

Comment Letter O22



Date: March 3, 2014

To: County of San Diego
Planning and Development Services (PDS)
Project Processing Counter
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123



From: San Diego Astronomy Association
Board of Directors
PO Box 23215
San Diego, CA 92193-3215

San Diego Astronomy Association Tierra del Sol Observatory Site
961 Tierra De Luna Road
Boulevard, CA 91905

Re: Soitec Solar Development Program Environmental Impact Report, Log No:
PDS2012-3910-12005
Tierra del Sol, 3300-12-007

Dear Planning and Development Services,

The Board of Directors San Diego Astronomy Association submitted comments on the above referenced PEIR dated February 10, 2014. With the extension of the comment period to March 3, we wanted to clarify and emphasize our comments. We asked the San Diego Planning and Development Services whether designation as a sensitive land use was related to a request for mitigation. Ms. Ashley Gungler kindly replied designation as a sensitive land use is not directly related to mitigation, but we wanted to comment further on both.

SDAA property at TDS is located near the proposed Tierra del Sol solar farm, as shown on the attached copy of PEIR Figure 2.5-4 "Tierra del Sol Sensitive Land Uses Within 1,000'" indicating our facility with a red arrow. However we were not designated as a 'sensitive' land use in the PEIR, and strongly believe this is erroneous. In support of our request to be included as sensitive, we have attached our Major/Minor Deviation Use Permit, permitting the SDAA to use our land for astronomical purposes. As stated in our Use Permit, we are approved to use the land "for an astronomical observation

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O22-1

O22-2

Response to Comment Letter O22

San Diego Astronomy Association Board of Directors

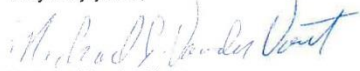
Michael Vander Vorst

March 3, 2014

O22-1 The County of San Diego appreciates this comment and addresses the specific comments on the Proposed Project below.

O22-2 The County agrees that the San Diego Astronomy Association (SDAA) property should be shown as a sensitive land use on Figure 2.5-4 of the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (DPEIR). In response to this comment, the County has made revisions to Figure 2.5-4 to include the SDAA property; refer to Chapter 2.5. Please refer to the responses to comments O1-2, O1-4, and O1-6.

<p>facility". Our land use is exquisitely sensitive to nearby nighttime lighting. We believe our TDS facility should be included as sensitive. A copy of Figure 2.5-4 is attached with a red arrow showing our property. Note: we are nearly surrounded by 'sensitive' properties.</p> <p>Also attached is a local announcement to the Boulevard community to visit our facilities, and a copy of a brochure on good lighting we provided by the thousands to San Diego County building permit sites. We have contacted and replaced outdoor fixtures for our neighbors around our TDS observatory facilities. We are sensitive to nighttime light pollution, and as a consequence, ask not only that Soitec agree to the mitigation measures as stated in our Feb 10 comment, but also request that the County of San Diego PDS include these mitigation measures in the Major Use Permit the Solar Farm will operate under. It has come to our attention Soitec is the developer and will likely sell or lease the facility to others. If only Soitec agrees to nighttime lighting mitigation, subsequent owners and operators may not be bound.</p> <p>Thus, the SDAA requests the County include the nighttime lighting mitigation measures in the Major Use Permit for the Tierra del Sol solar farm.</p> <p>Additionally supporting our dark skies protection, we have attached our letter to the US Customs and Border Protection, when the Border Patrol was proposing lighting up the border at Tierra del Sol. We are very pleased the US BCP, after a short trial of border lighting, has adopted night vision and modern surveillance technologies such as we enumerate below, preserving our night skies. Soitec and successor owner/operators can meet their nighttime security needs without lighting up the night sky. Since Soitec is not the long term owner operator, we request our dark sky mitigation be included within the TDS solar farm Major Use Permit. This will prevent future owner/operators from lighting up our night sky. SDAA members and associates have consulted with casinos and developers on best practices for night time lighting and security. We humbly offer Soitec our expertise during development, and request the county require the following dark sky mitigation measures in the TDS solar farm Major Use Permit:</p> <p><i>The proposed solar farm, we believe, can be a good neighbor to our observatories by installation of fully shielded outdoor lighting fixtures such as required in Zone A, by turning off outdoor lighting when no one is on site, and using motion sensors and night vision cameras for security. Specifically:</i></p> <p>The San Diego Astronomy Association requests the County PDS require the Proposer to specifically agree to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Installation of fully shielded outdoor lighting fixtures such as required in Zone A at TDS, (LPC Sec 59.105)</i> 2. <i>Use fully shielded motion sensor lighting at entrance gates, buildings, etc and turn off all outdoor lighting when no one is on site.</i> 3. <i>When possible, wash solar arrays during evening and morning hours,</i> 	<p>O22-3 See the response to comment O1-4. Additionally, it should be noted that project design features will become conditions of the Major Use Permit (MUP). Any entity that constructs and/or operates the Proposed Project will be bound to the conditions of the MUP.</p> <p>O22-4 The County appreciates this information; however, this comment does not raise an significant environmental issue, therefore no changes to the environmental document are required.</p> <p>O22-5 The commenter is referred to response to comment O22-3. The County acknowledges and appreciates SDAA's offer for expertise in the future during construction of the Proposed Project.</p> <p>O22-6 The County acknowledges and appreciates these suggestions. The County refers the commenter to responses to comments O1-4, O22-2, O22-23 and O22-5.</p>
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<p>4. <i>Use motion sensors and night vision cameras for security. (LPC Section 59.107),</i></p> <p>5. <i>Prohibit post construction addition of outdoor lighting not included in the proposed project, and</i></p> <p>6. <i>add the SDAA property to the list of sensitive land uses within 1,000' as shown on Figure 2.5-4.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">O22-6 Cont.</p> <p>The nearly 600 members and Board of the San Diego Astronomy Association appreciate this opportunity to provide input to the San Diego County Planning and Development Services department and the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Diego. These comments are in addition to our comments dated Feb 10, 2014.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">O22-7</p> <p>Very truly yours,</p>  <p>Michael Vander Vorst President San Diego Astronomy Association</p> <p>Attachment: 1. TDS Astronomy Boulevard Invitation 2. SDAA Minor Deviation Major Use Permit 3. SDAA letter to US CBP 4. PEIR Figure 2.5-4 "Tierra del Sol Sensitive Land Uses Within 1,000'" showing SDAA Astronomy facility with red arrow</p> <p style="text-align: right;">O22-8</p>	<p>O22-7 This comment concludes the letter and does not raise a significant environmental issue for which a response is required.</p> <p>O22-8 All attachments will be included in the administrative record for review and consideration by the decision makers.</p>
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