Comment Letter I39

Hingtgen, Robert J

From: Sandra Cooper <byscoop@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2014 12:24 PM
To: Hingtgen, Robert J; Jacob, Dianne; Cox, Greg; Roberts, Dave; Roberts, Ron; Horn, Bill
Cc: senator.hueso@sen.ca.gov; raquel.maden@sen.ca.gov; juan.vargas@mail.house.gov; matt.balich@mail.house.gov; tisdale.donna@gmail.com; scottlewis@voiceofsandiego.org
Subject: re:draft environmental impact report SOITEC SOLAR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT, LOG NO. PDS2012-3910-120005 (ER); 3800-12-010 (GPA); TIERRA DEL SOL, 3300-12-010 (MUP); 3600-12-005 (REZ); 3921-77-046-01 (AP); RUGGED SOLAR, 3300-12-007...
Attachments: February 9.doc

Dear Sir or Madam,
Attached is a letter expressing our concern over the possible placement of huge solar trackers in the community of Boulevard, California, and the harm Boulevard and its property owners may experience. I39-1
Thank you.
Sandra and Byron Cooper

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Response to Comment Letter I39

Sandra and Bryon Cooper
February 10, 2014

I39-1 This comment is introductory in nature and does not raise a significant environmental issue.

February 9, 2014

Robert Hingtgen, Land Use/Environmental Planner
Supervisor Dianne Jacob, Supervisor Greg Cox, Supervisor Dave Roberts,
Supervisor Ron Roberts, Supervisor Bill Horn

Dear Sir or Madam,

This letter is intended to explain why we believe that it would be a mistake to approve the **SOITEC SOLAR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT, LOG NO. PDS2012-3910-120005 (ER); 3800-12-010 (GPA); TIERRA DEL SOL, 3300-12-010 (MUP); 3600-12-005 (REZ); 3921-77-046-01 (AP); RUGGED SOLAR, 3300-12-007 (MUP); SCH NO. 2012121018.**

We, also, want noted that the Los Robles site is not even included in the project name. In fact, according to Donna Tisdale, Chair of the Boulevard Planning Group, the Los Robles site was added mid-December 2013. That would explain why we have received only one letter dated January 2, 2014. Our property is located adjacent to the southeast corner of the eastern portion of the Los Robles site. It seems backwards to possibly choose the Los Robles site and then have Soitec apply for the necessary permits and perform a site specific review. The Los Robles site should be removed for lack of Major Use Permit (MUP) application and lack of adequate information. I39-2

We have already endured a loss of property due to the grant of an easement of a portion of our property to SDG&E's East County (ECO) Substation Project. The location of thousands of large solar trackers adjacent to our property certainly would devalue our property and decrease the surrounding beautiful landscape due to the ugly aesthetics of the huge solar panel trackers.

We now want to address our protest of all of the possible sites. We attended the February 6, 2014, Boulevard Community Planning Group Meeting. We listened to the presentation of the county staff and viewed their power point. We listened to comments from attendees and responses from county staff and/or Soitec representatives. We listened to the reading of a letter written by Marty Kennell, a local well driller with decades of experience in the Boulevard area. We read materials handed out by the Boulevard Planning Group which included a Final Meeting Agenda, Draft Minutes/Summary for January 2, 2014, Boulevard Planning Group Actions on Soitec Solar Projects-To Date, and Draft Proposed Action/Motion for Soitec Solar Draft PEIR (DPEIR). I39-3

From the above, our first concern involves water use. It was stated that the ECO substation project has used more than three times the amount of water for construction as they estimated in their approved plan. We question the accuracy of the estimate in the Soitec plan. This is partly based on the letter from Marty Kennell, a local well driller, who clearly described a decreasing availability of water he has witnessed first hand due to drought, increases in population, and the building and use of the Casino and Border

I39-2 The commenter is referred to response to comment I96-2.

I39-3 The commenter is referred to responses to comments I96-2 and I96-3.

Patrol facilities. Dudek and San Diego County staff should have sought and included Mr. Kennell's expertise. We also question the accuracy of the water estimate based on a long list of components enumerated by Howard Cook of Jacumba that would affect water use and were not listed. We question the failure to include a plan to compensate a resident whose well dries up. We want to reiterate that the county was not up-to-date with the water table levels and, therefore, should not permit such a huge withdrawal from the water table. I39-3 Cont.

Second, potential fire damage could result with the depletion of water resources. We fail to understand why a Fire Service Availability letter states that services will not be available for 5 years. I39-4

Third, Donna Tisdale brought up questions regarding Soitec's reliability. She has visited Soitec's Newberry Solar 1 site near Barstow three times. She stated that neighbors near that site said that Soitec had not kept promises and were unreliable. Soitec's representatives either chose or were unable to speak positively about the Newberry site. The most foolish statement we heard came from Soitec employee Patrick Brown. He claimed that the company couldn't fail because hundreds of thousands of dollars were being invested. President Obama's failures in green technology, such as Solyndra, came immediately to mind and were vocalized by some members of the audience.

Fourth, we are concerned about the political agenda or fad to embrace green energy or is it just a means to garner federal funds? Boulevard does not benefit from this project. Yet Soitec, according to Robert Hingtgen in the January 2, 2014, minutes, is only the third project in the state to receive fast-tracking certification. Shouldn't the Board of Supervisors look out for Boulevard's residents? Don't they represent the tax-payers? I39-5

We want to support the justified opposition of the Boulevard Planning Group. We want the board to choose the "No Project" alternative. We see it as an easy choice for the board because they can move the Boulevard projects to an already approved Imperial Valley site.

We want to thank Robert Hingtgen for promptly returning phone calls and sending information to us via email. I39-6

Sincerely,

Sandra and Byron Cooper
P.O. Box 4283
Yuma, AZ 85366
760 352-3854
928 344-3293

c.c. Senator Ben Hueso
c.c. Congressman Juan Vargas
c.c. Donna Tisdale, Chair of Boulevard Planning Group

I39-4 The commenter is referred to response to comment I96-4.

I39-5 The commenter is referred to responses to comments I96-5 and I96-6.

I39-6 The commenter is referred to response to comment I96-7.

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