

Imperial County
Planning & Development Services Department
NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT EIR FOR THE VEGA SES 2, 3, & 5 SOLAR ENERGY PROJECTS
30 DAY TIME EXTENSION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department, as lead agency, is circulating for public review a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the proposed VEGA SES 2, 3, & 5 Solar Energy Project EIR.

PROJECT TITLE: Conditional Use Permits # Draft; Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the VEGA SES 2, 3 & 5 Solar Energy Projects EIR (SCH # 2021050013).

PROJECT LOCATION: The project area is located on approximately 1,963 acres of privately owned land in the unincorporated area of Imperial County, CA. The project area is located approximately 5.67 miles southeast of the unincorporated community of Niland between the unincorporated communities of Iris and Slab City. The Coachella and East Highline Canals and the Union Pacific Railway transect the project area. The project site is located entirely within the County's Renewable Energy Overlay Zone. APN's for CUP #20-0021 & CUP # 22-0025 include 025-010-006, 025-260-011 and 025-270-023-000. APN for CUP #20-0022 include 025-010-006 & CUP 22-0026. APN for CUP #20-0023 & CUP #22-0027 include 025-260-019 & 025-260-022-000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed projects consists of three primary components: 1) solar energy generation equipment and associated facilities including a substation and access roads (herein referred to as "solar energy facility"). 2) Battery storage system; and, 3) gen-tie line that would connect the proposed on-site substation to the point of interconnection at the existing Imperial Irrigation District's (IID) interconnection facilities. The proposed projects involves the construction of a total of 350 MW -megawatt (MW) alternating current (AC) photovoltaic (PV) solar energy facility with an integrated 350 MW battery storage system. The project proposes to utilize either thin film or crystalline solar PV technology modules mounted on fixed frames or horizontal single-axis tracker systems. The project would include electronic/electrical equipment, an on-site substation, access road(s) and fencing.

DESIGNATED AREA PLAN: The project site is located entirely within the County's Renewable Energy Overlay Zone with a General Plan Designation of Recreation/Open Space and/or Agriculture. The Current zoning for parcels are S-2-RE Open Space Preservation/Renewable Energy overlay and A-3 RE Heavy Agriculture/Renewable Energy overlay.

The project site parcels would require the approval of a Conditional Use Permit by the County to allow for the construction and operation of the proposed solar energy facility with an integrated Battery Energy Storage System on land zoned A-3-RE (General Agriculture with a Renewable Energy Overlay & S-2 Open Space Preservation/Renewable Energy overlay).

Water Supply Assessment: Implementation of the project requires the approval of a Water Supply Assessment (WSA).

ANTICIPATED SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS: The EIR will analyze potential impacts associated with the following: Aesthetics; Agricultural Resources; Air Quality; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Geology/Soils; Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Climate Change; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology/Water Quality; Land Use/Planning; Noise; Public Services; Transportation; Tribal Cultural Resources; Utilities and Service Systems including water supply; Cumulative Impacts; and, Growth-Inducing Impacts

COMMENTS REQUESTED: Written comments regarding the Draft EIR should be directed to David Black, Planner IV, Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department, 801 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243 and must be received **no later than March 3, 2023** (public review period starts on December 14, 2022).

The Final EIR will address and incorporate public input and comments for the consideration by the Imperial County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors at future public meetings.

For environmental review information for this project, please contact David Black at (442) 265-1736.

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