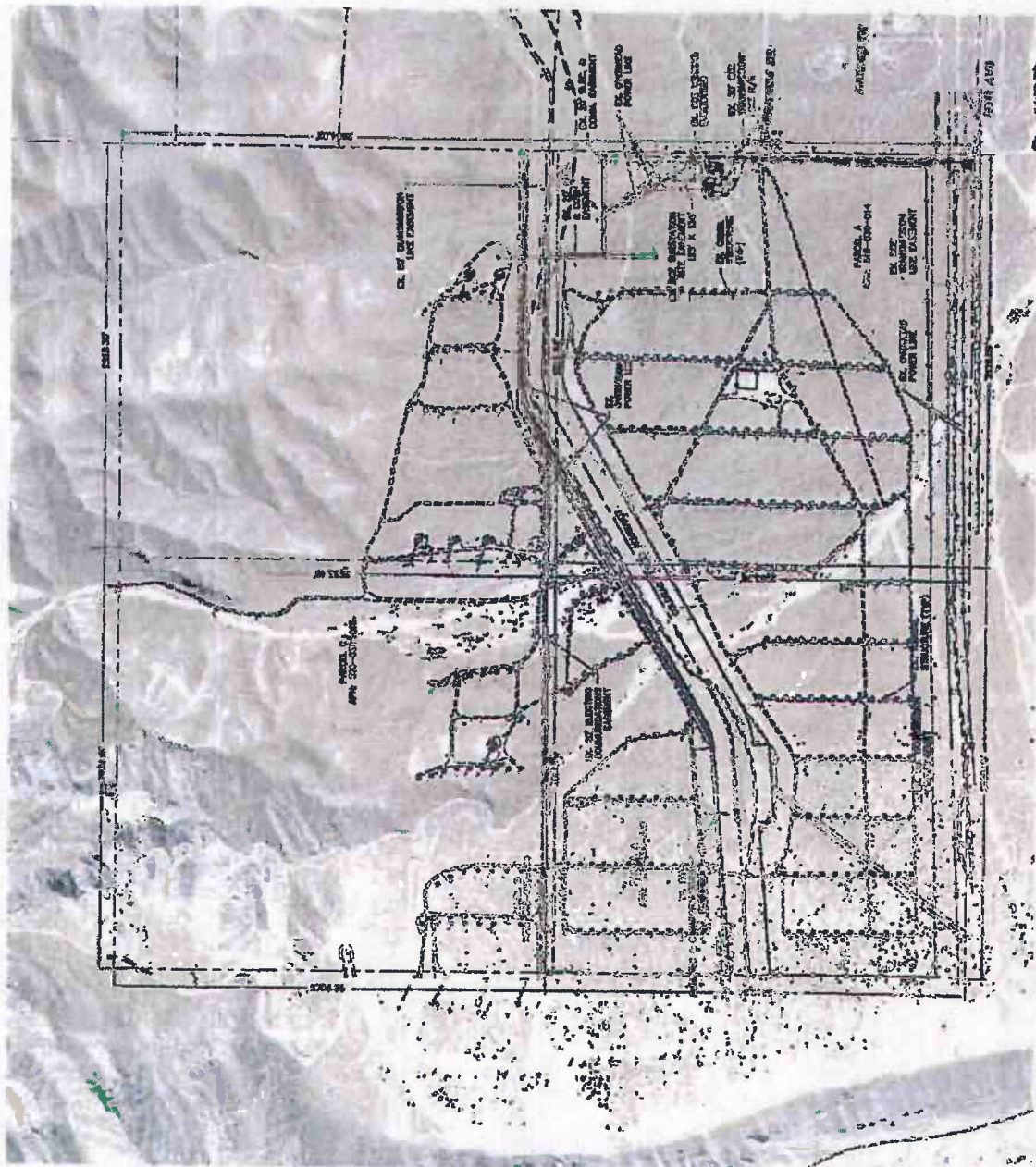
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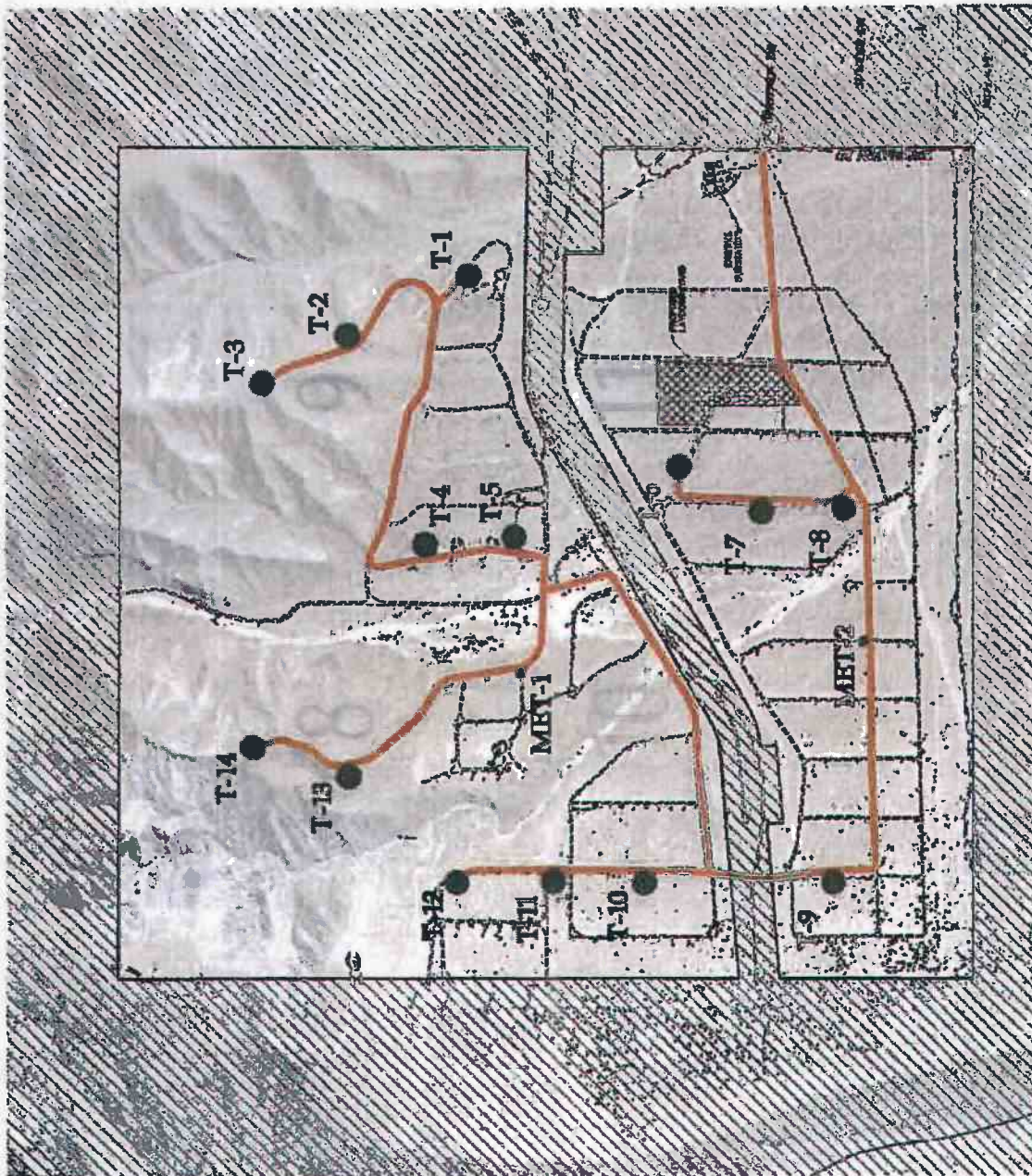


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\* EXISTING 1200 SIZE OVERHEAD DISTRIBUTION LINE AS SHOWN MAY BE USED BY THE PROJECT AS CURRENTLY CONSTRUCTED TO INTERCONNECT SOME PROPOSED NUMBERED TO THE SIZE VEHICLE PROPOSED.







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Height	100
Depth	100
Radius	100
Diameter	100
Circumference	100
Surface Area	100
Volume	100
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Weight	100
Force	100
Pressure	100
Energy	100
Power	100
Temperature	100
Time	100
Frequency	100
Wavelength	100
Speed	100
Acceleration	100
Velocity	100
Displacement	100
Angle	100
Area	100
Volume	100
Mass	100
Weight	100
Force	100
Pressure	100
Energy	100
Power	100
Temperature	100
Time	100
Frequency	100
Wavelength	100
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Area	100
Volume	100
Mass	100
Weight	100
Force	100
Pressure	100
Energy	100
Power	100
Temperature	100
Time	100
Frequency	100

**Painted Hills  
Wind, LLC**  
2400 N. Dunbar Blvd., Suite 100  
San Diego, CA 92108



## Painted Hills Wind Energy Repowering Project

Riverside County, California

Overall Site Plan

**DESIGNED FOR PERMITTING  
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION**

DATE 06/10/2003  
PAGE 3 OF 10



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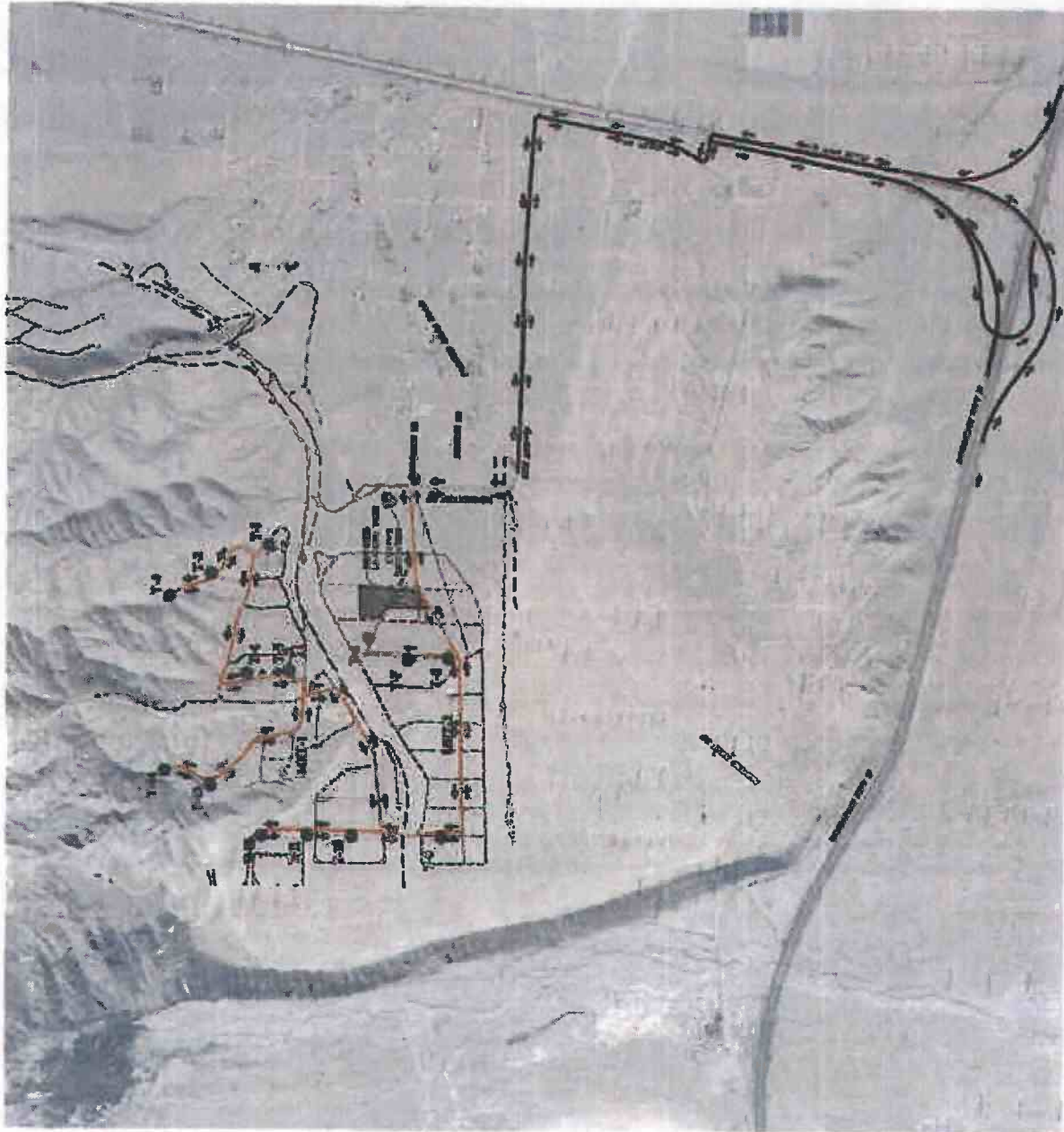
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Wind, LLC**  
1500 N. Center Blvd., Suite 103  
San Diego, CA 92108



**Riverside County, California**

**ISSUED FOR PRELIMINARY  
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION**

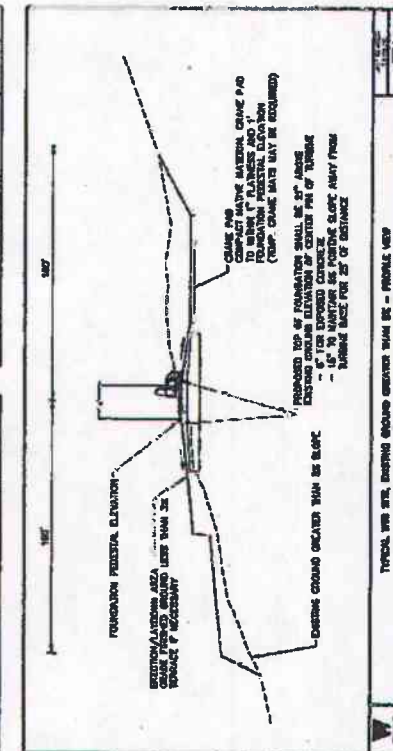
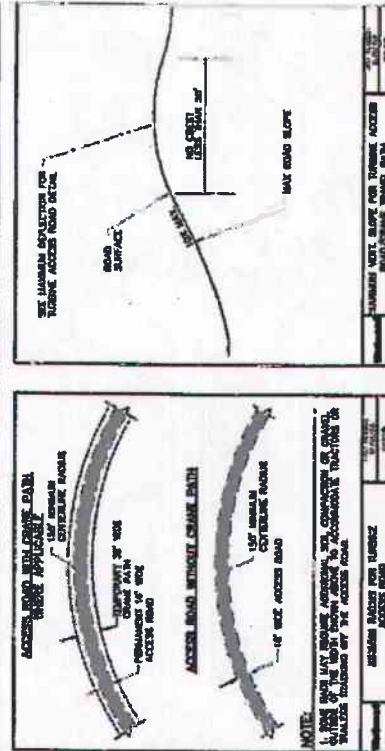
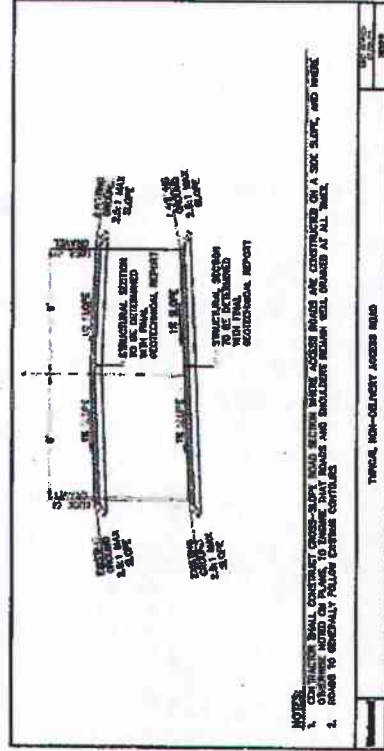
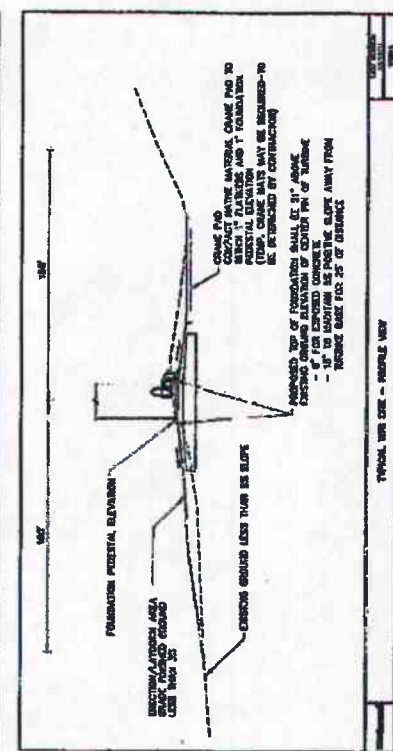
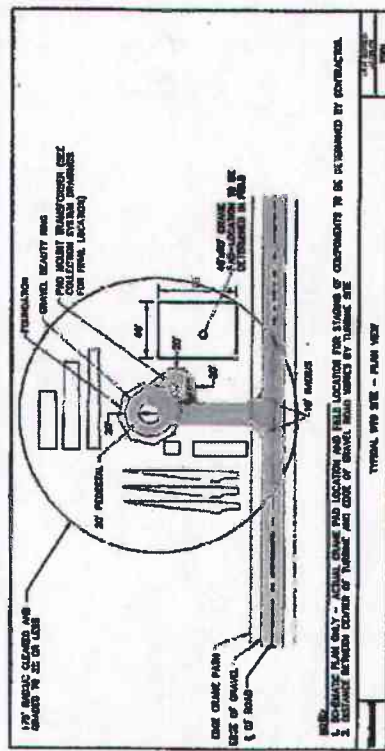
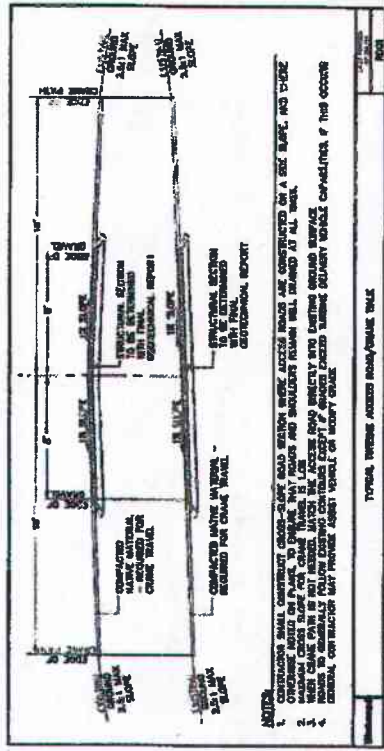
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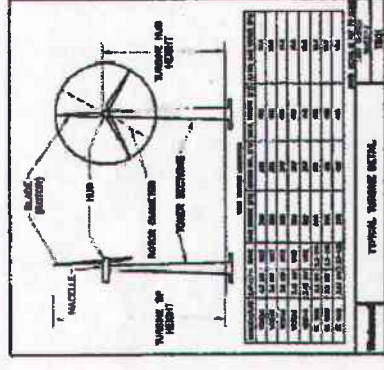
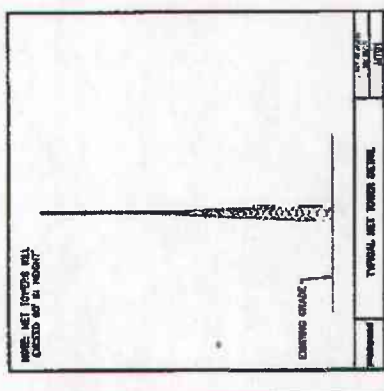
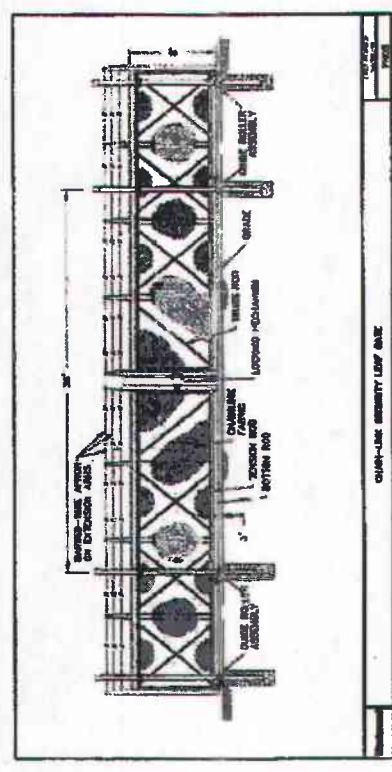
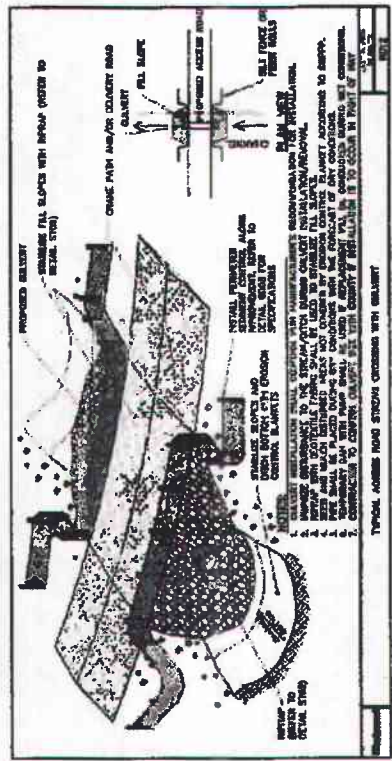
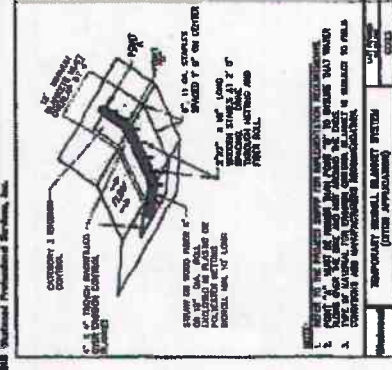




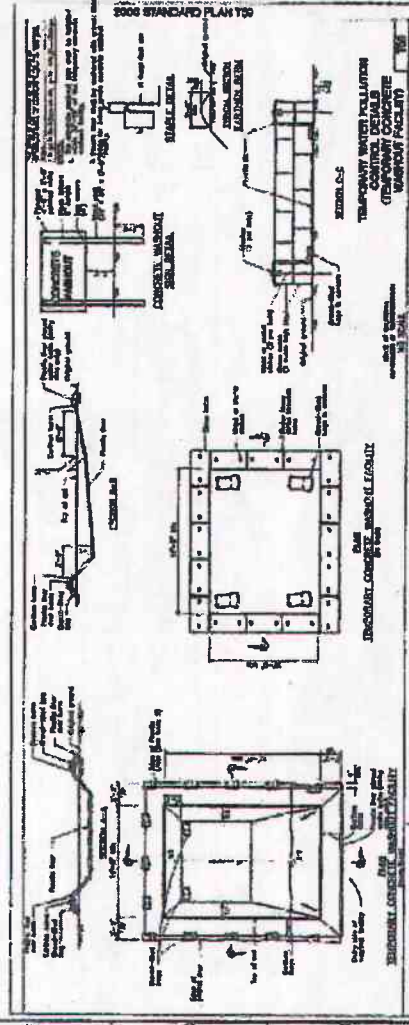
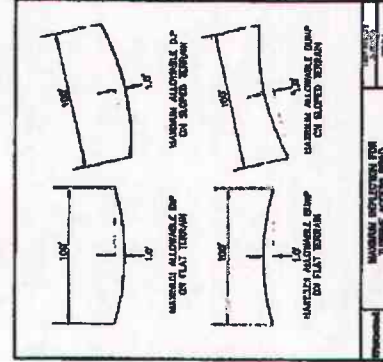
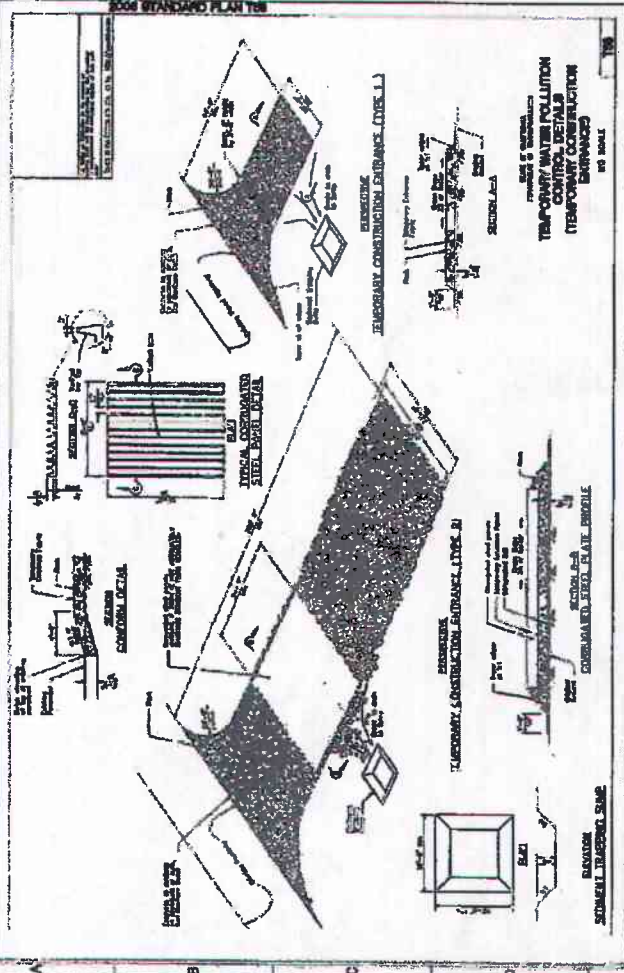
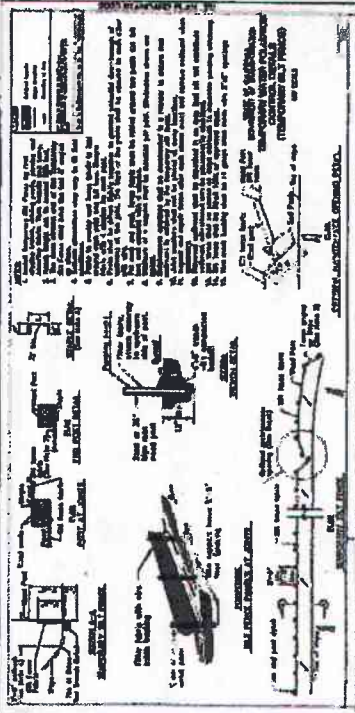












800-368-6868



Westwood

ENGINEERING

Project No.	
Client	
City	
County	
State	
Date	
Drawn By	
Checked By	
Reviewed By	
Approved By	

Painted Hills  
Wind, LLC  
1000 N. Orange Ave., Suite 200  
San Diego, CA 92101



Painted Hills Wind  
Energy Repowering  
Project

Riverside County, California

Civil Site Plan T-12,  
T-13, T-14, MET-1

ISSUED FOR PERMITTING  
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

Date: 04/24/2008  
Scale: 1" = 100'

08/04/2008

- LEGEND**
- PROPOSED TOWER LOCATION
  - PROPOSED TOWER LAYOUT
  - PROPOSED MET TOWER
  - PROPOSED FENCE LINE
  - PROPOSED FENCE POSTS
  - PROPOSED FENCE GATES
  - EXISTING FENCE
  - EXISTING SECTION LINE
  - EXISTING EASEMENT LINE
  - EXISTING RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE
  - EXISTING EASEMENT ROAD
  - EXISTING MET ROAD
  - EXISTING OVERHEAD POWER
  - EXISTING TOWER EASEMENT POWER
  - EXISTING EASEMENT LINES (SEE DATA)
  - EXISTING 20' CORRIDOR
  - EXISTING TOWER TO BE REMOVED
  - EXISTING TOWER TO BE REPAIRED
  - EXISTING TOWER TO BE DEMOLISHED
  - PROPOSED CLIENT
  - AREA OF TEMPORARY OBSTRUCTION
  - AREA OF PERMANENT OBSTRUCTION
  - PERMANENT COUNTY FLOODPLAIN

1	2
3	4

KEY MAP



SEE SHEET 11

SEE SHEET 12

TOPOGRAPHIC INFORMATION PROVIDED BY SANJAE ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS DATE FALL OF 2007



[illegible]

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



## Painted Hills Wind Energy Repowering Project

**Elvertide County, California**

Civil Site Plan T-1  
T-2, T-3, T-4, T-5

**ISSUED FOR PERMITTING  
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION**

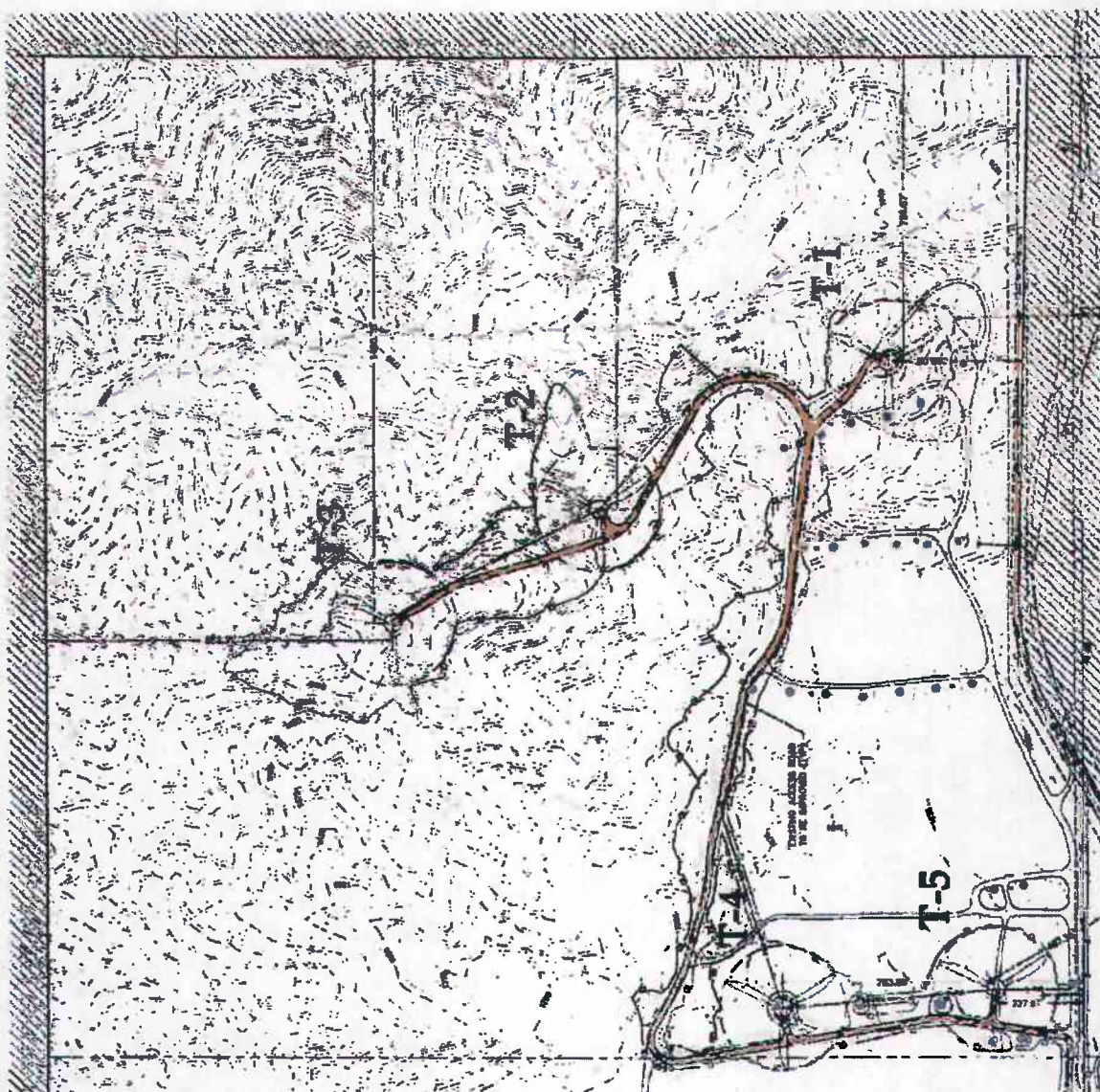
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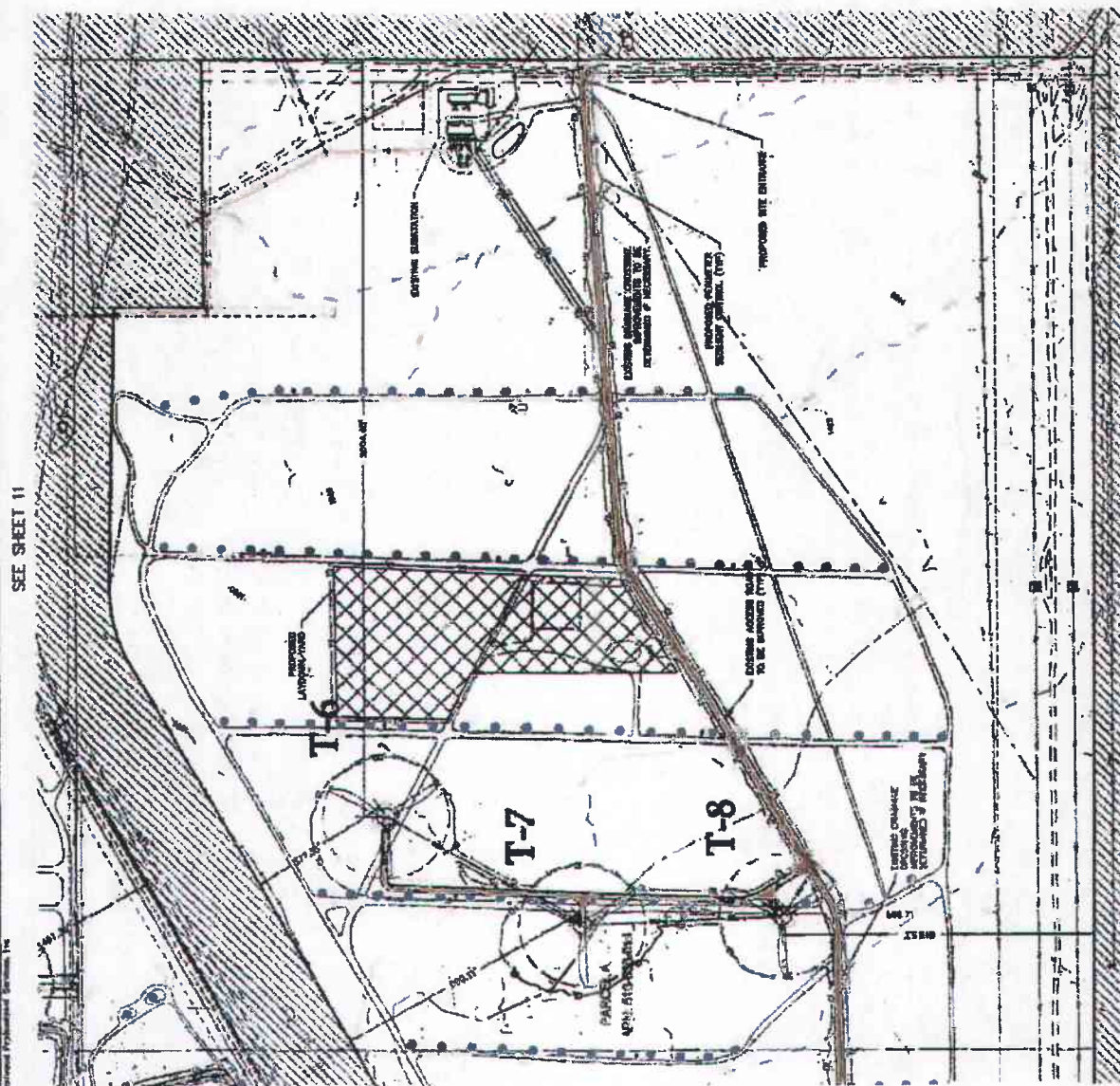
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**SPE SHEET 13**









**Painted Hills  
Wind, LLC**



## Palatka Hills Wind Energy Repowering Project

Riverside County, California

**Civil Serv. Plan T-4,  
T-7, T-9**

**ISSUED FOR PERMITTING  
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION**

06/29/2008

1998年12月15日



Dr. Paul H. Gearty, Director of the FBI, is the only member of the FBI to have been elected to the position of President of the American Bar Association.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

**Riverside County, California**

**ISSUED FOR PERMITTING  
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION**

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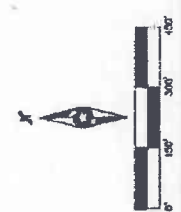


**THE JOURNAL**



Project:	Painted Hills Wind, LLC
Client:	Painted Hills Wind, LLC
Design:	Painted Hills Wind, LLC
Drawn:	Painted Hills Wind, LLC
Checked:	Painted Hills Wind, LLC
Approved:	Painted Hills Wind, LLC
Date:	10/10/2013
Scale:	1" = 100'
Sheet:	17 of 18

Painted Hills Wind, LLC  
2000 N. Canyon Blvd., Suite 100  
Boulder, CO 80502



Painted Hills Wind  
Energy Repowering  
Project  
Boulder County, Colorado

Grading Plan

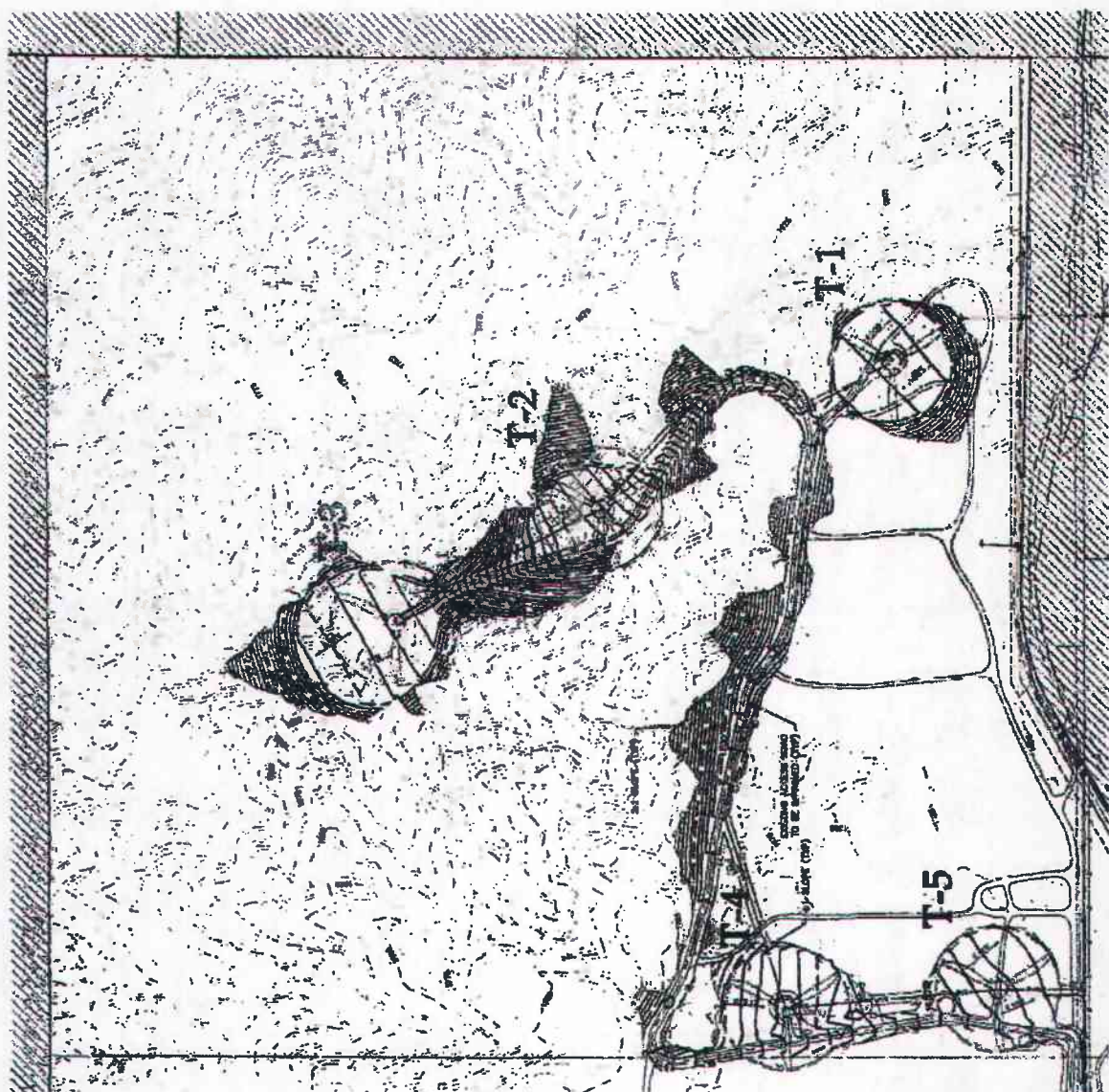
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NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

Date: 8/16/2013  
Sheet: 17 of 18  
08-1110-0017-17.dwg

- LEGEND**
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  - PROPOSED TOWER FOUNDATION
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KEY MAP



SEE SHEET 14

SEE SHEET 17



[illegible]

**Painted Hills  
Wind, LLC**  
11400 N. Camino Real, Suite 100  
San Diego, CA 92120



## Painted Hills Wind Energy Repowering Project

**Riverside County, California**

**WILLIAMS**

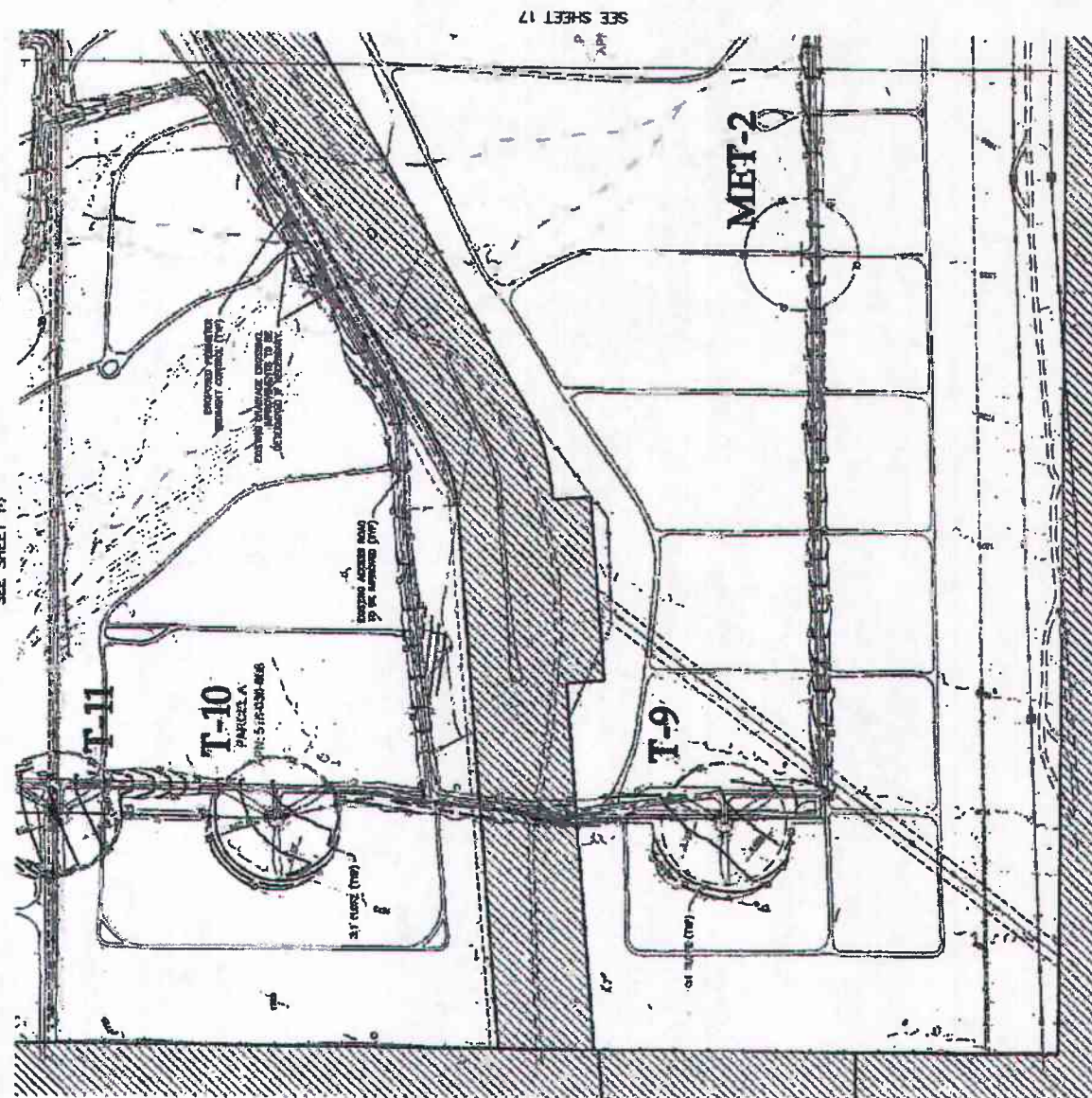
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NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION**

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**1. Introduction**



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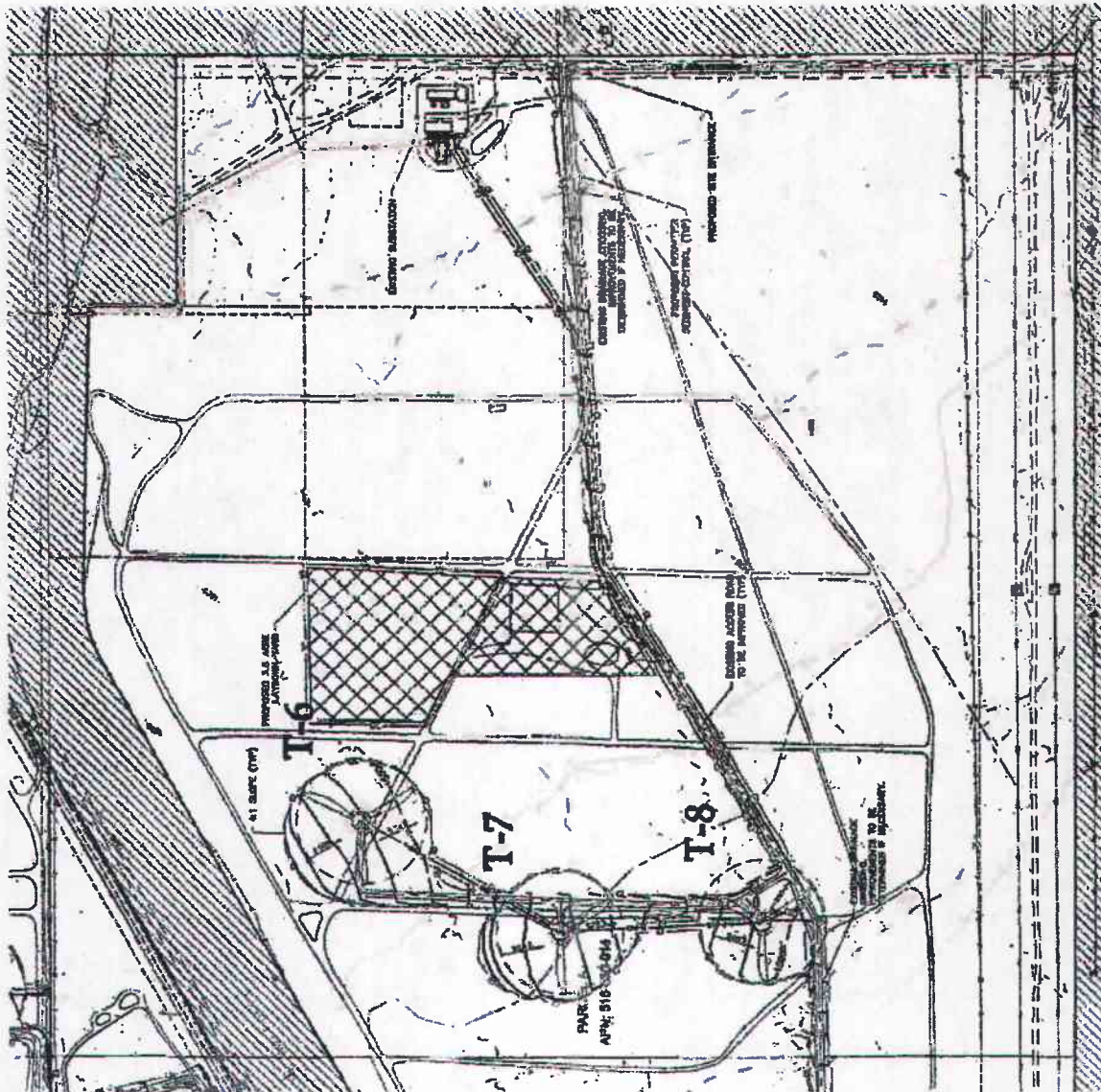




## Legend:

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51. LEAH 235



SEE SHEET 18

**Painted Hills  
Wind, LLC**  
12455 NE Columbia Road, Suite 100  
San Diego, CA 92120



**Painted Hills Wind  
Energy Repowering  
Protect**

**Riverside County, California**

**Cracking Final**

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6032-10-02292-1-0

## KEY MAP









EDMUND G. BROWN JR.  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE *of* PLANNING AND RESEARCH



KEN ALEX  
DIRECTOR

November 27, 2018

Jay Olivas  
Riverside County  
77-588 El Duna Court  
Palm Desert, CA 92211

Subject: Painted Hills Wind Energy Repowering Project  
SCH#: 2018101062

Dear Jay Olivas:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Mitigated Negative Declaration to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on November 26, 2018, and no state agencies submitted comments by that date. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

Please call the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. If you have a question about the above-named project, please refer to the ten-digit State Clearinghouse number when contacting this office.

Sincerely,

Scott Morgan  
Director, State Clearinghouse



**Document Details Report  
State Clearinghouse Data Base**

**SCH#** 2018101062  
**Project Title** Painted Hills Wind Energy Repowering Project  
**Lead Agency** Riverside County

---

**Type** MND Mitigated Negative Declaration  
**Description** The project proposes to decommission and remove approx 291 existing commercial wind turbines and install up to 14 new commercial wind turbines up to 499 ft in height with a per turbine generating capacity of between 2.0 MW and 4.2 MW on land within the Wind Energy Resource (W-E) Zone. The existing wind turbines were originally installed and have been operating since the mid-1980's. The project also proposes to install ancillary equipment, including 3 temporary, guyed meteorological towers up to 309-ft in height, a temporary expansion of an existing laydown yard, construction of new temporary and permanent internal access roads, and a new electrical collection system integrating the proposed wind turbines to the electrical grid.

---

**Lead Agency Contact**

**Name** Jay Olivas  
**Agency** Riverside County  
**Phone** 760-863-7050  
**email**  
**Address** 77-588 El Duna Court  
**City** Palm Desert  
**Fax**  
**State** CA **Zip** 92211

---

**Project Location**

**County** Riverside  
**City**  
**Region**  
**Lat / Long** 33° 56' 24" N / 116° 37' 24" W  
**Cross Streets** Windhaven Rd and Westside Dr/Super Creek  
**Parcel No.** 516-030-004, -008, 014, 015  
**Township** 3 **Range** 3e **Section** 1 **Base** SB

---

**Proximity to:**

**Highways** SR 62, I-10  
**Airports**  
**Railways**  
**Waterways** Whitewater River  
**Schools**  
**Land Use** LU: Commercial wind energy facility; Wind energy; GPD: OS-RUR

---

**Project Issues** Aesthetic/Visual; Agricultural Land; Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Biological Resources; Cumulative Effects; Drainage/Absorption; Economics/Jobs; Flood Plain/Flooding; Forest Land/Fire Hazard; Geologic/Seismic; Growth Inducing; Landuse; Minerals; Noise; Population/Housing Balance; Public Services; Recreation/Parks; Schools/Universities; Septic System; Sewer Capacity; Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading; Solid Waste; Toxic/Hazardous; Traffic/Circulation; Vegetation; Water Quality; Water Supply; Wetland/Riparian

---

**Reviewing Agencies** Resources Agency; Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 6; Department of Parks and Recreation; Department of Water Resources; Caltrans, District 8; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 7; Air Resources Board, Major Industrial Projects; Native American Heritage Commission; California Energy Commission; Public Utilities Commission

---

**Date Received** 10/25/2018 **Start of Review** 10/25/2018 **End of Review** 11/26/2018

## Notice of Completion &amp; Environmental Document Transmittal

2018101062

Mail to: State Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 3044, Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 (916) 445-0613

For Hand Delivery/Street Address: 1400 Tenth Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

SCH #

## Project Title: Painted Hills Wind Energy Repowering Project

Lead Agency: County of Riverside

Contact Person: Jay Olivas, Planner IV

Mailing Address: 77-588 El Duna Court

Phone: 760-863-7060

City: Palm Desert

Zip: 92211

County: Riverside

Project Location: County: Riverside

City/Nearest Community: Painted Hills/Whitewater

Cross Streets: Windhaven Road and Westside Drive/ Super Creek

Zip Code: 92282

Longitude/Latitude (degrees, minutes and seconds): 33 ° 56 ' 24 " N / 116 ° 37 ' 24 " W Total Acres: 600

Assessor's Parcel No.: 516-030-004, -008, -014, and -015

Section: 1

Twp.: 3

Range: 3E

Base: S. Bem.

Within 2 Miles: State Hwy #: SR-82, I-10

Waterways: Whitewater River

Airports: None

Railways: None

Schools: None

## Document Type:

CEQA: ☐ NOP☐ Draft EIRNEPA: ☐ NOIOther: ☐ Joint Document☐ Early Cons☐ Supplement/Subsequent EIR☐ BA☐ Final Document☐ Neg Dec

(Prior SCH No.)

☐ Draft EIS☐ Other:☒ Mit Neg Dec

Other:

☐ FONSI

## Local Action Type:

☐ General Plan Update☐ Specific Plan☐ Rezone☐ Annexation☐ General Plan Amendment☐ Master Plan☐ Prezone☐ Redevelopment☐ General Plan Element☐ Planned Unit Development☐ Use Study☐ Coastal Permit☐ Community Plan☐ Site Plan☐ Other:☐ Other: WECS Permit

## Development Type:

☐ Residential: Units \_\_\_\_\_

Acres \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Office: Sq.ft. \_\_\_\_\_

Acres \_\_\_\_\_

Employees \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Transportation: Type \_\_\_\_\_☐ Commercial: Sq.ft. \_\_\_\_\_

Acres \_\_\_\_\_

Employees \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Mining: Mineral \_\_\_\_\_☐ Industrial: Sq.ft. \_\_\_\_\_

Acres \_\_\_\_\_

Employees \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Power: Type Wind \_\_\_\_\_

MW Approx. 45

☐ Educational: \_\_\_\_\_☐ Waste Treatment: Type \_\_\_\_\_

MGD \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Recreational: \_\_\_\_\_☐ Hazardous Waste: Type \_\_\_\_\_☐ Water Facilities: Type \_\_\_\_\_

MGD \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Project Issues Discussed in Document:

☒ Aesthetic/Visual☐ Fiscal☒ Recreation/Parks☒ Vegetation☒ Agricultural Land☒ Flood Plain/Flooding☒ Schools/Universities☒ Water Quality☒ Air Quality☒ Forest Land/Fire Hazard☒ Septic Systems☒ Water Supply/Groundwater☒ Archeological/Historical☒ Geologic/Seismic☒ Sewer Capacity☒ Wetland/Riparian☒ Biological Resources☒ Minerals☒ Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading☒ Growth Inducement☐ Coastal Zone☒ Noise☒ Solid Waste☒ Land Use☒ Drainage/Absorption☒ Population/Housing Balance☒ Toxic/Hazardous☒ Cumulative Effects☒ Economic/Job☒ Public Services/Facilities☒ Traffic/Circulation☐ Other:

## Present Land Use/Zoning/General Plan Designation:

Land Use: Commercial wind energy facility; Zoning: Wind Energy (W-E); GP Designation: Open Space Rural (OS-RUR)

## Project Description: (please use a separate page if necessary)

The Project proposes to decommission and remove approximately 291 existing commercial wind turbines and install up to 14 new commercial wind turbines up to 499 feet in height with a per turbine generating capacity of between 2.0 megawatts (MW) and 4.2 MW on land within the Wind Energy Resource (W-E) Zone. The existing wind turbines were originally installed and have been operating since the mid-1980's. The Project also proposes to install ancillary equipment, including three (3) temporary, guyed meteorological towers up to 309 feet in height, two (2) permanent, self-supported meteorological towers up to 309 feet in height, a temporary expansion of an existing laydown yard, construction of new temporary and permanent internal access roads, and a new electrical collection system integrating the proposed wind turbines to the electrical grid.

Note: The State Clearinghouse will assign identification numbers for all new projects. If a SCH number already exists for a project (e.g. Notice of Preparation or previous draft document) please fill in.

## Reviewing Agencies Checklist

Lead Agencies may recommend State Clearinghouse distribution by marking agencies below with and "X".  
If you have already sent your document to the agency please denote that with an "S".

<input type="checkbox"/> Air Resources Board	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office of Historic Preservation
<input type="checkbox"/> Boating & Waterways, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Office of Public School Construction
<input type="checkbox"/> California Emergency Management Agency	<input type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> California Highway Patrol	<input type="checkbox"/> Pesticide Regulation, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans District # _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Utilities Commission
<input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Division of Aeronautics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional WQCB #7 _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources Agency
<input type="checkbox"/> Central Valley Flood Protection Board	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources Recycling and Recovery, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> Coachella Valley Mtns. Conservancy	<input type="checkbox"/> S.F. Bay Conservation & Development Comm.
<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> San Gabriel & Lower L.A. Rivers & Mtns. Conservancy
<input type="checkbox"/> Colorado River Board	<input type="checkbox"/> San Joaquin River Conservancy
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Santa Monica Mtns. Conservancy
<input type="checkbox"/> Corrections, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> State Lands Commission
<input type="checkbox"/> Delta Protection Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Clean Water Grants
<input type="checkbox"/> Education, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Quality
<input type="checkbox"/> Energy Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Rights
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fish & Game Region #6 _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
<input type="checkbox"/> Food & Agriculture, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Toxic Substances Control, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> Forestry and Fire Protection, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Water Resources, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> General Services, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Health Services, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Housing & Community Development	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native American Heritage Commission	

-----  
Local Public Review Period (to be filled in by lead agency)

Starting Date October 25, 2018

Ending Date November 23, 2018  
-----

Lead Agency (Complete if applicable):

Consulting Firm: Dudek

Address: 78-076 Main Street, #G-203

City/State/Zip: La Quinta, CA 92253

Contact: Collin Ramsey

Phone: 949-373-8328

Applicant: Painted Hills Wind, LLC

Address: 11512 El Camino Real, #100

City/State/Zip: San Diego, CA 92130

Phone: 858-764-3720

Signature of Lead Agency Representative: Col. R. J. Ramsey

on behalf of my client,  
Painted Hills Wind, LLC

Date: 10/24/2018

Authority cited: Section 21083, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 21161, Public Resources Code.

## **COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM: INITIAL STUDY**

**Environmental Assessment (E.A.) Number:** CEQ180059

**Project Case Type (s) and Number(s):** Commercial WECS Permit No. 180001

Variance Case No. 180003

**Lead Agency Name:** Riverside County Planning Department

**Address:** 77-588 El Duna Court, Suite H, Palm Desert, California 92211

**Contact Person:** Jay Olivas, Project Planner

**Telephone Number:** 760.863.7050

**Applicant's Name:** Painted Hills Wind, LLC

**Applicant's Address:** 11455 El Camino Real, Suite 160, San Diego, California 92130

#### **I. PROJECT INFORMATION**

##### **A. Project Description:**

###### **Project Location**

The approximately 600-acre Painted Hills Wind Energy Repowering Project (Project) is located within Section 1 of Township 3 South, Range 3 East, in an unincorporated area of Riverside County, California. It is generally bounded by the Super Creek Mine and undeveloped foothills (i.e., Painted Hills) to the north, rural single-family residential uses and State Route (SR-) 62 to the east, existing wind energy conversion system (WECS) facilities and Interstate (I-) 10 to the south, and an existing WECS facility and the unincorporated Whitewater area to the west. The Project site is also located within the San Geronio Wind Resource Area (SGWRA) and the County of Riverside (County) San Geronio Pass Wind Energy Policy Area, an area that maintains winds that support economically viable wind energy projects and in which wind turbines are an established use. Regional and local vicinity maps are provided on Figure 1.

###### **Project Overview**

Commercial WECS Permit No. 180001 proposes to decommission and remove approximately 291 existing commercial wind turbines and install up to 14-new commercial wind turbines up to 499- feet in height with a per turbine generating capacity of between 2.0 megawatts (MW) and 4.2 MW on land within the Wind Energy Resource (W-E) Zone (herein the "Project"). The existing wind turbines were originally installed and have been operating since the mid-1980's. The Project also proposes to install ancillary equipment, including three (3) temporary, guyed meteorological towers up to 309- feet in height, two (2) permanent, self-supported meteorological towers up to 309- feet in height, a temporary expansion of an existing laydown yard, construction of new temporary and permanent internal access roads, and a new electrical collection system integrating the proposed wind turbines to the electrical grid via one of two options. Option 1 would include the installation of new 12-kilovolt (kV) underground collector circuits from each wind turbine to an existing, on-site, SCE-owned 12 kV distribution system and 12 kV to 115 kV collector substation. Option 2 would include the installation of new 34.5 kV underground collector circuits from each wind turbine to a new Project-owned 34.5 kV to 115 kV collector substation that would connect to the electric grid on-site by way of a new, Project-owned 115 kV tie line.

Variance Case No. 180003 proposes reductions in WECS safety setbacks from 1.1 times total WECS height from lot lines abutting the Colorado River Aqueduct to between 325 feet and 515 feet, reduce WECS safety setbacks from 1.1 times total WECS height to 0 feet from all internal lot lines associated with W-E zoned land, reduce WECS safety setbacks from 1.25 time total WECS height to 555 feet from the northern boundary of the Southern California Edison transmission line easement located

along the southern lot line of APN 516-030-014 and eliminate wind access setbacks along the northern, southern and eastern lot lines of the Project parcels.

The following section describes the key Project construction components and operations and maintenance (O&M) activities that compose the Project. A preliminary layout of the Project is provided on Figure 2.

#### Project Components

##### Wind Energy Conversion Systems

Since wind turbine technology is continually improving, and the cost and availability of specific types of turbines vary from year to year, the final turbine make and model have not yet been selected. However, maximum characteristics of turbines for the Project are described as follows:

- Fourteen wind turbines, ranging from 2.0 MW to 4.2 MW in nameplate capacity per turbine
- Tubular steel towers
- Rotor diameter – approximately 427 feet (approximately 213-foot blades)
- Base – approximately 18 feet
- Hub height – approximately 309 feet
- Total height of turbine (highest point) – approximately 499 feet

The dimensions above represent the maximum expected installed for the Project. Technical/physical specifications for the proposed turbines have been provided, ensuring that they reflect the most conservative estimate of proposed turbine-related impacts. All proposed turbines would be three-bladed, upwind, horizontal-axis wind turbines. Each turbine would be mounted on a concrete pedestal supported by a permanent concrete foundation. Each turbine would have a turbine rotor and nacelle mounted on top of its tubular tower.

The turbines would be connected to the collector substation through an electrical collection system. Turbines would be arranged within the Project site in accordance with applicable industry siting recommendations for optimum energy production.

Consistent with Federal Aviation Administration rules established in Advisory Circular 70/7460-1L: Obstruction Marking and Lighting, all turbine components (including towers, nacelles, and rotors) would be painted or finished using low-reflectivity, neutral white colors. Exterior lighting installed on turbines would be restricted and would only include Federal Aviation Administration aviation warning lights.

The wind turbines would have a three-blade rotor. The diameter of the circle swept by the blades (rotor swept zone) would be no more than 427 feet. The wind turbines' control system includes provisions to safely stop the rotor by pitching the blades to a stall position under all foreseeable upset conditions. The turbines also would be equipped with a parking brake to keep the rotor stationary while maintenance or inspection is performed.

A step-up transformer would be used at each wind turbine to boost voltage to the appropriate medium voltage to deliver power within the Project site. The transformer may either be contained within the wind turbine unit itself or may be pad-mounted next to the base of the wind turbine. Electrical cables in an underground electrical collection system would transmit electricity from the transformer to a collector substation, where the collector substation main power transformers would boost the medium voltage to high voltage to deliver power to the point of interconnection located at the SCE Devers Substation 115 kV switchrack, and for ultimate distribution to the customer base.

Each turbine would be installed in an area designated as the turbine pad, which would include the subterranean 60- to 70-foot-diameter steel-reinforced concrete turbine foundation, and a crane pad to

provide the appropriate working surface and strength for safe operation of the high-capacity crawler crane required to erect each turbine. Each turbine pad would require an approximately 2.0- to 2.5-acre temporary construction area, including a 60-foot by 100-foot crane pad.

The proposed wind turbines would include built-in safety measures to comply with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and American National Standards Institute (ANSI) requirements. Each wind turbine would be equipped with a lightning rod atop the nacelle. Sensitive parts in the nacelle, such as the anemometer, wind vane, and the controller, are protected from noise or surge spike due to lightning by an upgraded shielded protection system. Each of the blades would have lightning shielding to protect the blades from damage caused by lightning. The wind turbine-mounted protection would be tied to a bare copper grounding cable installed around the foundation for lightning and electrical protection. A fire detection system within each wind turbine would interface with the SCADA system.

#### *Electrical Collection System*

There are two options under consideration for the Project's electrical system:

Option 1: The Project's electrical system would consist of new, underground 12-kilovolt (kV) collector circuits ultimately connecting the new turbines to the existing Southern California Edison (SCE)-owned 115 kV Venwind substation (Venwind) located inside the Project boundary on Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 516-030-014. The proposed locations for these facilities are shown on Figure 2.

All or a portion of these new Project collector circuits may tie directly into an existing 12 kV bus at Venwind. Alternatively, one or more of these new circuits may tie directly into the existing, SCE-owned, 12 kV overhead collection system located inside the Project boundary. This system, which is currently used by the existing wind turbines to be decommissioned, is also connected to Venwind's 12 kV bus. The 12 kV bus, in turn, is connected to the Venwind 12 kV to 115 kV transformer which connects to SCE's 115 kV transmission line inside the Project boundary. The 115 kV transmission line ultimately connects to the Project's point of interconnection at the 115 kV switchrack inside the SCE-owned, existing Devers Substation located approximately 2 miles east of the Project.

Option 2: The Project's electrical system would consist of new, underground 34.5 kV electrical collector circuits that would collect the electrical energy generated from the Project's turbines into a new, Project-owned collector substation which would be located within an approximately 0.7-acre portion of the existing, laydown area. This substation would then step up the electrical energy from 34.5 kV to 115 kV by way of a new collector substation transformer. The stepped-up electrical energy would then be transmitted from this collector substation via a new, approximately 0.25-mile long, Project-owned overhead 115 kV transmission line where it would tie into Venwind or a nearby point on a segment of the SCE-owned 115kV Devers Transmission line located within the Project boundary. This tie-line would be constructed inside the Project boundary and within an existing access road that leads from the laydown and maintenance yard to Venwind.

Underground circuits would be direct buried within a trench with at least 4 feet of cover. Fiber-optic cables for wind turbine generator management and control would be installed within these same collection trenches as would bare copper or copper-clad neutral ground wire. These trenches would be located adjacent to Project access roads to the maximum extent possible. Vaults and splice boxes would be placed underground at locations as needed.

#### *Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System and Communication Systems Collection System*

The supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system would be installed at the Project to collect operating and performance data from each turbine and to enable remote operation of the wind turbines. The wind turbines would be linked to a central computer located on-site or in a nearby, existing operations center by a fiber-optic network. The SCADA system's fiber-optic cables would be co-located with the

Project's collection circuits to the greatest extent possible. The SCADA system would be capable of sending signals to a cellphone, tablet, computer, or other personal communication device to alert operations staff of any operational issues. The SCADA system would also be connected to the California Independent System Operator and SCE. Personnel located at an off-site O&M facility would monitor the wind turbines with the SCADA system.

#### *Meteorological Towers*

Up to two new permanent met towers would be erected within the Project site to monitor and document wind conditions. These towers would be up to 309 feet high and would be equipped with applicable FAA-compliant marking or lighting for aviation safety. Up to three new temporary met towers would also be erected within the Project site as part of the Project's wind turbine power curve testing campaign that would occur prior to commercial operations. These temporary met towers would be constructed atop targeted wind turbine locations (prior to the erection of those wind turbines) to collect turbine site specific wind data that would be used to calibrate these locations prior to performing power curve testing. These towers would also be up to 309 feet high and equipped with applicable FAA-compliant marking or lighting for aviation safety. The permanent met towers would be free-standing lattice towers constructed atop a concrete foundation. The temporary met towers would be guyed-lattice towers constructed atop a relatively smaller, temporary concrete foundation.

#### *Access Roads*

Where feasible, the existing network of permanent access roads would be retained and reused for the new wind turbines. In addition to the existing roads, permanent access and maintenance roads would be constructed to provide access and circulation within the Project. These access roads would consist of 12- to 16-foot-wide permanent roads to provide access to each wind turbine, meteorological (met) tower, and ancillary equipment. These same permanent access roads would be used during construction, although the width of these roads may be temporarily increased to up to 36 feet wide to accommodate cranes and larger construction equipment.

Access roads would consist of compacted native material but may also require approximately four to six inches of aggregate and/or geosynthetic material to provide the soil strength needed for construction. The disturbed areas outside the final roadway width would be graded and compacted for use during construction and then de-compacted and stabilized at the conclusion of construction. The new, permanent access road layout would incorporate applicable federal and local standards regarding internal road design and circulation, particularly those provisions related to emergency vehicle access.

#### *Temporary Laydown and Parking*

An existing staging/storage area would be expanded and used for construction parking and as a temporary laydown yard to stage wind turbine components, construction equipment, and construction materials. Steel construction containers would be used to securely store specialized equipment. This area is located strategically within the Project area to optimize construction activities while also minimizing off-site visual impacts to the extent feasible. After construction, all temporary disturbances and construction containers associated with the temporary laydown and parking area would be removed, and these areas would be restored.

A temporary work area for each wind turbine site would be used for the crane pad, equipment laydown, and other construction-related needs. Within this temporary work area, a crane pad is required for supporting the large tower erection crane. The crane pad would consist of a compacted native soil or compacted aggregate base gravel area. The topsoil from the crane pads, if any, would be used at adjacent locations during restoration activities.

#### *Project Adjacent, Off-Site Improvements*

The Project would be required to improve Windhaven Road approximately between 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the south and the Project entrance at Westside Drive/Super Creek to the north (roughly 0.25 miles). This



segment of Windhaven Road would be improved to a width of 24 feet and would be graded and compacted in compliance with the approved geotechnical/soils report and Riverside County Fire Department standards.

### Project Construction

#### *Decommissioning of Existing Turbines*

The decommissioning stage of the Project would consist of dismantling and removing the existing wind turbine generators, removing turbine access roads not required for the Project, and removing ancillary equipment that would not be used by the Project. The decommissioning process for the Project is expected to follow the following steps:

- The contractor would mobilize staff and equipment to perform the work, including setting up a field office, hiring personnel, and arranging for utilities, along with other general decommissioning requirements.
- Construction permits would be obtained, and a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP), a spill prevention control and countermeasure plan, and other documents, as required by County regulations, would be submitted prior to the start of decommissioning field operations. These documents include a Project health and safety plan, revegetation plan, site reclamation and monitoring plan, construction notification plan, noxious weed and invasive species control plan, dust control plan, and traffic control plan for the decommissioning phase of the Project.
- Cranes and other construction equipment sufficient to dismantle and remove the existing wind turbines would be mobilized to the site.
- Gearboxes, transformers, and hydraulic systems would be drained of fluids, which would be put into appropriate containers and would be transported and disposed of in accordance with all state and federal environmental regulations.
- The contractor would dismantle and remove the rotor, nacelle, towers, and transformers and transport these components off site. It is anticipated that the towers and nacelle would be reduced to manageably sized pieces on site to facilitate movement off site to recycling facilities. Blades would be cut up into manageable and appropriately sized pieces to be hauled to an appropriate recycling facility or to an approved disposal site. If the resale market for used wind turbines and components is viable, some of the turbines and components, such as blades, may be transported off site intact for resale.
- All underground cables would be de-energized and abandoned in place.
- Overhead SCE-owned distribution lines and associated electrical components that would not be used by the Project would be removed.
- Crane paths, to the extent unused for Project construction, would be de-compacted, regraded, and restored to as close as reasonably possible to pre-construction condition.
- The use of temporary staging areas during decommissioning would be kept to a minimum. If temporary staging areas are required, they would also likely be used for the construction phase of the Project, after which they would be restored and re-vegetated after use.
- The Project site would be cleaned, and any remaining debris would be removed and disposed of off-site.

#### *Construction Access*

The primary construction access and haul route into the Project would be from Seely Road to 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Windhaven Road. Construction contractors would post signs on public roads, alerting the public of increased heavy construction traffic. When possible, delivery times would be planned around local peak travel periods to avoid congestion.



### ***Flagging/Staking***

Environmentally sensitive areas would be staked, flagged or fenced to display boundaries, so that sensitive ecological and archaeological resources would be avoided. The applicant would provide training to construction personnel in regards to these environmentally sensitive areas, avoidance measures, and the importance of identified exclusion areas that should be avoided.

### ***Clearing and Grading***

Each turbine construction work area would require an approximately 2.0- to 2.5-acre area to be cleared and graded depending on the Project site topography. Upon completion of construction, gravel with a minimum 12-foot width would be placed around each approximately 18-foot diameter reinforced concrete turbine pedestal to provide truck access. The balance of the cleared area would be revegetated. Clearing and grading would result in approximately 813,500 cubic yards of cut and 329,620 cubic yards of fill, with the net volume to be redistributed throughout the Project site. The Project's limits of grading are shown on Figure 2.

Construction of the Project would rely on existing roads to the extent possible. Any new roads would minimize excessive grading and impacts to road embankments, ditches and drainages. Except as described in the section on impacts to jurisdictional waters, roads would avoid dry washes and drainage bottoms, and would be designed to minimize surface water runoff and erosion and use the flow of the natural contours. The cut and fill required for the access roads would be balanced to the extent feasible to minimize the amount of materials that would need to be brought onto or removed from the Project site. Temporary disturbance areas would be reseeded with native species in accordance with the applicable requirements.

### ***Turbine Foundation Construction and Tower Erection***

Permanent turbine foundations would be buried underground and would include scour protection provisions as necessary. After turbine erection has been completed, with the exception of the approximately 18-foot-diameter foundation pedestal and the turbine access road, the cleared area would be revegetated. To support the construction crane for turbine erection, a compacted-soil crane pad with a maximum slope of 1% would be required.

The turbine foundation design would be based on site-specific geotechnical investigations; prior to confirming the final turbine locations, soil borings would be collected for each turbine site to ensure sufficient soil bearing capacity necessary to provide a stable foundation for the crane. During the construction phase, a licensed geotechnical engineer would then analyze and recommend specific construction techniques for foundational strength at each turbine. Reinforced concrete foundations would be placed for the turbines according to the manufacturer's and geotechnical engineer's recommendations.

### ***Construction of Underground Electrical Collection***

Underground electrical collection would have a 24-foot-wide temporary disturbance area that coincides with the temporary impacts associated with new roads and where possible constructed within new roads and existing roads to minimize impacts. The underground electrical collection system would be placed within a 48-inch-deep and at least 12-inch-wide cable trench generally located along the length of the proposed turbine access roads. Electrical cables would be installed first and the trench would be partially backfilled before placing communications cables. The topsoil in the trench would be removed and set aside. During backfill, the topsoil would be replaced as the uppermost layer.

### ***Project Collector Substation – Option 2 Only***

Construction of the collector substation would begin with clearing and removing any obstructing materials and equipment from the portion within existing laydown area where the substation is to be constructed. This area would then be excavated to frame and pour foundations. Structural footings and underground utilities, along with electrical conduit and grounding grid would be installed, followed by

aboveground structures and equipment. A chain-link fence would be constructed around the new collector substation for security and to restrict unauthorized persons and wildlife from entering the facility. The location of the substation is shown on Figure 2.

#### ***Permanent Meteorological Tower Foundation Construction and Tower Erection***

Construction work areas would be cleared for each permanent meteorological tower location. These work areas would vary in size due to topography, requiring an approximately 1.0- to 1.5-acre area around each permanent tower to be cleared and leveled. The construction work area is necessary for foundation excavation and construction, assembly of met tower sections, and staging of the construction crane, which would hoist the lattice tower sections into place. The construction work area would not be paved.

Permanent met tower foundations would be buried underground and would include scour protection provisions as necessary. Once erected, the permanent met tower would be enclosed within an approximately 25-foot x 25-foot graveled and fenced area. All other cleared areas associated with construction would be revegetated. Similar crane pads would be used for met tower installation as for turbine installation; site specific soil borings would be collected and a geotechnical analysis would be done to ensure a stable foundation. Reinforced concrete foundations would be placed for the towers according to the manufacturer's and geotechnical engineer's recommendations.

#### ***Temporary Meteorological Tower Foundation Construction and Tower Erection***

Temporary met towers would be installed by crane at specified turbine locations that would have already been graded and prepared for turbine construction. Therefore, no incremental site preparation work would be required. These towers would require much smaller concrete foundations than the permanent meteorological towers since they would be supported by guy wires. Upon collecting sufficient, site-specific wind data, these towers would be removed.

#### ***Temporary Laydown and Parking Area***

An approximately 4-acre, centrally located temporary laydown and parking area would be constructed adjacent to an approximately 2-acre existing laydown area during decommissioning and construction. This combined area may be graveled depending on soil conditions and would be removed upon completion of construction and revegetated in accordance with the applicable requirements. If stockpiled materials are stored in the temporary staging area, the staging area may be secured as necessary to control access and limit damage or theft.

#### ***Road Construction***

Due to the length of the turbine blades and heavy turbine components, existing Project access roads may require upgrades and modifications to accommodate blade delivery and large delivery trucks and cranes. The Project includes the construction of new access roads and improvements to existing access roads within the Project boundary. Temporary access roads between turbine sites would be constructed at up to 36-foot widths to allow for a large crane. Permanent access roads between turbines would be 16 feet wide.

Depending on the soil subsurface, surface soils may need to be excavated and replaced with gravel and/or sand to sufficiently establish a stable road base. Roads would be located away from drainage bottoms, steep slopes, and erodible soils if practicable and would be designed to maintain current surface water runoff patterns and prevent erosion. Soil erosion would be controlled at culvert outlets with appropriate structures. Catch basins, roadway ditches, and culverts would be cleaned and maintained regularly. If road grade and/or runoff patterns result in added erosion, control measures would be installed to minimize the added erosion. Exact locations of cut and fill, grading, and culvert locations would be developed and provided as part of the grading plans.

### ***Facility Testing and Commissioning***

As facilities are constructed, commissioning would take place to ensure all facilities are operating per applicable specifications. Each wind turbine would be tested and commissioned individually along with associated equipment. Upon all inspections being completed and certifications being provided by third-party inspectors, the Project would be fully operational and able to deliver energy to the electric grid.

### **Project Operations**

O&M activities for the Project would remain similar to the O&M activities conducted for the existing facility. Regularly scheduled maintenance of the Project would generally include lubrication of mechanical parts, cleaning of blades, and changing of fluids, performed in conformity with the manufacturer's guidelines. Occasionally, major overhauls or component replacements would be required, necessitating use of cranes or other equipment similar to that used during construction. Maintenance personnel would be on site on a regular basis to service turbines, replace parts, and perform other maintenance duties. No increase in the number of maintenance personnel is expected.

### **Final Decommissioning and Reclamation**

Decommissioning would involve removing the turbines, support towers, met towers, transformers, and foundations and would be similar to decommissioning of existing turbines as described above. Generally, turbines, electrical components, and towers are either refurbished and resold or recycled for scrap. All unsalvageable materials would be disposed of at authorized sites in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations in effect at the time of final decommissioning.

Site reclamation after decommissioning would include removing turbine and met tower foundations, importing topsoil, and restoring the areas consistent with County requirements set forth at the time of decommissioning. Such future requirements may include revegetation of the previously impacted areas, or similar types of restoration activities. Underground collection system cables would be cut to three feet below grade and abandoned in place.

**B. Type of Project:** Site Specific ☒; Countywide ☐; Community ☐; Policy ☐.

**C. Total Project Area:** Approximately 600 acres (total permanent disturbed acreage = 36.33 acres and temporary disturbed acreage = 3.74 acres).

<b>Residential Acres:</b>	<b>Lots:</b>	<b>Units:</b>	<b>Projected No. of Residents:</b>
<b>Commercial Acres:</b>	<b>Lots:</b>	<b>Sq. Ft. of Bldg. Area:</b>	<b>Est. No. of Employees:</b>
<b>Industrial Acres:</b>	<b>Lots:</b>	<b>Sq. Ft. of Bldg. Area:</b>	<b>Est. No. of Employees:</b>
<b>Other:</b> 14 new, modern turbines			

**D. Assessor's Parcel No(s):** 516-030-004, 516-030-008, 516-030-014, 516-030-015

**E. Street References:** North of I-10 and 16th Avenue, west of SR-62 and Windhaven Avenue, and east of Whitewater Canyon Road. The Project site is roughly bisected by Super Creek Road.

**F. Section, Township & Range Description or reference/attach a Legal Description:** Section 1, of Township 3 South, Range 3 East.

**Brief description of the existing environmental setting of the Project site and its surroundings:** The Project site primarily encompasses desert terrain that rises in elevation from east to west and south to north and is currently developed with wind turbines, dirt access roads, and transmission lines supported by tall steel lattice structures and the SCE-owned Venwind substation. Photographs of the Project site are provided on Figure 3.

The Project site features approximately 291 older wind turbines spaced throughout the site within approximately 31 rows. Rows include as little as two wind turbines and as many as approximately 24 wind turbines. These existing wind turbines range between 100 feet and 285 feet in height. Low, mounded desert shrubs and tufts of low golden grasses surrounded by pockets of exposed tan soils separate wind turbine rows. Narrow washes occasionally run between rows of turbines. Each row of wind turbines is accessible from a parallel dirt access road. While limited, some on-site storage of wind turbine components (e.g., blades, tower sections) occurs on the Project site.

An electrical transmission line corridor traverses the southern extent of the Project site in an east-west direction. Two parallel electrical lines are installed in the corridor and are supported by large, geometric steel lattice towers. The towers are accessible from a 20-foot-wide dirt access road that runs through the middle of the corridor. An additional transmission line is installed in a northeast-southwest alignment on the Project site. The electrical line is supported by narrow wood poles and parallels Windhaven Road, running from the Venwind substation south toward another local substation located off site. An underground, high-pressure distribution natural gas line owned by Southern California Gas Company traverses the southeastern corner of the Project site.

The Project site is surrounded by operational wind energy development to the west, north, and south (Figure 4). The land use designation of the Project site and land to the north is Open Space Rural (OS-RUR) (zoned by the City of Desert Hot Springs as Open Space Mountain Reserve [OS/MR]), and the property to the south is designated Rural Desert (RD) (zoned Rural Residential [R-R]). There are scattered residences to the east, within the Rural Residential (R-R) land use designation, (zoned One-Family Dwelling [R-1] and Controlled Development Area [W-2]). The closest habitable residence is greater than 2,000 feet from the nearest proposed WECS. The area to the west of the Project site is open space, with the Open Space Conservation Habitat (OS-CH) land use designation (zoned R-R). The Colorado River Aqueduct, owned and operated by the Metropolitan Water District (MWD), bisects the Project site.

The Project is located within the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) and is more specifically located within the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon and Whitewater Canyon Conservation Area. The Project was reviewed by the County of Riverside Environmental Programs Division in conjunction with the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) to address the CVMSHCP as discussed under Checklist Item 5.

## **II. APPLICABLE GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING REGULATIONS**

### **A. General Plan Elements/Policies:**

- 1. Land Use:** The Project would be consistent with the following policies related to wind energy resources and included within the County's General Plan Land Use Element (County of Riverside, 2017a):

**LU 16.1** Prohibit commercial wind turbines within the Rural Community Foundation Component areas and within the Rural Residential land use designation. Prohibit commercial wind turbines within the Community Development Foundation Category, except within the areas designated Public Facilities (Edom Hill and the area around Devers Substation) within the mapped Policy Area providing for wind energy development in the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan.

*Consistency Analysis: Consistent.* The Project is located outside the Rural Community and Rural Residential foundation components.

**LU 16.2** Require wind turbines to address through project design the alignments of multipurpose trails as designated on Figure [C-6] of the Circulation Element.

*Consistency Analysis: Consistent.* The Project does not affect nearby trails and therefore complies with LU 16.2.

**LU 16.3** Require wind turbines to address through project design Riverside County Regional Parks and sensitive environmental areas. Setbacks will be determined on a project by project basis.

*Consistency Analysis: Consistent.* The Project reduces setbacks through proposed Variance Case No. 180003.

**LU 16.7** Geotechnical considerations, such as potential landslides and mudflows, shall be reviewed with all commercial wind energy developments. Geotechnical reports submitted for review shall adequately address avoidance of hazards and, if avoidance is not feasible, propose mitigation according to good engineering practices.

*Consistency Analysis: Consistent.* County Geologic Report No. 180021 addresses geotechnical impacts to a level deemed appropriate by a licensed geotechnical engineer.

**LU 16.8** Wildlife and natural vegetation impacts of proposed commercial wind turbine development shall be considered, including endangered species avoidance and mitigation, bird migration flyways, and may include appropriate consultation with state and federal agencies.

*Consistency Analysis: Consistent.* The Project was reviewed by Environmental Programs and CVCC to address biological impacts and was found to be reduced to a level below significance.

**LU 16.9** Restrict placement of commercial wind turbine arrays within 2,000 feet of residential development for arrays with 10 or fewer wind turbines and restrict placement of commercial wind turbine arrays within 3,000 feet or greater of residential development for arrays with more than 10 wind turbines, unless the

applicant supplies documentation that the machines are designed according to proven engineering practices and will not violate applicable County of Riverside noise standards including excessive low frequency or pure tone noise.

**Consistency Analysis: Consistent.** The nearest residence is more than 2,400 feet away from the nearest proposed turbine location.

- LU 16.10 Require wind turbines to operate at less than 65 dBA [A-weighted decibels] and not more than 60 dBA when installed adjacent to noise-sensitive land uses.

**Consistency Analysis: Consistent.** The submitted Noise Study indicated compliance with county noise standards for commercial WECS and the Project is required to comply with Advisory Notification Document (AND) Planning 16 – Operational Noise.

- LU 16.11 Ensure that site designs and operation provide for adequate security and safety to lessen the possibilities and impacts of accidents, vandalism, and environmental hazards.

**Consistency Analysis: Consistent.** The Project would be conditioned to comply with security and safety measures as indicted by Condition of Approval (COA) Planning 90-3 – Perimeter Fence.

- LU 16.12 Require the design and location of commercial wind energy developments to mitigate visual impacts. Issues which may be included in the review may be, but are not necessarily limited to, the following list, depending on turbine types, densities, and siting:

- a. Color of turbines;
- b. Location and design of associated facilities such as roads, fencing, non-Public Utilities Commission regulated utility lines, substations and maintenance buildings to minimize intrusion or disruption of the landscape;
- c. Minimizing of disturbed ground and roadway, and restoring of the surface to natural vegetation;
- d. Prohibition of brand names or advertising associated with wind turbines visible from any scenic highway or key viewpoints;
- e. Need for interpretation and/or visitors center located at the end of the view shed of turbines.

**Consistency Analysis: Consistent.** The Project was designed and located so as to mitigate visual impacts. The color of turbines would be light grey; the location and design of associated facilities have been designed to minimize intrusion and disturbance; the Project would rely on existing roads to the extent possible; and the Project does not include brand names or advertising;

- LU 16.13 Require design measures for commercial wind energy development on sites near official or eligible State or County Scenic Highways designated (Figure C-9, Circulation Element) by Riverside County, and sites within those areas identified as "critical" and "very critical" by Environment Impact Report No. 158. Issues which may be included in the review may be, but are not necessarily limited to, the following list, depending on turbine types, densities, and siting:

- b. Wind turbines should be set back from scenic highways and viewpoints; set back individual turbines far enough from scenic highways and key

viewpoints so they do not obscure or overwhelm distinctive skylines; set back large turbines from small important landmarks so that they do not overwhelm the landform.

- c. Coordinate color schemes for all developments; avoid mixing colors within a particular array unless to subordinate a particular turbine type or to provide safety markings; limit use of color patterns as accent for key clusters or individual turbines; consider aviation safety coloration and lighting as may be required by the FAA.

**Consistency Analysis: Consistent.** The Project would not interrupt or obstruct the existing long views of the Coachella Valley available to the southeast and east. Due to the location of the Project site and setbacks of new wind turbines from SR-62, new wind turbines would not be viewed in line with San Jacinto Peak, a prominent visual resource in the Project region. Additionally, as viewed from SR-111, new wind turbines on the Project site would be compatible with existing wind energy facilities in northwestern Coachella Valley.

2. **Circulation:** The Project would be consistent with the following policies related to the Project and included within the County's General Plan Circulation Element:

- C2.4 The direct project related traffic impacts of new development proposals shall be mitigated via conditions of approval requiring the construction of any improvements identified as necessary to meet level of service targets.

**Consistency Analysis: Consistent.** The Project would be required to improve Windhaven Road approximately between 16th Avenue to the south and the Project entrance at Westside Drive/Super Creek to the north (roughly 0.25 miles). This segment of Windhaven Road would be improved to a width of 24 feet and would be graded and compacted in compliance with the approved geotechnical/soils report and Riverside County Fire Department standards.

3. **Multipurpose Open Space:** The Project would be consistent with the following policies related to wind energy resources and included within the County's General Plan Multipurpose Open Space Element:

- OS 10.1 Provide for orderly and efficient wind energy development in a manner that maximizes beneficial uses of wind resources and minimizes detrimental effects to the residents and the environment of the county.

**Consistency Analysis: Consistent.** The Project would improve the overall efficiency of energy production on the Project site by deploying new, modern, and high-efficiency wind turbines. Because state-of-the-art turbine technology would be used, the Project would be capable of generating more electric energy, more reliably and with fewer turbines, reducing the visual clutter that currently affects the site.

- OS 10.2 Continue the County's Wind Implementation Monitoring Program (WIMP) in order to study the evolution of wind energy technology, identify means to solve environmental and community impacts, and provide for an ability to respond with changes in the County's regulatory structure.

**Consistency Analysis: Consistent.** The Project would be conditioned to pay WIMP fees.

4. **Safety:** The Project would be consistent with the following policies related to the Project and included within the County's General Plan Safety Element:

S 2.1 Minimize fault rupture hazards through enforcement of Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act provisions and the following policies:

- a. Require geologic studies or analyses for critical structures, and lifeline, high-occupancy, schools, and high-risk structures, within 0.5 miles of all Quaternary to historic faults shown on the Earthquake Fault Studies Zones map.
- b. Require geologic trenching studies within all designated Earthquake Fault Studies Zones, unless adequate evidence, as determined and accepted by the Riverside County Engineering Geologist, is presented. The County of Riverside may require geologic trenching of non-zoned faults for especially critical or vulnerable structures or lifelines.

S 2.2 Require geological and geotechnical investigations in areas with potential for earthquake-induced liquefaction, landsliding or settlement, for any building proposed for human occupancy and any structure whose damage would cause harm, except for accessory buildings.

*Consistency Analysis: Consistent.* Consistent with Mitigation Measure (MM) GEO-1, the site design and engineering shall be conducted in conformance with all recommendations as specified in both the Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 and the Geologic Feasibility Investigation (Appendix E.1 and E.2), as well as those applicable recommendation specified in any subsequently prepared geotechnical/soils reports for the Project. Recent field surveys conducted in September 2018 by a geotechnical professional confirmed that, with the incorporation of Project-specific engineering considerations, the Project can be constructed and operated on-site without posing a risk to life or property.

5. **Noise:** The Project would be consistent with the following policies related to wind energy resources and included within the County's General Plan Noise Element:

N 5.1 Enforce the Wind Implementation Monitoring Program (WIMP).

*Consistency Analysis: Consistent.* The Project would be conditioned to pay WIMP fees in accordance with Planning-6 – WIMP Fees.

N 5.2 Encourage the replacement of outdated technology with more efficient technology with less noise impacts.

*Consistency Analysis: Consistent.* The wind turbines would be of the newest technology available.

6. **Housing:** The County's General Plan Housing Element does not contain any policies related to wind energy resources or the Project.

*Consistency Analysis: While no policies outlined in the Housing Element apply, the Project would not conflict with the County's General Plan Housing policies.*

7. **Air Quality:** The Project would be consistent with the following policies related to wind energy resources and included within the County's General Plan Air Quality Element:



- AQ 20.19 Facilitate development and siting of renewable energy facilities and transmission lines in appropriate locations.**

**Consistency Analysis: Consistent.** The Project would be situated on an existing commercial wind energy facility. The nearest residence is more than 2,400 feet away from the nearest proposed turbine location.

- AQ 26.1 The County shall implement programs and requirements to achieve the following objectives related to reducing greenhouse gas emissions derived from energy generation:**

- a. Encourage the installation of solar panels and other energy-efficient improvements.
- b. Facilitate residential and commercial renewable energy facilities (solar array installations, individual wind energy generators, etc.).
- c. Facilitate development of renewable energy facilities and transmission lines in appropriate locations.
- d. Facilitate renewable energy facilities and transmission line siting.
- e. Provide incentives for development of local green technology businesses and locally produced green products.
- f. Provide incentives for investment in residential and commercial energy efficiency improvements.
- g. Identify lands suitable for wind power generation or geothermal production and encourage development of these alternative energy sources.

**Consistency Analysis: Consistent.** The Project would improve the overall efficiency of energy production on the Project site by deploying new, modern, and high-efficiency wind turbines. Because state-of-the-art turbine technology would be used, the Project would be capable of generating renewable electric energy and thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

- 8. Healthy Communities: The County's General Plan Healthy Communities Element does not contain any policies related to wind energy resources or the Project.**

**Consistency Analysis:** While no policies outlined in the Healthy Communities Element apply, the Project would not conflict with the County's General Plan Health Community policies.

- B. General Plan Area Plan(s): Western Coachella Valley Plan Area**
- C. Foundation Component(s): Open Space (unincorporated Riverside County)**
- D. Land Use Designation(s): Open Space Rural (OS-RUR)**
- E. Overlay(s), if any: San Geronio Pass Wind Energy Policy Area**
- F. Policy Area(s), if any: San Geronio Pass Wind Energy Policy Area**

**G. Adjacent and Surrounding:**

- 1. Area Plan(s):** Western Coachella Valley Area Plan; The Pass Area Plan
- 2. Foundation Component(s):** Rural, Open Space, Rural Community
- 3. Land Use Designation(s):** Rural Desert, Conservation Habitat, Estate Density Residential
- 4. Overlay(s), if any:** San Geronio Pass Wind Energy Policy Area
- 5. Policy Area(s), if any:** San Geronio Pass Wind Energy Policy Area

**H. Adopted Specific Plan Information**

- 1. Name and Number of Specific Plan, if any:** None.
- 2. Specific Plan Planning Area, and Policies, if any:** Not within a specific plan.

**I. Existing Zoning:** Wind Energy Resource (W-E) Zone

**J. Proposed Zoning, if any:** W-E (no change from existing)

**K. Adjacent and Surrounding Zoning:** R-R, W-2, R-1, and W-E (County of Riverside); OS/MR and I-E (City of Desert Hot Springs)

### III. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below ( X ) would be potentially affected by this Project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" or "Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture & Forest Resources  | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: Environmental Justice/Socioeconomics   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paleontological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils        | <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing                   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions        | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services                      |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials   | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                           |  |

#### IV. DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

<b>A PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/NEGATIVE DECLARATION WAS NOT PREPARED</b>
---

<input type="checkbox"/> I find that the Project <b>COULD NOT</b> have a significant effect on the environment, and a <b>NEGATIVE DECLARATION</b> would be prepared.
--

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I find that although the Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there would not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the Project, described in this document, have been made or agreed to by the Project Proponent. A <b>MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION</b> would be prepared.
--

<input type="checkbox"/> I find that the Project <b>MAY</b> have a significant effect on the environment, and an <b>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT</b> is required.
--



**A PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/NEGATIVE DECLARATION WAS PREPARED**

☐ I find that although the Project could have a significant effect on the environment, **NO NEW ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION IS REQUIRED** because (a) all potentially significant effects of the Project have been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or Negative Declaration pursuant to applicable legal standards, (b) all potentially significant effects of the Project have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or Negative Declaration, (c) the Project would not result in any new significant environmental effects not identified in the earlier EIR or Negative Declaration, (d) the Project would not substantially increase the severity of the environmental effects identified in the earlier EIR or Negative Declaration, (e) no considerably different mitigation measures have been identified and (f) no mitigation measures found infeasible have become feasible.

☐ I find that although all potentially significant effects have been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or Negative Declaration pursuant to applicable legal standards, some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in California Code of Regulations, Section 15162 exist. An **ADDENDUM** to a previously-certified EIR or Negative Declaration has been prepared and would be considered by the approving body or bodies.

☐ I find that at least one of the conditions described in California Code of Regulations, Section 15162 exist, but I further find that only minor additions or changes are necessary to make the previous EIR adequately apply to the Project in the changed situation; therefore a **SUPPLEMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required that need only contain the information necessary to make the previous EIR adequate for the Project as revised.

☐ I find that at least one of the following conditions described in California Code of Regulations, Section 15162, exist and a **SUBSEQUENT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required: (1) Substantial changes are proposed in the Project which would require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; (2) Substantial changes have occurred with respect to the circumstances under which the Project is undertaken which would require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or (3) New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the negative declaration was adopted, shows any the following: (A) The Project would have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR or negative declaration; (B) Significant effects previously examined would be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR or negative declaration; (C) Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible, and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the Project, but the Project Proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measures or alternatives; or (D) Mitigation measures or alternatives which are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR or negative declaration would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the Project on the environment, but the Project Proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measures or alternatives.

Signature

Jay Olivas  
Project Planner  
Printed Name

October 24, 2018

Date

For: Charissa Leach, PE  
Assistant TLMA Director

## V. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES ASSESSMENT

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code, Sections 21000–21178.1), this Initial Study has been prepared to analyze the Project to determine any potential significant impacts on the environment that would result from construction and implementation of the Project. In accordance with California Code of Regulations, Section 15063, this Initial Study is a preliminary analysis prepared by the lead agency, the County, in consultation with other jurisdictional agencies, to determine whether a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or an EIR is required for the Project. The purpose of this Initial Study is to inform the decision makers, affected agencies, and the public of potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the Project.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>AESTHETICS Would the Project</b>				
<b>1. Scenic Resources</b>				
a) Have a substantial effect upon a scenic highway corridor within which it is located?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings and unique or landmark features; obstruct any prominent scenic vista or view open to the public; or result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: Riverside County General Plan, Figure C-8 "Scenic Highways;" Visual Resources Study by Dudek dated July 23, 2018 (Appendix A).

Findings of Fact: Under its existing condition, the Project site includes a commercial wind energy facility and would continue to operate as such. Visual simulations that depict the Project and potential visual change to the landscape were created and included on Figures 4a through 4m.

a-b) In addition to SR-62 (an officially designated state scenic highway) and SR-111 (an eligible state scenic highway), County-eligible scenic highways are located in the Project area and provide opportunities to motorists for scenic views (Figure 4a). Motorists on SR-62, SR-111, I-10, and local roads are provided opportunities for scenic views of the Coachella Valley landscape and surrounding mountainous terrain. As viewed from the southbound travel lanes of SR-62, the new wind turbines on the Project site would not interrupt or obstruct the existing long views of the Coachella Valley available to the southeast and east. Due to the location of the Project site and setbacks of new wind turbines from SR-62, new wind turbines would not be viewed in line with San Jacinto Peak, a prominent visual resource in the Project region. Additionally, as viewed from SR-111, new wind turbines on the Project site would be compatible with existing wind energy facilities in northwestern Coachella Valley. Further, because modern wind turbine development is a familiar element in the existing viewshed, the Project would not have a substantial effect upon a scenic highway corridor within which the Project is located, nor would it have an adverse effect on existing views available from either Old Morongo Road or Whitewater Canyon Drive.

Regarding recreational receptors in the Project area, the visual landscape throughout the Project area has been previously altered by existing commercial wind facilities (including those wind turbines currently located on and adjacent to the Project site). As such, large existing wind turbines are commonplace elements in the trail and recreational experience.

From residential properties in the Bonnie Bell area to the west of the Project site, the higher elevation terrain to the east of Whitewater River and tall and dense vegetation within and adjacent to the Whitewater River floodplain obscure views of the site (Figures 4h, 4j, and 4l). Private yard landscaping also aids in the screening of the Project site from residential properties in Bonnie Bell. The natural vegetation and private yard landscaping is concentrated around the handful of homes in the community of Bonnie Bell that are generally located east of Whitewater Canyon Road and approximately 1.6 miles north of Whitewater Cutoff. Although existing wind turbine tower sections, hubs, and blades are visible from Whitewater Canyon Road to the north and south of Bonnie Bell, these features are generally blocked from view on residential properties by intervening vegetation and terrain. The new wind turbines on the Project site would be setback from the rocky and mountainous horizontal ridgeline that rises to the east above Bonnie Bell and Whitewater Canyon and would be partially obscured from view (Figures 4i, 4k, and 4m).

Similarly, for those residents living in the Painted Hills area, although the massing and scale of the new wind turbines would be noticeably larger than the existing wind turbines on the Project site, the new wind turbines would generally display a similar massing and scale as other modern wind turbine development in the Project area, including the newer commercial wind facility southeast of the site. Specifically, the modern wind turbine development dots the landscape to the south and southeast of the Project site and is visible from Old Morongo Road and nearby 16th Avenue (Figures 4d and 4e). As a result, the anticipated massing and scale contrast between the existing wind turbines on the Project site and the new wind turbines would be tempered by the presence of existing modern wind turbine development in the Project area. Additionally, the Project proposes light grey turbine finish and is conditioned to provide color and finish samples prior to building permit issuance as indicated by COA Planning 80-1 – Color and Finish.

Overall, the new wind turbines would not substantially obstruct or interrupt existing views to mountain peaks available to highway motorists and would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings and unique or landmark features; obstruct any prominent scenic vista or view open to the public; or result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view. The installation of up to 14 new wind turbines on a Project site currently developed with approximately 291 wind turbines, within a region that has been previously developed with wind turbines, would not result in substantial damage to existing scenic resources. Therefore, impacts associated with scenic resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>2. Mt. Palomar Observatory</b>				
a) Interfere with the nighttime use of the Mt. Palomar Observatory, as protected through Riverside County Ordinance No. 655?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source: Geographic Information system (GIS) database; County of Riverside Ordinance No. 655 (Regulating Light Pollution).

**Findings of Fact:**

a) The Project site is located approximately 40 miles from the Palomar Observatory and is located within Zone B as identified by the Mt. Palomar Lighting Ordinance No. 655 (Zone B encompasses a 45-mile radius around the Observatory). Due to the presence of intervening natural topography and human-made development, the Project site is not within the immediate viewshed of the observatory; notwithstanding, the Project would still be conditioned to comply with Ordinance No. 655 as indicated by AND Planning 12 – Mt. Palomar Lighting Area.

In addition, as indicated by AND Planning 6 – FAA Rules Compliance, on-site nighttime lighting associated with the Project would be limited to FAA-required obstruction lighting, which consists of slowly pulsing red lights affixed atop some of the new wind turbines. Such lighting would be intermittent and would not be required on every wind turbine. Although the FAA has yet to determine which of the new wind turbines will require obstruction lighting, it is estimated that the between 4 and 10 of the wind turbines would include lighting. Based on the distance between the Project site and Palomar Observatory, no adverse effects on the observatory are expected. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>3. Other Lighting Issues</b>				
a) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Expose residential property to unacceptable light levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** Visual Resources Study (Appendix A).

**Findings of Fact:**

a-b) Due to their proposed height, some of the new wind turbines and met towers installed on the Project site would be affixed with FAA obstruction lighting. The obstruction lights would alert aircraft pilots to the presence of particularly tall objects on the Project site. The addition of slowly pulsing red lights affixed atop some of the new wind turbines installed on the Project site would represent increased color contrast when compared to existing conditions. Obstruction lighting would also be a regular source of nighttime lighting in the area that could be received at nearby residences, the closest of which is located approximately 2,400 feet from the nearest proposed wind turbine on the Project site.

While obstruction lighting would operate near residential uses, existing wind turbine development is prevalent in the Project area, along the I-10 corridor, and along the southern segment of the SR-62 corridor. Existing wind turbines located near both the Project site and the Painted Hills area include wind turbines with FAA-required obstruction lights. Thus, the addition of the new wind turbines with obstruction lights would not represent a new, previously unrepresented source of nighttime lighting in the Project area.



In terms of glare, support poles associated with the approximately 0.25-mile long overhead transmission line associated with Option 2 would be constructed of wood or steel. At certain times of the day and depending on the angle of the sun and inbound light, steel support poles may reflect inbound sunlight and create perceptible glare in the surrounding area. However, several existing electrical distribution and transmission lines supported by similar steel materials and located in the Project area. As such, the installation of a limited number of steel support poles and an associated transmission line in an area that currently supports similar uses would not represent a new, previously unrepresented source of daytime glare in the Project area. In addition, the Project will comply with AND Planning 9 – Lighting Hooded & Directed, as well as AND Planning 6 – FAA Rules Compliance. Therefore, impacts associated with nighttime lighting and daytime glare would be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>AGRICULTURE &amp; FOREST RESOURCES Would the Project</b>				
<b>4. Agriculture</b>				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing agricultural zoning, agricultural use or with land subject to a Williamson Act contract or land within a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Cause development of non-agricultural uses within 300 feet of agriculturally zoned property (Ordinance No. 625 "Right-to-Farm")?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** Riverside County General Plan, Figure OS-2, Agricultural Resources; Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program Important Farmland Finder; Riverside County Williamson Act FY 2015/2016 (Sheet 1 of 3) Map.

**Findings of Fact:**

a-d) The existing Project site is currently used as a commercial wind energy facility and is zoned W-E. The Project site is not located on or adjacent to any lands identified by the state as Important Farmland or by the County as a locally important agricultural resource, and no agricultural operations occur in the Project area. In addition, the Project site is not under a Williamson Act contract. The Project site would continue to support a commercial wind energy facility and would not impact the ability of any distant agricultural businesses to continue operations as normal. Therefore, no impacts to agriculture resources would occur.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>5. Forest</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
a) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4525), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Govt. Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** Riverside County General Plan, Figure OS-3a, Forestry Resources Western Riverside County Parks, Forests, and Recreation Areas; Figure OS-3b, Forestry Resources Eastern Riverside County Parks, Forests, and Recreation Areas.

**Findings of Fact:**

**a-c)** The existing Project site is currently used as a commercial wind energy facility and is zoned W-E. No forestland or timberland occurs on the Project site, and the Project would not impact the ability of any distant timberland production businesses to operate. Therefore, no impacts to forestland or timberland resources would occur.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>AIR QUALITY Would the Project</b>				
<b>6. Air Quality Impacts</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a) Conflict with or obstruct Implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors which are located within 1 mile of the Project site to project substantial point source emissions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Involve the construction of a sensitive receptor located within one mile of an existing substantial point source emitter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Report (Appendix B).

Findings of Fact:

**a) Conflict with Applicable Air Quality Plan**

The Project site is located within the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB) under the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), which is the local agency responsible for the administration and enforcement of air quality regulations for the area. The SCAQMD has established the following criteria for determining consistency with the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), which is currently in the 2016 AQMP, in Chapter 12, Sections 12.2 and 12.3, in the SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook:

Consistency Criterion No. 1 states that a proposed project would not result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or cause or contribute to new violations or delay the timely attainment of air quality standards of the interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP. As address below, the Project would not result in an exceedance of SCAQMD thresholds for any criteria air pollutant during either Project construction or operations. Therefore, the Project would not result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations and would not conflict with Consistency Criterion No. 1 of the SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook.

Consistency Criterion No. 2 states the Project would not exceed the assumptions in the AQMP or increments based on the year of Project buildout and phase. While striving to achieve the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) and particulate matter less than or equal to 2.5 microns in diameter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and the Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) for O<sub>3</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub> through a variety of air quality control measures, the 2016 AQMP also accommodates planned growth in the SSAB. Proposed projects are considered consistent with and would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the AQMP if the growth in socioeconomic factors (e.g., population and employment) is consistent with the underlying regional plans used to develop the AQMP (per Consistency Criterion No. 2 of the SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook). The Project is located entirely within the W-E zone. County Code of Ordinances Title 17, Section 17.2(D), specifies the uses permitted in the W-E zone as follows: "Commercial wind energy conversion system (WECS) and WECS arrays with no limit as to rated power output are permitted provided a commercial WECS permit has been granted pursuant to the provisions of Section 18.41 of this ordinance."

The County Zoning Ordinance, Section 18.41, codifies requirements for commercial WECS. As described in Section 18.41a(2), WECS arrays having a total power output of more than 100 kW are permitted in the W-E zone, provided a commercial WECS permit is granted pursuant to the County Zoning Ordinance, Section 18.41. Thus, the Project is consistent with the zoning of the Project site. Additionally, the Project would not directly or indirectly promote population growth or increase trips in the region. Therefore, the Project would not exceed the assumptions of the 2016 AQMP and the Project would meet Consistency Criterion No. 2 of the SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook.

Based on these considerations, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the AQMP.

**b) Violate Air Quality Standard**

Project construction would result in the temporary addition of pollutants to the local airshed caused by on-site sources (i.e., off-road construction equipment and soil disturbance) and off-site sources (i.e., on-road haul trucks, vendor trucks, and worker vehicle trips). Construction emissions were

calculated for the estimated worst-case day over the construction period associated with each phase and reported as the maximum daily emissions estimated during each year of construction (2018 through 2020).

Construction of the Project would generate air pollutant emissions from entrained dust, off-road equipment, and vehicle emissions. Entrained dust results from the exposure of earth surfaces to wind from the direct disturbance and movement of soil, resulting in PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions. The Project would be required to comply with SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1 to control dust emissions generated during the grading activities. Standard construction practices that would be employed to reduce fugitive dust emissions include watering of the active sites three times per day depending on weather conditions. The Project would also employ an off-road speed limit of 15 miles per hour. Internal combustion engines used by construction equipment, vendor trucks (i.e., delivery trucks), and worker vehicles would result in emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

As provided in the Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Report (Appendix B) and summarized in Table 1, the estimated daily emissions generated during Project construction would not exceed SCAQMD Thresholds for VOC, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, SO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, or PM<sub>2.5</sub>. Construction-generated emissions would be temporary and would not represent a long-term source of criteria air pollutant emissions. Therefore, impacts related to construction emissions exceeding regional thresholds would be less than significant.

**Table 1**  
**Estimated Maximum Daily Construction Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions**

Year	VOC	NO <sub>x</sub>	CO	SO <sub>x</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub>	PM <sub>2.5</sub>
	Pounds per Day					
2018	5.71	48.94	37.43	0.08	41.28	6.51
2019	8.50	88.91	51.73	0.11	52.77	11.52
2020	4.58	40.51	35.39	0.08	40.13	5.80
Maximum Daily Emissions	8.50	88.91	51.73	0.11	52.77	11.52
SCAQMD Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Notes: VOC = volatile organic compound; NO<sub>x</sub> = oxides of nitrogen; CO = carbon monoxide; SO<sub>x</sub> = sulfur oxides; PM<sub>10</sub> = coarse particulate matter; PM<sub>2.5</sub> = fine particulate matter; SCAQMD = South Coast Air Quality Management District.

See Appendix B for complete results.

The values shown are the maximum summer or winter daily emissions results from the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod). These emissions reflect CalEEMod "mitigated" output, which accounts for compliance with SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1 (Fugitive Dust), including watering of the Project site and unpaved roads three times per day, and restricting vehicle speed on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour.

#### **c) Cumulatively Considerable Net Increase in Criteria Pollutant**

If a project's emissions would exceed the SCAQMD significance thresholds, it would be considered to have a cumulatively considerable contribution. Conversely, projects that do not exceed the project-specific thresholds are generally not considered to be cumulatively significant. The SSAB has been designated as a federal and state nonattainment area for O<sub>3</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>. The nonattainment status is the result of cumulative emissions from various sources of air pollutants and their precursors within the SSAB, including motor vehicles, off-road equipment, and commercial and industrial facilities. Construction of the Project would generate VOC and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions (which are precursors to O<sub>3</sub>) and emissions of PM<sub>10</sub>. However, as presented in Table 1, Project-generated construction emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD emission-based significance thresholds for VOC, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, SO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, or PM<sub>2.5</sub>. Similarly, because Project operations would consist of O&M



activities that are almost identical to existing O&M activities, the Project would not generate an increase in emissions during operations.

In regards to potential cumulative localized impacts, future projects would be subject to CEQA and would require air quality analysis and, where necessary, mitigation if the project would exceed SCAQMD thresholds. Identical to the Project, criteria air pollutant emissions associated with construction activity of future projects would be reduced through implementation of control measures required by the SCAQMD. Cumulative PM<sub>10</sub> emissions would be reduced because all future projects would be subject to SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1 (Fugitive Dust), which sets forth general and specific requirements for all construction sites in the SCAQMD.

Based on the previous considerations, the Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions of nonattainment pollutants.

#### **d-e) Expose Sensitive Receptors**

##### **Localized Significance Thresholds Analysis**

Sensitive receptors are those individuals more susceptible to the effects of air pollution than the population at large. The nearest sensitive-receptor land use (an existing residential use) is located approximately 600 feet from the closest area of construction disturbance. As such, the localized significance threshold (LST) receptor distance was assumed to be 328 feet (100 meters).

An LST analysis has been prepared to determine potential impacts to nearby sensitive receptors during Project construction. As indicated in the discussion of the thresholds of significance (Section 2.4, Significance Criteria and Methodology), the SCAQMD also recommends the evaluation of localized nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), CO, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub> impacts as a result of construction activities to sensitive receptors in the immediate vicinity of the Project site. The impacts were analyzed using methods consistent with those in the SCAQMD's *Final Localized Significance Threshold Methodology* (2009). According to the *Final Localized Significance Threshold Methodology*, "off-site mobile emissions from the Project should not be included in the emissions compared to the LSTs" (SCAQMD, 2009). Hauling of soils and construction materials associated with the Project construction are not expected to cause substantial air quality impacts to sensitive receptors along off-site roadways. Emissions from the trucks would be relatively brief in nature and would cease once the trucks pass through the main streets.

Construction activities would result in temporary sources of on-site fugitive dust and construction equipment emissions. The maximum allowable daily emissions that would satisfy the SCAQMD localized significance criteria are presented in Table 2 and compared to the maximum daily on-site emissions generated by Project construction. As shown in Table 2, construction activities would not generate emissions in excess of site-specific LSTs. Therefore, health impacts associated with LSTs would be less than significant.

**Table 2**  
**Localized Significance Thresholds Analysis for Project Construction**

Maximum On-Site Emissions	NO <sub>2</sub>	CO	PM <sub>10</sub>	PM <sub>2.5</sub>
	Pounds per Day			
Construction Emissions	73.20	45.99	13.69	8.73
SCAQMD LST	238	2,565	35	10
LST Exceeded?	No	No	No	No

Source: SCAQMD 2009.

Notes: NO<sub>2</sub> = nitrogen dioxide; CO = carbon monoxide; PM<sub>10</sub> = coarse particulate matter; PM<sub>2.5</sub> = fine particulate matter; SCAQMD = South Coast Air Quality Management District; LST = localized significance threshold

See Appendix B for detailed results.

LSTs are shown for 1-acre sites corresponding to a distance to a sensitive receptor of 100 meters.

These estimates reflect control of fugitive dust required by SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1, including watering of the Project site and unpaved roads three times per day and restricting vehicle speed on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour.

#### Health Impacts of Toxic Air Contaminants

In addition to impacts from criteria pollutants, Project impacts may include emissions of pollutants identified by the state and federal government as toxic air contaminants (TACs). The greatest potential for TAC emissions during construction would be diesel particulate matter (DPM) emissions from heavy equipment operations and heavy-duty trucks during Project construction and the associated health impacts to sensitive receptors. The closest sensitive receptors would be residents approximately 600 feet from the closest area of construction disturbance. As presented in Table 2, maximum daily particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> or PM<sub>2.5</sub>) emissions generated by construction equipment operation and from hauling of soil during grading (exhaust particulate matter, or DPM), combined with fugitive dust generated by equipment operation, would be well below the SCAQMD significance thresholds. Project operations would also not emit any new TAC emissions, given that Project operations would consist of O&M activities that are almost identical to existing O&M activities. Therefore, health impacts associated with TACs would be less than significant.

#### Health Impacts of Carbon Monoxide

Mobile source impacts occur on two scales of motion. Regionally, Project-related vehicle trips could add to regional trip generation and increase the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) within the local airshed and the SSAB. Locally, Project-generated traffic would be added to the County's roadway system near the Project site during Project construction. If such traffic occurs during periods of poor atmospheric ventilation, is composed of a large number of vehicles "cold-started" and operating at pollution-inefficient speeds, and is operating on roadways already crowded with non-Project traffic, there is a potential for the formation of microscale CO hotspots in the area immediately around points of congested traffic.

The Project would have trip generation associated with construction worker vehicles and vendor trucks. Total average AADT for the Project during construction is estimated to be 105 per day at its peak. This AADT represents only a nominal percentage of the AADT on nearby highways, including HWY 10, which supports an AADT of 88,000 trips, and HWY 62, which experiences an AADT of 20,000 trips. The California Code of Regulations, 40 CFR 93.123(c)(5), Procedures for Determining Localized CO, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub> Concentrations (hot-spot analysis), states that CO, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub> hot-spot analyses are not required to consider construction-related activities, which cause temporary increases in emissions. Because the Project would not result in long-term operational vehicular trips, an operational CO hotspot evaluation is also not required. Therefore, health impacts associated with CO would be less than significant.

#### Health Impacts of Other Criteria Air Pollutants

Project construction and operations would result in emissions that would not exceed the SCAQMD thresholds for criteria air pollutants including VOC, CO, sulfur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>), PM<sub>10</sub>, or PM<sub>2.5</sub>. VOCs would be associated with motor vehicles and construction equipment. However, as presented in Table 1, Project-generated VOC emissions would not result in the exceedances of the SCAQMD thresholds. VOCs and NO<sub>x</sub> are precursors to O<sub>3</sub>, for which the SSAB is designated as nonattainment with respect to the NAAQS and CAAQS. The VOC and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions associated with Project construction could minimally contribute to regional O<sub>3</sub> concentrations and the associated health impacts. Nonetheless, as emissions thresholds were not exceeded for either pollutant, health effects would be considered less than significant.

Additionally, Project construction would not exceed thresholds for PM<sub>10</sub> and would be required to comply with SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1, which limits the amount of fugitive dust generated during construction activities. Due to the minimal contribution of particulate matter during construction, health impacts would be considered less than significant. Further, Project construction would not contribute to exceedances of the NAAQS and CAAQS for NO<sub>2</sub>. Project construction would be relatively short term, and off-road construction equipment would be operating at various portions of the alignment and would not be concentrated in one portion of the Project site at any one time. In addition, the Project grading will comply with an approved PM<sub>10</sub> Dust Control Plan and as indicated by Dust Summarization Plan dated June 15, 2018. Therefore, health impacts associated with NO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> would be less than significant.

#### Exposure to Valley Fever

Valley fever is not highly endemic to the County, and within the County, the incident rate in Desert Hot Springs is very low, accounting for only 0.9% of the County's incidents in 2015 (Appendix B). The Project would also employ dust mitigation measures by watering three times per day and limiting speed on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour. The Project would also be constructed in accordance with the SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1, which limit the amount of fugitive dust generated during construction. As previously mentioned, the nearest sensitive-receptor land use (an existing residential use) is located approximately 600 feet from the closest area of disturbance. Therefore, health impacts associated with Valley Fever exposure would be less than significant.

#### **f) Objectionable Odor**

Odors would be potentially generated from vehicles and equipment exhaust emissions during Project construction. Potential odors produced during construction would be attributable to concentrations of unburned hydrocarbons from tailpipes of construction equipment. Such odors would disperse rapidly from the Project site and generally occur at magnitudes that would not affect substantial numbers of people. Further, Project operations do not include uses or activities associated with the creation of objectionable odors. Therefore, impacts associated with the generation of objectionable odors would be less than significant.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES</b> Would the Project				
<b>7. Wildlife &amp; Vegetation</b>				
a) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any endangered, or threatened species, as listed in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (Sections 670.2 or 670.5) or in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (Sections 17.11 or 17.12)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U. S. Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: Biological Resources Assessment and Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) Consistency Analysis (Appendix C).

**Findings of Fact:**

a-f) A literature review was conducted to assist in determining the existence or potential occurrence of special-interest plant and animal species within the Survey Area and in the Project vicinity. A records search of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database Rarefind 5 (2018) and California Native Plant Society's (CNPS's) Online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (v7-18) for the Desert Hot Springs, California, and Whitewater, California, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangles and relevant neighboring quadrangles was conducted on May 23, 2017. A review of the Final Recirculated CVMSHCP (CVAG, 2007) was also



conducted in order to determine CVMSHCP consistency and conservation measures that apply to the Project and to reference vegetation types within the Survey Area. GIS software was used to map the Project location, habitat types, and land uses.

A general field survey within the approximately 492-acre Survey Area was conducted on March 1, 2018. Weather conditions consisted of clear skies, temperatures ranging from 52 to 66 degrees Fahrenheit, and winds ranging from seven to 15 miles per hour. The entire Survey Area was surveyed on foot. Notes were taken on general site conditions, vegetation, and suitability of habitat for various special-interest elements. All plant and animal species observed or otherwise detected during this field survey were noted and are listed in the Biological Resources Assessment and CVMSHCP Consistency Analysis (Appendix C). Appendix C also provides a summary of the special-interest plant and animal species potentially present within the Survey Area.

#### **Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan**

The Project is within the area covered by the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). The CVMSHCP is a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional habitat conservation plan focusing on conservation of species and their associated habitats in the Coachella Valley region of the County. The overall goal of the CVMSHCP is to maintain and enhance biological diversity and ecosystem processes within the region while allowing for future economic growth. The CVMSHCP covers 27 sensitive plant and wildlife species (Covered Species), as well as 27 natural communities. Covered Species include listed and non-listed species that are adequately conserved by the CVMSHCP. The overall provisions for the plan are subdivided according to specific resource conservation goals that have been organized according to geographic areas defined as Conservation Areas. These areas are identified for sensitive plant, invertebrate, amphibian, reptile, bird, mammal species, and the following:

- **Core Habitat:** The areas identified in the plan for a given species that are composed of a habitat patch or aggregation of habitat patches that (1) are of sufficient size to support a self-sustaining population of that species, (2) are not fragmented in a way to cause separation into isolated populations, (3) have functional essential ecological processes, and (4) have effective biological corridors and/or linkages to other habitats, where feasible, to allow gene flow among populations and to promote movement of large predators.
- **Essential Habitat:** Certain lands delineated in the Recovery Plan for Bighorn Sheep in the Peninsular Ranges, California (USFWS, 2000).
- **Other Conserved Habitat:** Part of a Conservation Area that does not contain core habitat for a given species, but which still has conservation value. These values may include essential ecological processes, biological corridors, linkages, buffering from edge effects, enhanced species persistence probability in proximate core habitat, genetic diversity, recolonization potential, and flexibility in the event of long-term habitat change.
- **Essential Ecological Process Areas:** Processes that maintain specific habitat types and are necessary to sustain the habitat (in a state usable by Covered Species). Essential ecological processes may include abiotic hydrological processes (both subsurface and surface); erosion; deposition; blow-sand movement; substrate development and soil formation; and disturbance regimes such as flooding and fire; and biotic processes such as reproduction, pollination, dispersal, and migration.
- **Biological Corridors:** Wildlife movement area that is constrained by existing development, freeways, or other impediments.
- **Biological Linkages:** Habitat that provides for the occupancy of Covered Species and their movement between larger blocks of habitat over time, potentially over a period of generations. In general, linkages are large enough to include adequate habitat to support small populations of the species and, thus, do not require that an individual of the species transit the entire linkage

to maintain gene flow between populations. What functions as a linkage for one species may provide only a biological corridor or no value for other species.

Each Conservation Area has specific conservation objectives that must be satisfied. Those conservation objectives include how the plan would accomplish the protection of core habitat, essential ecological processes, biological corridors, and linkages in the CVMSHCP Reserve System to ensure that the Covered Species are adequately conserved. The Conservation Area conservation goals are also designed to ensure the persistence of natural communities. The Project is a covered activity under Section 7.3.1 of the CVMSHCP as follows:

New ground disturbance associated with repowering or development of new wind energy facilities shall be treated as a Covered Activity similar to development projects permitted or approved by Local Permittees. Within each Permittee's jurisdiction, existing wind turbines may be replaced with new turbines. If old turbines are removed and the former impact area is restored to a natural condition, an equal new area may be disturbed without counting toward the calculation of net disturbance.

**CVMSHCP Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Conservation Area**

The Survey Area is located entirely within the boundaries of the CVMSHCP. Specifically, the Survey Area lies within the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area (Conservation Area). Within the Conservation Area, the Project would permanently impact approximately 36.33 acres.

Core habitat, other conserved habitat, and essential ecological processes are discussed below as they pertain to the Project:

**Core Habitat.** Core habitat for the Mohave Desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) lies within the Survey Area. The population of Mohave Desert tortoise within the Conservation Area is considered to be connected to a larger viable population stretching southwest into the Whitewater Canyon Conservation Area and eastward through the Little San Bernardino Mountains into the Joshua Tree National Park Conservation Area.

The CVMSHCP conservation objective for core habitat within this Conservation Area includes conservation of at least 7,936 acres in the unincorporated portion of the County. Individual Mohave Desert tortoises shall be protected within the area when allowed development occurs.

Per the CVMSHCP, because the Survey Area contains potentially suitable habitat for the Mohave Desert tortoise, a pre-construction survey for this species would be required prior to any ground-disturbing activities. Because the Project may affect Mohave Desert tortoise, a streamlined federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) Section 7 consultation in accordance with the CVMSHCP is recommended for potential Project-related effects to the Mohave Desert tortoise. During construction-related activities, contractors would comply with the avoidance and minimization measures contained in the CVMSHCP protocol.

**Other Conserved Habitat.** Other Conserved Habitat for the Coachella Valley milkvetch (*Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *coachellae*) and Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket (*Stenopelmatus calhouni*) is present within the Survey Area. The CVMSHCP conservation objective for Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket within this Conservation Area includes conservation of at least 419 acres of Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket habitat in the County portion of the area. No specific conservation objectives for the Coachella Valley milkvetch are included in this Conservation Area.

Based on analysis by the CVCC, conducted during the Joint Project Review (JPR) process, the Project as proposed will place the CVMSHCP Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Conservation

Area out of Rough Step in regards to Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket habitat conservation. In order to mitigate this, Riverside County will condition the Project to restore, at minimum, 3.74 acres of the new temporary disturbance found in Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket habitat on the Project site, thereby reducing the permanent impacted habitat area to 0.23 acres. Pursuant to a Project condition, the Project Applicant will submit a Restoration Plan for the Project site to Riverside County, to be approved by both the County and CVCC prior to any ground disturbance. While CVCC is in the process of pursuing acquisition of the habitat type in other areas of the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Conservation Area to meet Rough Step, the Project Applicant will still be responsible for the restoration of 3.74 acres to address the issue of Rough Step. The condition will stipulate that if restoration does not occur to the satisfaction of County of Riverside and CVCC, a Transfer of Conservation Goals associated with Conservation Objectives pursuant to Minor Amendments under Section 6.12.3 of the CVMSHCP may be possible, but would require approval by the applicable wildlife agencies.

**Essential Ecological Processes.** The Survey Area includes sand source and the upper part of the fluvial sand transport system that provides blowsand to the Willow Hole Preserve and, to some extent, to the Whitewater Floodplain Preserve. Mission Creek and Morongo Wash, fed by Dry Morongo Canyon, Big Morongo Canyon, and Little Morongo Canyon, convey sediment from the San Bernardino and Little San Bernardino Mountains during storm events. The sediments are deposited in a broad area below the San Andreas Fault, where blowsand habitat is formed and where strong winds carry the sediment eastward to the existing Willow Hole Preserve.

The CVMSHCP conservation objectives for sand source and fluvial sand transport within this Conservation Area include conservation of at least 6,488 acres of sand source in the County portion subject to natural erosion processes and conservation of at least 1,259 acres of fluvial sand transport in the County portion.

The Project would avoid impacts to sand source within the Survey Area with the removal of approximately 291 existing turbines, which would create a net increase in sand source and provide additional blow-sand to the Willow Hole and Whitewater Floodplain Preserves. Additionally, the Project would avoid altering the drainages found within the Survey Area resulting in no effect on processes that are responsible for fluvial sand transport.

#### **Special-Status Species**

This section discusses special-status species observed or potentially occurring within the limits of the Survey Area. Legal protection for special-interest species varies widely, from the comprehensive protection extended to listed threatened/endangered species, to no legal interest at present. The CDFW, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), local agencies, and special-interest groups such as the CNPS, publish watch lists of declining species. Species on watch lists can be included as part of the special-interest species assessment. Species that are candidates for state and/or federal listing and species on watch lists are included in the special-interest species list. Inclusion of species described in the special-interest species analysis is based on the following criteria:

- Direct observation of the species or its sign in the Survey Area or immediate vicinity during previous biological studies
- Sighting by other qualified observers
- Record reported by the California Natural Diversity Database, published by the CDFW
- Presence or location information for specific species provided by private groups (e.g., CNPS)
- Survey Area within known distribution of a given species and contains appropriate habitat

The special-interest species analysis revealed 44 special-interest species with the potential to occur within the limits of the Survey Area. Appendix C lists these species with a data summary and determination of the likelihood of each species occurring on the Survey Area.

#### Threatened/Endangered Species

The following 11 federally/state-listed species and candidates for listing were identified as potentially present (Appendix C) in the Project vicinity:

- Coachella Valley milkvetch: Federally listed endangered and CVMSHCP Covered Species
- Triple-ribbed milkvetch (*Astragalus tricarlinatus*): Federally listed endangered and CVMSHCP Covered Species
- Slender-horned spineflower (*Dodecahema leptoceras*): Federally and state-listed endangered
- Casey's June beetle (*Dinacoma caseyi*): Federally listed endangered
- California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*): Federally listed threatened
- Sierra Madre yellow-legged frog (*Rana muscosa*): Federally and state-listed endangered
- Mohave Desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*): Federally and state-listed threatened and CVMSHCP Covered Species
- Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard (*Uma inornata*): Federally listed threatened, state-listed endangered, and CVMSHCP Covered Species
- Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*): California fully protected species
- Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*): Federally and state-listed endangered and CVMSHCP Covered Species
- Peninsular bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsonii*) (peninsular Distinct Population Segment): Federally listed endangered and state-listed threatened, California fully protected species, and CVMSHCP Covered Species

Habitat within the Survey Area is considered unsuitable for seven of the 11 species identified above. The Survey Area provides moderate quality habitat for Mohave Desert tortoise, and low-quality habitat for Coachella Valley milkvetch and triple-ribbed milkvetch. Additionally, low-quality foraging habitat for the golden eagle is present within the Survey Area.

#### Mohave Desert Tortoise

A pre-construction survey for this species would be required prior to any ground-disturbing activities. Because the Project may affect Mohave Desert tortoise, a streamlined FESA Section 7 consultation in accordance with the CVMSHCP is recommended for potential Project-related effects to the Mohave Desert tortoise. During construction-related activities, contractors would comply with the avoidance and minimization measures contained in the CVMSHCP protocol.

#### Non-Listed Special-Interest Species

Of the 33 other non-listed special-interest species identified and discussed in Appendix C, eight are considered absent based on lack of suitable habitat, 17 are considered to have a low probability of occurrence, and eight species are considered to have a moderate probability for occurrence. The following non-listed special-interest species have a moderate probability to occur within the Survey Area:

- Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus (*Linanthus maculatus* (*Gilia maculata*))
- Desert beardtongue (*Penstemon pseudospectabilis* ssp. *pseudospectabilis*)
- Coachella giant sand treader cricket (*Macrobaenetes valgum*)
- Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket
- Orangethroat whiptail (*Aspidoscelis hyperythra*)
- Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*)
- Prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*)
- Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)



The Project as proposed will place the CVMSHCP Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Conservation Area out of Rough Step in regards to Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket habitat conservation. In order to mitigate this, Riverside County will condition the Project to restore, at minimum, 3.74 acres of the new temporary disturbance found in Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket habitat on the Project site, thereby reducing the permanent impacted habitat area to 0.23 acres. Pursuant to a Project condition, the Project Applicant will submit a Restoration Plan for the Project site to Riverside County, to be approved by both the County and CVCC prior to any ground disturbance. While CVCC is in the process of pursuing acquisition of the habitat type in other areas of the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Conservation Area to meet Rough Step, the Project Applicant will still be responsible for the restoration of 3.74 acres to address the issue of Rough Step. The condition will stipulate that if restoration does not occur to the satisfaction of County of Riverside and CVCC, a Transfer of Conservation Goals associated with Conservation Objectives pursuant to Minor Amendments under Section 6.12.3 of the CVMSHCP may be possible, but would require approval by the applicable wildlife agencies.

#### *Nesting Birds Species*

Nesting bird species, including special-interest species identified in Appendix C, with potential to occur (i.e., prairie falcon, burrowing owl, and loggerhead shrike) are protected by California Fish and Game Code, Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3800, and by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 USC 703-711). These laws regulate the take, possession, or destruction of the nest or eggs of any migratory bird or bird of prey. However, the USFWS has recently determined that the MBTA should apply only to "affirmative actions that have as their purpose the taking or killing of migratory birds, their nests, or their eggs" and would not be applied to incidental take of migratory birds pursuant to otherwise lawful activities.

The 33 special-interest species identified in Appendix C as having a low to high probability of occurrence in the Survey Area have limited population distribution in Southern California, and development is further reducing their ranges and numbers. These species have no official state or federal protection status, but they merit consideration under CEQA. The Project is not anticipated to have a substantial effect on these non-listed special-interest species.

In addition, to ensure compliance with California Fish and Game Code and to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds, it is recommended that the vegetation removal activities be conducted outside the general bird nesting season (January 15 through August 31). If vegetation cannot be removed outside the bird nesting season, a pre-construction nesting bird survey by an Acceptable Biologist is required prior to vegetation removal (Mitigation Measure (MM)-BIO-1).

#### *Burrowing Owl*

A pre-construction burrowing owl survey would be required in the Conservation Area using an accepted protocol (as determined by the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) in coordination with the permittees and the Wildlife Agencies). Prior to construction, an Acceptable Biologist would survey the construction area including a 500-foot buffer, or to the edge of the property if less than 500 feet, for burrows that could be used by burrowing owl. If a burrow is located, the Acceptable Biologist would determine whether an owl is present in the burrow. If the burrow is determined to be occupied, the burrow would be flagged, and a 160-foot buffer during the non-breeding season or a 250-foot buffer during the breeding season or a buffer to the edge of the property boundary if less than 500 feet would be established around the burrow. The buffer would be staked and flagged. No development activities would be permitted within the buffer until the young are no longer dependent on the burrow.

#### Avian Use Studies

Golden eagle occupancy and productivity surveys were conducted in 2011 within a 10-nautical-mile spatial buffer of the Project (Appendix C) for a similar project that was located within the boundaries of

the Painted Hills Survey Area. The survey is still considered relevant and adequate because the Survey Areas overlap.

Six golden eagle nests, composed of three territories, were documented with core nesting areas within the Project area's spatial buffer; two were documented to be active for the 2011 breeding season, one of which produced a total of two young. Additionally during additional surveys, three golden eagles, one American kestrel (*Falco sparverius sparverius*), 35 common ravens (*Corvus corax*), four great horned owls (*Bubo virginianus*), two peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*), three prairie falcons, 13 red-tailed hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*), seven Swainson's hawks (*Buteo swainsoni*), a turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), and an unidentified falcon (*Falco* sp.) were observed, making up a total of 83 unique wildlife documentations (Appendix C).

An avian use memorandum was prepared by CH2M Hill (Appendix C) for a similar project within the Survey Area. The memorandum analyzed multiple surveys conducted at various wind turbine facilities within the vicinity of the San Geronio Pass area. The memorandum concluded that the location of the Project in a mid-elevation area, its proximity to recently studied sites with estimated low avian risks, the siting of wind turbines away from open water and riparian vegetation, and the use of tubular monopole tower design that eliminates perching attractants associated with lattice structures and guy wires, constitutes a project designed to avoid impacts to avian species (Appendix C). The current Project description proposes tubular monopole towers and a large reduction in the number of proposed turbines that would reduce risks to avian species by reducing the total rotor-swept area, reducing rotor speeds, and increasing turbine spacing within the site.

Based on the previous studies conducted for golden eagle and general avian use and the Project design, the Project is not anticipated to result in a significant effect to avian species. Due to removal of numerous existing turbines and their replacement with fewer new turbines, avian impacts are expected to be reduced from existing conditions.

#### **Critical Habitat**

Vegetation within the Survey Area is best described as *Larrea tridentata* Shrubland Alliance (Creosote Bush Scrub). Dominant species include creosote bush, white bur-sage (*Ambrosia dumosa*), and brittle bush (*Encelia farinosa*). The Survey Area does not lie within any federally designated critical habitat.

#### **Jurisdictional Waters**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulates discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States. These waters include wetlands and non-wetland bodies of water that meet specific criteria, including a direct or indirect connection to interstate commerce. The USACE regulatory jurisdiction pursuant to Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) is founded on a connection, or nexus, between the water body in question and interstate commerce. This connection may be direct (through a tributary system linking a stream channel with traditional navigable waters used in interstate or foreign commerce), or it may be indirect (through a nexus identified in the USACE regulations). In order to be considered a jurisdictional wetland under Section 404, an area must possess three wetland characteristics, each with its unique set of mandatory wetland criteria: hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology.

The CDFW, under Sections 1600 through 1616 of the California Fish and Game Code, regulates alterations to lakes, rivers, and streams (defined by the presence of a channel bed and banks, and at least an intermittent flow of water) where fish or wildlife resources may be adversely affected.

The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) is responsible for the administration of Section 401 of the CWA. Typically, the areas subject to jurisdiction of the RWQCB coincide with those of the USACE (i.e., waters of the United States, including any wetlands). The RWQCB may also assert authority over "waters of the state" under waste discharge requirements pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Act.

Appendix C contains the detailed results of the jurisdictional delineation and assessment of jurisdictional waters prepared for this Project. Based on the results of the wetlands delineation/ jurisdictional assessment, a total of 29.35 acres of potential USACE non-wetland waters of the United States and 30.32 acres of potential CDFW streambed occur within the Survey Area.

The Project would have 0.25 acres of permanent impacts and 2.20 acres of temporary impacts to potential non-wetland USACE waters of the United States and 0.25 acres of permanent impacts and 2.20 acres of temporary impacts to CDFW streambed. The Project would not affect USACE jurisdictional wetlands waters or CDFW riparian habitat.

Project effects to jurisdictional waters would require a CWA Section 404 authorization from the USACE, a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the RWQCB, and a California Fish and Game Code Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the CDFW.

The Project is expected to be authorized under two USACE Nationwide Permits (NWP): NWP 3 for repair and rehabilitation to the access road; and NWP 51 for impacts associated with the wind turbines. NWPs are designed for projects with minimal adverse effects on the aquatic environment. NWP 3 authorizes the repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of any previously authorized, currently serviceable structure or fill, or of any currently serviceable structure or fill authorized by 33 CFR 330.3, such as roads similar to those that currently exist within the Project. NWP 51 authorizes discharges of dredged or fill material into non-tidal waters of the United States for the construction, expansion, or modification of land-based renewable energy production facilities, such as the Project. For projects in non-tidal waters, the discharge cannot cause the loss of greater than 0.50 acres of waters of the United States.

As part of the Section 401 (USACE), Section 404 (RWQCB), and Section 1600 through 1616 (CDFW) wetland permitting processes, the Project Applicant will coordinate with the USACE, CDFW, and RWQCB prior to any ground disturbance to ensure that impacts to waters of the U.S. and waters of the state are offset to the satisfaction to these resources agencies. This coordination with the USACE, CDFW, and RWQCB regarding the offsetting of Project-related effects would, in turn, assure that potential impacts are less-than-significant.

#### **Habitat Fragmentation and Wildlife Movement**

Wildlife movement and habitat fragmentation are important issues in assessing effects to wildlife. Habitat fragmentation occurs when a proposed action results in a single, unified habitat area being divided into two or more areas such that the division isolates the two new areas from each other. Isolation of habitat occurs when wildlife cannot move freely from one portion of the habitat to another or from one habitat type to another. An example is the fragmentation of habitats within and around "checkerboard" residential development. Habitat fragmentation can also occur when a portion of one or more habitats is converted into another habitat, as when scrub habitats are converted into annual grassland habitat because of frequent burning.

Although local wildlife movement may be temporarily disrupted during the vegetation removal and Project construction, this effect would be highly localized, short-term in nature and would not result in a long-term, adverse effect to wildlife movement in the Project area. In addition, the site has been developed with wind energy turbines since the mid 1980's.

#### **Local Policies and Ordinances**

With participation in the CVMSHCP, the Project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances. The Project lies within the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area of the CVMSHCP. The Project is subject to the requirements of the CVMSHCP. In particular, Section 4.4, Required Avoidance, Minimization and Mitigation Measures, of the CVMSHCP (CVCC 2016) describes

certain avoidance, minimization, and mitigation requirements for Covered Activities within the Conservation Area, in addition to Conservation Area-specific measures described in the Conservation Area subsections in Section 4.3 of the CVMSHCP. The measures described in these sections are designed assist Permittees and Project Applicants to reduce/minimize impacts to Covered Species to acceptable levels of significance. Based on the requirements in Sections 4.4 of the CVMSHCP – specifically those pertaining to Mohave Desert tortoise and burrowing owl, the Project would be consistent with the CVMSHCP.

For purposes of overseeing compliance with CVMSHCP requirements and with the Implementing Agreement (IA), a Joint Project Review (JPR) process was instituted by the CVCC for Project impacts within the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area to address temporary and permanent disturbances within the Conservation Area.

As addressed above, in order to mitigate the fact that the Project will place the CVMSHCP Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Conservation Area out of Rough Step in regards to Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket habitat conservation, Riverside County will condition the Project to restore, at minimum, 3.74 acres of the new temporary disturbance found in Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket habitat on the Project site, thereby reducing the permanent impacted habitat area to 0.23 acres. Pursuant to a Project condition, the Project Applicant will submit a Restoration Plan for the Project site to Riverside County, to be approved by both the County and CVCC prior to any ground disturbance. While CVCC is in the process of pursuing acquisition of the habitat type in other areas of the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Conservation Area to meet Rough Step, the Project Applicant will still be responsible for the restoration of 3.74 acres to address the issue of Rough Step. The condition will stipulate that if restoration does not occur to the satisfaction of County of Riverside and CVCC, a Transfer of Conservation Goals associated with Conservation Objectives pursuant to Minor Amendments under Section 6.12.3 of the CVMSHCP may be possible, but would require approval by the applicable wildlife agencies. In addition, the Project will be conditioned to pay its fair share of CVMSHCP fees in accordance with Ordinance No. 875, as indicated in COA Planning 90-2 – Ord. No. 875 CVMSHCP Fees. Upon successful completion of the JPR process, no adverse effects would occur, and impacts would be less than significant.

#### Mitigation:

**MM-BIO-1: Nesting Birds.** In conformance with the requirements of the MBTA Act and California Fish and Game Code, should vegetation clearing, cutting, or removal activities be required during the nesting season (i.e., January 1 through August 31), an Acceptable Biologist shall conduct a nesting bird survey within 72 hours of such activities. The survey shall consist of full coverage of the Project footprint and an appropriate buffer, as determined by the Biologist. If no occupied nests are found, no additional steps shall be required. If nests are found that are being used for breeding or rearing young by a native bird, the Biologist shall recommend further avoidance measures, including establishing an appropriate buffer around the occupied nest. The buffer shall be determined by the Biologist based on the species present, surrounding habitat, and existing environmental setting/level of disturbance. No construction or ground-disturbing activities shall be conducted within the buffer until the Biologist has determined that the nest is no longer being used for breeding or rearing.

**Monitoring:** A pre-construction nesting bird survey (see MM-BIO-1) is required. In addition, species-specific pre-construction monitoring is required consistent with the provisions outlined in Section 4.4 of the CVMSHCP that outline certain avoidance, minimization, and mitigation requirements for Covered Activities within the Conservation Area. These CVMSHCP requirements include, but are not limited to, the pre-construction surveys for burrowing owl and desert tortoise. If burrowing owl and/or desert tortoise are found on the Project site during the course of these surveys, additional avoidance measures would be implemented pursuant to the CVMSHCP requirements.



	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES Would the Project</b>				
<b>8. Historic Resources</b>				
a) Alter or destroy an historic site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in California Code of Regulations, Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** Cultural Resources Assessment (Appendix D).

**Findings of Fact:**

**a-b)** A records search was conducted at the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) at the Eastern Information Center (EIC). This search included mapped prehistoric, historical, and built-environment resources; Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) site records; technical reports; archival resources; and ethnographic references. Additional consulted sources included historical maps of the Project site, the NRHP, the CRHR, the California Historic Property Data File, and the lists of California State Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, and the Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility (Appendix D).

In addition to the records search, archaeologists conducted an intensive-level pedestrian survey of the Project site on March 15 and 16, 2018 and spot-checked resources previously recorded within the Project site. Portions of the Project site that might be subjected to ground disturbance were surveyed. The pedestrian survey followed standard archaeological procedures and techniques. The intensive-level survey methods consisted of a pedestrian survey conducted in parallel transects spaced no more than 15 meters apart. Deviations from transects only occurred in areas containing steep slopes, dense vegetation, or impassable natural features. Within each transect, the ground surface was examined for prehistoric artifacts (e.g., flaked stone tools, tool-making debris, stone milling tools, ceramics, fire-affected rock), soil discoloration that might indicate the presence of a cultural midden, soil depressions, features indicative of the current or former presence of structures or buildings (e.g., standing exterior walls, post holes, foundations), and historic artifacts (e.g., metal, glass, ceramics, building materials). Ground disturbances such as burrows, cut banks, and drainages were also visually inspected for exposed subsurface materials.

The records search of the Project site identified four archaeological isolates and one built environment resource. The isolates—P-33-022322, P-33-022325, P-33-022326, and P-33-022327—consist of historic-era food and beverage cans located within the Project site but not adjacent to Project activities. Isolates possess limited research potential and are not eligible for listing in either the NRHP or the CRHR.

The built environment resource—the NRHP-recommended Colorado River Aqueduct (P-33-011265; CA-RIV-6726H)—bisects the Project site from east to west. This portion of the resources consists of a subsurface water pipe. The path of this linear resource specifically underlies the internal access road and underground collection line. Consistent with general construction practices related to the avoidance of existing subsurface utilities, Project construction would ensure that excavations for the installation of the proposed subsurface collection line are shallower than this segment of the Colorado River Aqueduct. This would avoid impacts to the resource during Project construction. In addition, ongoing use and continued maintenance of the collection line and access roads, which would occur in an identical fashion compared with existing conditions associated with the active commercial wind energy facility, would not impact the Colorado River Aqueduct.

No additional cultural or built environment resources have been identified by the records search, Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File search, or the intensive pedestrian survey. Due to the steep terrain in the northern section of the Project site, the existing disturbance caused by the construction of the current commercial wind energy facility, and the minimal findings of this cultural resources assessment, the identification of cultural resources during construction is not anticipated. Therefore, impacts associated with historic resources would be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

<b>9. Archaeological Resources</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a) Alter or destroy an archaeological site.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Restrict existing religious or sacred uses within the potential impact area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** Cultural Resources Assessment (Appendix D).

#### **Findings of Fact:**

##### **a-b) Archaeological Resources**

As previously addressed, the records search of the Project site identified four archaeological isolates and one built environment resource. The isolates—P-33-022322, P-33-022325, P-33-022326, and P-33-022327—consist of historic-era food and beverage cans located within the Project site but not adjacent to Project activities. Isolates possess limited research potential and are not eligible for listing in either the NRHP or the CRHR.

The built environment resource—the NRHP-recommended Colorado River Aqueduct (P-33-011265; CA-RIV-6726H)—bisects the Project site from east to west. This portion of the resource consists of a subsurface water pipe. The path of this linear resource specifically underlies the internal access road and underground collection line. Consistent with general construction practices related to the avoidance of existing subsurface utilities, Project construction would ensure that excavations for the installation of the proposed subsurface collection line are shallower than this segment of the Colorado River Aqueduct. This would avoid impacts to the resource during Project construction. In addition, ongoing use and continued maintenance of the collection line and access roads, which would occur in an identical fashion compared with the active commercial wind energy facility, would not impact the Colorado River Aqueduct.

No additional cultural or built environment resources have been identified by the records search, NAHC Sacred Lands File search, or the intensive pedestrian survey. Due to the steep terrain in the northern section of the Project site, the existing disturbance caused by the construction of the current commercial wind energy facility, and the minimal findings of this cultural resources assessment, the identification of cultural resources during construction is not anticipated.

Notwithstanding, because there is always potential to encounter subsurface, unrecorded cultural resources during ground-disturbing construction activities, the County has conditioned the Project with

a series of COAs that would further minimize already less-than-significant impacts to archaeological resources, including COA Planning-CUL 3 – Unanticipated Resources, COA 060 - Planning-CUL 1 – Native American Monitor Required, COA 060 - Planning-CUL 2 – Project Archaeologist, COA 070 - Planning-CUL 1 – Artifact Disposition, and COA 070 - Planning-CUL 2 – Phase IV Monitoring Report. With the adherence to these conditions, impacts associated with archaeological resources would be less than significant.

**c-d) Human Remains**

No formal or informal cemeteries or burial grounds are known to be located on the Project site. However, there is always potential to encounter subsurface, unrecorded cultural resources and remains during ground-disturbing construction activities. In accordance with Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, if human remains are found, the San Bernardino County Coroner shall be notified within 24 hours of the discovery. No further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains shall occur until the County Coroner has determined, within two working days of notification of the discovery, the appropriate treatment and disposition of the human remains. If the County Coroner determines that the remains are, or are believed to be, Native American, s/he shall notify the NAHC in Sacramento within 48 hours. In accordance with California Public Resources Code, Section 5097.98, the NAHC must immediately notify those persons it believes to be the most likely descended (MLD) from the deceased Native American. The MLD shall complete their inspection within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The designated Native American representative would then determine, in consultation with the property owner, the disposition of the human remains. With the implementation of existing state regulations, impacts associated with human remains would be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** No additional mitigation measures beyond the required COAs are needed.

**Monitoring:** No additional monitoring beyond the monitoring activities detailed in the required COAs is necessary.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>GEOLOGY AND SOILS Would the Project</b>				
<b>10. Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone or County Fault Hazard Zones</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Be subject to rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** Riverside County General Plan, Figure S-2, Earthquake Fault Study Zones; California Department of Conservation, EQ Zapp: California Earthquake Hazards Zone Application; Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2.1 and E.2).

**Findings of Fact:**

a-b) The Project site is located in a seismically active region of Southern California dominated by activity on the San Andreas and related faults. According to the County General Plan, the Banning branch of the San Andreas Fault Zone passes through the northern part of the Project site. The area within and surrounding this fault trace is identified both within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Zone and a County fault zone. According to the Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2.1 and E.2), the risk associated with ground rupture and strong ground shaking is moderately high on the Project site.

The Project, however, does not include construction of habitable structures that would be occupied by people. All structures constructed on the Project site (e.g., tower foundations, turbine towers) would be required to conform to the seismic requirements of the Uniform Building Code and County building standards. In addition, consistent with MM-GEO-1, the site design and engineering shall be conducted in conformance with all recommendations as specified in the Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2.1 and E.2), as well as those applicable recommendation specified in any subsequently prepared geotechnical/soils reports for the Project. Recent field surveys conducted in September 2018 by a geotechnical professional confirmed that, with the incorporation of Project-specific engineering considerations, the Project can be constructed and operated on-site without posing a risk to life or property.

Further, Project operations, when compared with the existing O&M activities that already occur on the Project site, would not result in additional workers being location on-site for additional durations of time. As such, while the Project would be subject to faulting, the Project would not result in the substantial exposure of people to risk of loss, injury, or death as a result of earthquakes or related events. With the incorporation of mitigation, impacts associated with ground rupture would be less than significant.

**Mitigation:**

MM-GEO-1: Site design and engineering shall be conducted in conformance with all recommendations as specified in the Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2.1 and E.2), as well as those applicable recommendation specified in any subsequently prepared geotechnical/soils reports for the Project.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
11. Liquefaction Potential Zone				
a) Be subject to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** Riverside County General Plan, Figure S-3, Generalized Liquefaction; Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2).

**Findings of Fact:**

a) The County General Plan indicates that groundwater is located at depth greater than 300 feet below the surface at the Project site, resulting in the county designation of moderate potential for liquefaction at the Project site. In addition, the Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No.



180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2) indicates that the groundwater level is anticipated at depths greater than 50 feet, and as a result, risk associated with liquefaction is negligible. Therefore, impacts associated with liquefaction would be less than significant.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>12. Ground-shaking Zone</b>				
a) Be subject to strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: Riverside County General Plan, Figure S-4, Earthquake-Induced Slope Instability Map, and Figures S-13 through S-21 (showing General Ground Shaking Risk); Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2).

Findings of Fact:

a) According to the Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2), the risk associated with ground rupture and strong ground shaking is moderately high on the Project site. The Project, however, does not include construction of habitable structures that would be occupied by people. All structures constructed on the Project site (e.g., tower foundations, turbine towers) would be required to conform to the seismic requirements of the Uniform Building Code and County building standards.

In addition, consistent with MM-GEO-1, the site design and engineering shall be conducted in conformance with all recommendations as specified in the Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2), as well as those applicable recommendation specified in any subsequently prepared geotechnical/soils reports for the Project. Recent field surveys conducted in September 2018 by a geotechnical professional confirmed that, with the incorporation of Project-specific engineering considerations, the Project can be constructed and operated on-site without posing a risk to life or property.

Further, Project operations, when compared with the existing O&M activities that already occur on the Project site, would not result in additional workers being located on site for additional durations of time. As such, while the Project would be subject to strong ground shaking, the Project would not result in the substantial exposure of people to risk of loss, injury, or death as a result of earthquakes or related events. With the incorporation of mitigation, impacts associated with ground rupture would be less than significant.

Mitigation: MM-GEO-1 is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>13. Landslide Risk</b>				
a) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the Project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, collapse, or rockfall hazards?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** Riverside County General Plan, Figure S-5, Regions Underlain by Steep Slope; Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2).

**Findings of Fact:**

a) The Project site primarily encompasses desert terrain that rises in elevation from east to west and south to north. Although the northern portions of the Project site contain hillier terrain, the majority of the Project site and immediately surrounding area has low susceptibility to seismically induced landslides and rockfalls due to the gentle sloping of the broader Project area. In addition, there are no known active landslide areas mapped within or surrounding the Project site, and no evidence (e.g., rockfalls) of recent landslide activities. Therefore, impacts associated with landslides would be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>14. Ground Subsidence</b>				
a) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the Project, and potentially result in ground subsidence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** Riverside County General Plan, Figure S-7, Documented Subsidence Areas Map; Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2).

**Findings of Fact:**

a) According to the County General Plan, the Project area lies within an area that is potentially susceptible to subsidence, but with no areas with documented subsidence in the vicinity of the Project site. There are loose young alluvial materials occupying some of the drainage channels and the channel of Super Creek that may be susceptible to differential settlement caused by strong ground shaking. However, based on the depth to groundwater at the Project location and there being no evidence of prior ground subsidence in the area, no ground subsidence is expected.

In addition, consistent with MM-GEO-1, the site design and engineering shall be conducted in conformance with all recommendations as specified in the Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2), as well as those applicable recommendation

specified in any subsequently prepared geotechnical/soils reports for the Project. With the incorporation of mitigation, impacts associated with subsidence would be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** MM-GEO-1 is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>15. Other Geologic Hazards</b>				
a) Be subject to geologic hazards, such as seiche, mudflow, or volcanic hazard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** On-Site Inspection, Project Application Materials, Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2).

**Findings of Fact:**

a) The Project site has existing drainage channels, and mudflows are possible as a result of intense rainfall or thunderstorms. These channels have previously been accounted for and avoided during construction of the existing on-site wind turbines, and the Project would generally stay within previously disturbed areas. The Project would not be affected by other geological hazards such as seiche, tsunami, or volcanic hazard, since the Project is not located near any source which could create these hazards. Therefore, impacts associated with other geologic hazards would be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>16. Slopes</b>				
a) Change topography or ground surface relief features?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create cut or fill slopes greater than 2:1 or higher than 10 feet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in grading that affects or negates subsurface sewage disposal systems?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** Riverside County 800-Scale Slope Maps, Riverside County Code, Project Application Materials, On-Site Inspection, Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2).

**Findings of Fact:**

a-c) Based on the current design of the Project, the four proposed wind turbines and associated access roads located in the northern portion of the Project site would be on hillside terrain containing slopes greater than 2:1 or higher than 10 feet. These four proposed turbines and associated access roads would require approximately 808,000 cubic yards of cut and 245,000 cubic yards of fill (for a net cut of

363,000 cubic yards) project grading is proposed including northerly expansion of interior service roads within areas of unique topography. While subsurface sewage disposal systems do not traverse the Project site, grading and re-contouring of these area to accommodate the new foundation and wind turbines could result in geotechnical-related effects.

Consistent with MM-GEO-1, the site design and engineering shall be conducted in conformance with all recommendations as specified in the Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2), as well as those applicable recommendations specified in any subsequently prepared geotechnical/soils reports for the Project. With the incorporation of mitigation, impacts associated with cut/fill activities would be less than significant.

In addition, all cut/fill activities would be required to comply with all applicable grading requirements set forth by the County. This includes applying for and securing a grading permit and implementation of best management practices (BMPs) and standard design/engineering principles intended to minimize impacts of grading in area containing steeper than normal topography. With the incorporation of mitigation and these County requirements, impacts associated with steep slopes would be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** MM-GEO-1 is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>17. Soils</b>				
a) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Section 1802.3.2 of the California Building Code (2007), creating substantial risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** USDA Soil Conservation Service Soil Surveys, Riverside County Code, Project Application Materials, On-Site Inspection, Geotechnical/Geologic Feasibility Study – Geologic Report No. 180021 (Appendix E.1 and E.2).

**Findings of Fact:**

**a-c)** The general soil series found at the Project site consists primarily of the Carsitas and Chuckawalla series. According to the USDA Soil Survey of Riverside County, California Coachella Valley Area, the Carsitas series consists of excessively drained soils formed in predominantly coarse textured gravelly or cobbly granitic alluvium which is rapidly permeable. The Chuckawalla series consists of very deep, well-drained soils formed in stratified mixed alluvium. These soils exhibit low plasticity and, thus, are not expansive.

Project construction would be subject to local and state codes and requirements for erosion control and grading. Because construction activities would disturb one or more acres, the Project must adhere to the provisions of the NPDES Construction General Permit. Construction activities subject to this permit



include clearing, grading, and disturbances to the ground such as stockpiling and excavating. The NPDES Construction General Permit requires implementation of a SWPPP, which would include Project construction features (i.e., BMPs) designed to prevent erosion and protect the quality of stormwater runoff. Sediment-control BMPs may include stabilized construction entrances, straw wattles on earthen embankments, sediment filters on existing inlets, or the equivalent.

Additionally, grading activities would be required to conform to the incumbent version of the California Building Code, the County Code, the approved grading plans, and good engineering practices. The Project consists of approximately 813,500 cubic yards of cut and 329,620 cubic yards of fill resulting in a net cut of 483,800 cubic yards. The Project must also comply with SCAQMD Rule 402 (Nuisance) and Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust), which would reduce construction erosion impacts. Rule 403 requires control measures to reduce fugitive dust from active operations, storage piles, or disturbed surfaces so as to not be visible beyond the property line or exceed 20% opacity. Rule 402 requires dust suppression techniques be implemented to prevent dust and soil erosion from creating a nuisance off site. Compliance with these federal, regional, and local requirements would reduce the potential for both on-site and off-site erosion effects to accepted levels. Therefore, impacts associated with soil erosion, topsoil loss, and expansive soils would be less than significant.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>18. Erosion</b>				
a) Change deposition, siltation, or erosion that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed of a lake?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in any increase in water erosion either on or off site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: Riverside County Code, Project Application Materials, On-Site Inspection, NPDES Construction General Permit.

Findings of Fact:

a-b) Project construction would be subject to local and state codes and requirements for erosion control and grading. Because construction activities would disturb one or more acres, the Project must adhere to the provisions of the NPDES Construction General Permit. Construction activities subject to this permit include clearing, grading, and disturbances to the ground, such as stockpiling and excavating. The NPDES Construction General Permit requires implementation of a SWPPP, which would include Project construction features (i.e., BMPs) designed to prevent erosion and protect the quality of stormwater runoff. Sediment-control BMPs may include stabilized construction entrances, straw wattles on earthen embankments, and sediment filters on existing inlets or the equivalent.

Additionally, grading activities would be required to conform to the incumbent version of the California Building Code, the County Code, the approved grading plans, and good engineering practices. The Project must also comply with SCAQMD Rule 402 (Nuisance) and Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust), which would reduce construction erosion impacts. Rule 403 requires control measures to reduce fugitive dust from active operations, storage piles, or disturbed surfaces so as to not be visible beyond the property line or exceed 20% opacity. Rule 402 requires dust suppression techniques be implemented to prevent dust and

soil erosion from creating a nuisance off site. Compliance with these federal, regional, and local requirements would reduce the potential for both on-site and off-site erosion effects to accepted levels.

Further, the Project would have limited effects on the existing drainage courses found on the Project site. Wherever feasible, areas of existing disturbance have been used to site new wind turbines and existing access roads have been re-use, limited the amount of new disturbances to natural drainage courses. While some of the new turbines may have nominal impacts on existing drainage courses, these effects would be localized and would not result in wholesale impedance of stormwater flows across most or all of the Project site. Additionally, where required, the new foundations would include scour protection to prevent on-site erosion impacts. Therefore, impacts associated with deposition, siltation, and water erosion would be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>19. Wind Erosion and Blowsand from Project either on or off site.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a) Be impacted by or result in an increase in wind erosion and blowsand, either on or off site?				

**Source:** Riverside County General Plan, Figure S-8, Wind Erosion Susceptibility Map; Ordinance No. 460, Article XV, Ordinance No. 484.

**Findings of Fact:**

a) The Project would be influenced by wind erosion and blowsand issues during the grading phases of Project construction. Blowsand is a maintenance concern as it creates drifting sand dunes and acts as an abrasive on metal, glass, and wood surfaces, such as cars, windows, and siding.

Project operations, when compared with the existing O&M activities that already occur on the Project site, would not result in additional workers being located on-site for additional durations of time. Thus, the safety and quality of life issues associated with blowsand are not relevant to the Project.

Implementation of the Project's Dust Control Plan and adherence with the County's Fugitive Dust and Erosion Control Ordinance would serve to reduce the effects of wind erosion to acceptable less of significance. In addition, Riverside County Ordinance No. 484 requires protective actions from landowners disturbing sandy or sandy loam soils so as to prevent substantial quantities of soil from being deposited on public roads and private property. The Project Applicant would adhere to Ordinance No. 484, implementing protection actions described herein to prevent soil deposition as a result of excavating, leveling, cultivating, plowing, removing natural or planted vegetation or root crops, or by depositing or spreading a substantial quantity of similar soil on said land, or by any other act likely to cause or contribute to wind erosion of said land, or to aggravate an existing wind erosion condition.

As previously addressed, the Project would be required to comply with SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1 to control dust emissions generated during the grading activities. Standard construction practices that would be employed to reduce fugitive dust emissions include watering of the active sites three times per day depending on weather conditions. Additionally the Project is required to comply with PM<sub>10</sub> Dust

Control Plan and Dust Summarization Sheet dated June 15, 2018. Therefore, impacts associated with wind erosion and blowsand would be less than significant.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS Would the Project</b>				
<b>20. Greenhouse Gas Emissions</b>				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Report (Appendix B).

Findings of Fact:

**a) Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Construction the Project would result in GHG emissions, which are primarily associated with use of off-road construction equipment, on-road vendor trucks, and worker vehicles. According to the Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Report (Appendix B), the estimated total GHG emissions during construction of would be approximately 1,221 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MT CO<sub>2e</sub>) over the construction period. Estimated Project-generated construction emissions amortized over 30 years would be approximately 41 MT CO<sub>2e</sub> per year. GHG emissions generated during Project construction would be short-term in nature, lasting only for the duration of the construction period, and would not represent a long-term source of GHG emissions. Thus, the amortized construction emissions was added to the operational emissions and compared to the County's significance thresholds of 3,000 MT CO<sub>2e</sub> per year.

The estimated annual Project-generated GHG emissions would be approximately 10 MT CO<sub>2e</sub> per year. Estimated annual Project-generated operational emissions and amortized Project construction emissions would be approximately 51 MT CO<sub>2e</sub> per year. As such, the Project's total annual emissions would not exceed the GHG significance threshold of 3,000 MT CO<sub>2e</sub> per year. Therefore, impacts associated with the generation of GHG emissions would be less than significant.

**b) Conflict with Applicable Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan**

The County's Climate Action Plan (CAP) is a qualified GHG reduction plan according to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15183.5, and thus can be used in a cumulative impacts analysis to determine significance. As previously discussed, the Project would not exceed the 3,000 MT CO<sub>2e</sub> threshold established by the CAP. Additionally, the Project does not conflict with any of the GHG reducing measures or goals within the CAP, and thus, is consistent with the plan. In addition, the Project would not inhibit the County from implementing any of the measures that both do and do not apply to the Project.

SCAG's 2016 Regional Transportation Strategy/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), although not directly applicable to the Project, provides direction and guidance by making the transportation choices for future development. As the Project does not alter the current use of the property and does not induce

growth during operation, development of the Project would not conflict with the critical goals of the 2016 RTP/SCS. Therefore, impacts associated with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions would be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS Would the Project</b>				
<b>21. Hazards and Hazardous Materials</b>				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** Project Application Materials; Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Toxic Substances Control; California Occupational Safety and Health Administration; Resource Conservation and Recovery Act; Riverside County Department of Environmental Health; California Government Code, Section 65962.5.

**Findings of Fact:**

a-e) During construction of the Project, hazardous and potentially hazardous materials typically associated with construction activities would be routinely transported to/from and used on the Project site. These hazardous materials could include gasoline, diesel fuel, lubricants, and other products used to operate and maintain construction equipment. During construction of the new turbines, standard operating procedures would be followed to ensure that lubricants do not escape the surrounding area. The transport, use, and handling of these materials would be a temporary activity coinciding with short-term Project construction activities. Transmission oils from the turbines would not affect ground level soils because the Project would be routinely monitored by on-site maintenance personnel, who inspect the wind turbines for leaks as part of daily operations activities. Although such materials may be stored on the Project site, any transport, use, and handling of these materials would be conducted by a permitted and licensed service provider.



Any handling, transport, use, or disposal would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local agencies and regulations, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the California Department of Transportation, the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health (the Certified Unified Program Agency for Riverside County). Additionally, as mandated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, all hazardous materials stored on site would be accompanied by a Material Safety Data Sheet, which would inform on-site personnel about the necessary remediation procedures in the case of accidental release.

In addition, the Project site is not listed as a hazardous materials site pursuant to California Government Code, Section 65962.5 (Cortese List), and no other property in the surrounding area is considered a recognized environmental concern. As such, subsurface construction activities would not expose construction workers or nearby bystanders to contaminated soils.

To avoid contact or damage to buried wet and dry utilities, the construction contractor is required to contact "Dig Alert" (Underground Service Alert of Southern California) prior to the issuance of grading permits to ensure that pipelines are properly located. The Project Applicant would also be required to secure all appropriate amendments to rights-of-way or corresponding instruments from the Southern California Gas Company, MWD, SCE, and other utilities. Utility easements of record would be observed and unauthorized disturbance would be prohibited by law.

The Project design incorporates modern turbine design, which includes a safety system ensuring that the wind turbine is shut down immediately at the onset of mechanical disorders, and turbine towers incorporate structural elements capable of withstanding large seismic events, high winds, and flooding. In addition, because the nearest new turbine is located over 2,000 feet from the nearest sensitive receptor (a residential land use) and because no schools occur in the broader Project area, potential hazards due to mechanical issues are considered very unlikely.

Further, the Project would not add a substantial number of vehicle trips onto local and regional roadways. As such, the Project would not interfere with emergency responders traveling along roadways during an emergency, nor would the Project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Therefore, impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be less than significant.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>22. Airports</b>				
a) Result in an inconsistency with an Airport Master Plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Require review by the Airport Land Use Commission?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

d) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, or heliport, would the Project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project area?

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**Source:** Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan Policy Document; Riverside County General Plan, Figure S-20, Airport Locations; GIS database; Airport Land Use Commission transmittal letter dated October 11, 2018.

**Findings of Fact:**

a-d) No private airstrips are known to be located in the vicinity of the Project site.

In regards to public airports, Palm Springs International Airport is located approximately eight miles southeast of the Project site and is the closest public airport to the Project site. The Project site is not identified by Map PS-1, Compatibility Map, of the Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility (ALUC) Plan Policy Document. However, although there is considerable distance between the Project site and Palm Springs International Airport, the Project still requires review by the ALUC since new wind turbines would exceed 200-feet in height. At their meeting on October 11, 2018, the ALUC determined that the Project was conditionally consistent, subject to the conditions included in their staff report, and such additional conditions as may be required by the FAA.

The FAA uses level and sloping imaginary surfaces to determine if a proposed structure is an obstruction to air navigation. Structures that are identified as obstructions are then subject to a full aeronautical study and increased scrutiny. However, exceeding a Part 77 imaginary surface does not automatically result in the issuance of a determination of hazard. Proposed structures must have airspace impacts that constitute a substantial adverse effect in order to warrant the issuance of determinations of hazard (14 CFR Part 77.17(a)(2) and 77.19/21/23). Public-use airport imaginary surfaces do not overlie the Project site, and as a result, the new turbines would not exceed these surfaces.

Installation of the wind turbines and met towers would be required to comply with all applicable requirements set forth in FAA Advisory Circular 70/7460-1L Change 1, Obstruction Lighting/Marking. These requirements include marking and lighting standards for wind turbines and met towers intended to provide day and night conspicuity and to assist pilots in identifying and avoiding these obstacles. Pursuant to these standards, it is likely one red light would be mounted on the northern-most wind turbine, one red light would be mounted on the southern-most wind turbine, and one red light would be mounted on each of the permanent and temporary met towers. These red lights would be used only at night and would be simultaneously flashing. Because the wind turbines would be painted white and the met towers would be painted with alternate bands of aviation orange and white paint, daytime lighting is not required. Therefore, no impacts associated with airport hazards would occur.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>23. Hazardous Fire Area</b>				
a) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: Riverside County General Plan Figure S-11 "Wildfire Susceptibility," GIS database.

Findings of Fact:

a) The Project site is located within a hazardous fire area with high to moderate wildfire risk identified by the County General Plan. Although there is little vegetation on the Project site, risk of fire would be further reduced by improving access to the Project site. Therefore, impacts associated with wildland fire would be less than significant.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY Would the Project</b>				
<b>24. Water Quality Impacts</b>				
a) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area, as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>