



Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead



Richard J. Bruckner
Director

July 21, 2011

Wendy Reed, President
Board of Directors, Antelope Valley Conservancy
P.O. Box 3133
Quartz Hill, CA 93586

Dear Ms. Reed,

RE: AV SOLAR RANCH I, FIRST SOLAR

The Department of Regional Planning received your letter dated July 6, 2011 (attached) and acknowledges concerns raised by the Antelope Valley Conservancy regarding the recent brush and grass fire on and near the west side of the A.V. Solar Ranch One Project site. The project's Environmental Impact Report ("EIR") includes mitigation measures to address potential fire safety impacts. The County Fire Department has reviewed and approved a detailed Fire Protection Plan ("Plan") for the Project. The Plan requires that the permittee provide an onsite water truck to be made available during work hours for emergency fire control purposes, and all construction workers are required to check in with the onsite construction manager prior to starting the day's work. Site security will be implemented to control site access, and a guard station will be installed during move-on activities.

Planning staff recognize that the fire incident is a cause for concern for neighbors and the environment, and staff discussed this matter further with the permittee's project manager to ensure that fire safety measures are diligently implemented and caution continues to be exercised as the Project moves forward. County zoning inspection and mitigation monitoring are required to be done on a regular basis by County zoning enforcement staff according to the approved mitigation monitoring program and conditions of approval to insure Project safety and compliance.

Regarding your second inquiry pertaining to offsite mitigation land, AV Solar Ranch One has entered into an agreement with the Desert and Mountains Conservation Authority ("DMCA") for the management and conservation of the offsite mitigation land consistent with the project conditions and mitigation monitoring program. The DMCA is a Joint Powers Authority ("JPA") established by the Antelope Valley Resource Conservation District ("District") and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy ("SMMC") pursuant to the Joint Exercise of Powers Act, Government Code §§ 6500, et seq. The DMCA operates pursuant to a joint exercise of powers agreement entered into by the District

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and SMMC, which delineates its powers and organizational structure. A JPA exercises the purposes and powers of its members. In this case, both the SMMC and the District have as their purpose to manage and conserve natural resources in the Antelope Valley.

Regarding the selection of a conservancy or other appropriate entity for holding mitigation lands, pursuant to the applicable provisions of the conditional use permit and mitigation measures, the permittee proposed an entity to the Department of Regional Planning for its consideration and approval. The SMMC, through DMCA, is uniquely suited to manage the AVSR1 mitigation lands given the mission and experience of its member agencies. SMMC has extensive experience with management of conservation land including membership in many JPA's in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. The District has a long history in the Antelope Valley having been formed in 1966 when three then-existing resource conservation districts were consolidated. The District's jurisdictional area encompasses the AVSR1 mitigation land.

The last comment in your letter requested that assurance be provided regarding a mitigation lands endowment. The permittee is required to comply with the pertinent off-site land mitigation measure, which includes establishment and use of a required restoration, enhancement and restoration fund until such time as when the mitigation land(s) become self-sustained, as stated in the EIR and in the authoritative Mitigation Monitoring Program as enforced by County zoning enforcement staff.

Thank you for your concern and care for the Fairmont community. Please do not hesitate to contact either myself or my staff regarding this matter.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Bruckner
Director

RJB:SZD:KKS

Attachment: AVC Letter Dated July 6, 2011

C: Edel Vizcarra, Planning Deputy, County Board of Supervisors, Fifth District
Norm Hickling, Field Deputy, County Board of Supervisors, Fifth District