

To: Katie Cullen[kcullen@scprtnrs.com]
From: Cason, James
Sent: 2017-02-10T08:20:42-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: Help with a Project
Received: 2017-02-10T08:21:19-05:00

Katie,
I'll look into the status of the Notice of Availability.

Jim

On Thu, Feb 9, 2017 at 4:27 PM, Katie Cullen <kcullen@scprtnrs.com> wrote:

Jim,

I promise I won't write every day with requests. I don't know if you are the appropriate person to handle this but if not, could you forward on. Thanks. As you know developing a project takes time, money and patience. This project is under construction but we still have one issue remaining and are requesting assistance from the Department.

First Solar is looking to expedite a Notice of Availability in the Federal Register so that impending financial, contractual, and commercial milestones can be met and the commercial operation of the California Flats Solar Project can be achieved.

The California Flats Solar Project (Project) is a 280MW solar photovoltaic power plant being constructed by First Solar, Inc. The energy produced from the California Flats Solar Project is being purchased by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) and Apple Energy, a subsidiary of Apple. The Project started construction in April 2015 and will continue through 2018. A portion of the Project will achieve commercial operation this year.

The Project was issued Federal Endangered Species Act Biological Opinion (BO), USFWS File No. O8EVENOO-2015-F-0287 on November 19, 2015 from the Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The BO was issued for the Department of the Army Permit No. 2012-00266S for the dredge or fill of wetlands. The BO covers incidental take of species during project construction. Additionally, the Project has prepared a Low-Effects Habitat Conservation Plan (LEHCP) for the take of species during the Project operations period, which is expected to be for a period of 34 years. This LEHCP was submitted to the Ventura Office on October 18, 2016. The LEHCP was deemed complete and the Notice of Availability (NOA) was submitted to the Federal Register for publication on December 22, 2016. The NOA was resubmitted to the Federal Register on January 16, 2017 after some requested editing. Following the change in administration on January 20,

the publication of Federal Register notices were curtailed until new administration leaders could review the notices. FWS Region 8 is currently preparing a newly required Directors briefing memo supporting the publication of the NOA.

Project Information: First Solar's 280 megawatt (MW) California Flats solar project began construction in June of 2016 with module installation currently underway on the first 130 MW. Construction of the full 280 MW will be complete by 2018. **Currently, there are approximately 700 workers onsite and the project will average about 300 jobs through the construction period.**

California Flats solar project is located on approximately 2,900 acres of private land owned by the Hearst Corporation. The California Flats site was carefully selected after thorough environmental review. The availability of land near existing electrical transmission lines, the amount of sunlight, and current land uses were also important considerations in the siting decision. It is not visible from any public gathering point or major roads. When fully operational, the project will employ up to 11 ongoing monitoring and operations positions and generate enough clean solar energy to serve the needs of about 100,000 average homes per year.

Any thoughts and help would be greatly appreciated. Thanks.

Best,

Katie

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