

7.0 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

In accordance with Section 15128 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must contain a statement briefly indicating the reasons that various potential significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant. Based on the Initial Study prepared for the proposed projects (Appendix A), Imperial County has determined that the proposed projects would not have the potential to cause significant adverse effects associated with the issues identified below. These topics have not, therefore, been addressed in detail in this EIR.

7.1 FORESTRY RESOURCES

The solar generating portion of the study area is located on privately owned, undeveloped agricultural land. No portion of the study area or in the immediate vicinity is zoned or designated as forest lands, timberlands, or Timberland Production. As such, the project would not result in a conflict with existing zoning or cause rezoning. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

7.2 MINERAL RESOURCES

The location of the study area is currently under agricultural production and/or located in desert land (OTF within BLM land) and is not utilized for mineral resource production. Additionally, no mapped mineral resources occur within the study area and no known mineral resources occur within the boundaries of the proposed projects. As such, the proposed projects would not result in a significant impact on the availability of any known mineral resources within the study area.

7.3 POPULATION AND HOUSING

Because the study area is currently being used for agricultural production and no residential or commercial component is proposed as part of the projects, the projects would not result in or induce additional growth within the vicinity. Although the proposed projects would result in new construction-related jobs, the limited number of employees at full buildout would not create a need for new permanent housing in the area. Finally, the proposed projects would not result in the displacement of people or housing units. Therefore, the proposed projects would not impact population and housing.

7.4 PUBLIC SERVICES

Schools, Parks and Other Facilities

The proposed projects do not include the development of residential land uses that would result in an increase in population or student generation. Construction of the proposed projects would not result in an increase in student population within any school district that would serve the project sites =. Therefore, the proposed projects would have no impact on Imperial County schools.

Operation of the proposed projects would require minimal full-time staff (for security, maintenance, etc.). Therefore, substantial permanent increases in population that would adversely affect local parks, libraries and other public facilities (such as post offices) are not expected. The proposed projects are not expected to have an impact on public services such as post offices, and libraries. Therefore, no impacts are identified for these issue areas.

7.5 UTILITIES

Wastewater

The proposed projects would generate a minimal volume of wastewater during construction. During construction activities, wastewater would be contained within portable toilet facilities and disposed of at an approved site. Operation of the proposed projects could include up to five O&M buildings. Wastewater generation would be minimal and would be treated via an on-site septic system associated with each of the O&M buildings. The proposed projects would not exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the Regional Water Quality Control Board. The project does not require new storm drainage facilities because the proposed solar facilities would not generate a significant increase in the amount of runoff water during operations. Water from solar panel washing would continue to percolate through the ground, as a majority of the surfaces on the project sites would remain pervious; therefore the Initial Study concluded that the project would not result in an impact with regards to new storm drainage facilities..

Solid Waste

During construction and operation of the proposed projects, waste generation will be minor. Solid waste will be disposed of using a locally-licensed waste hauling service. There are over 40 solid waste facilities listed in Imperial County in the CalRecycle database. Trash would likely be hauled to the Calexico Solid Waste Site located in Calexico or the CR&R Material Recovery Transfer Station located in El Centro. The Calexico Solid Waste site has approximately 2 million cubic yards of capacity (reporting date July 2009) and is estimated to remain in operation through 2071. The CR&R Material Recovery and Transfer station has a maximum permitted throughput of 15 tons/day. No closure date has been reported for this facility (<http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/SWFacilities/Directory/13-AA-0004/Detail/>). Therefore, there is ample landfill capacity throughout the County to receive the project's minor amount of solid waste generated by project construction and operation.

Additionally, because the proposed projects would generate solid waste during construction and operation of the projects, they will be required to comply with waste reduction and recycling measures. The 1989 California Integrated Waste Management Act (AB 939) requires Imperial County to attain specific waste diversion goals. In addition, the California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991, as amended, requires expanded or new development projects to incorporate storage areas for recycling bins into the proposed project design. The projects would be required to comply with the 1989 California Integrated Waste Management Act and the 1991 California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991. Also, conditions of the CUP will require recycling and diversion of construction waste per policies of the County. A less than significant impact is identified for this issue.