

APPENDIX 3

Minor Clarifications of Proposed PA/FEIS/EIR

Introduction

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) prepared the Proposed PA/FEIS/EIR for the Soda Mountain Solar Project (Project) in consultation with other agencies, taking into account public comments received during the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process undertaken for the Project. The Proposed PA/FEIS/EIR described the Proposed Action and alternatives, analyzed the proposed CDCA Plan Amendment and Project decisions, and responded to written comments received during the public review period for the Draft PA/EIS/EIR (see Proposed PA/FEIS/EIR Chapter 4, *Consultation, Coordination and Public Involvement*, and Appendix K, *Individual Responses to Comments*). Review of the Proposed PA/FEIS/EIR by the BLM and others has resulted in the minor corrections and clarifying statements listed below. Revisions to language as it appears in the Proposed PA/FEIS/EIR are indicated as follows: Quoted language is *italicized*, new language is shown in underscore, deleted language is shown in ~~strikethrough~~. None of these minor corrections and clarifying statements affects the adequacy of the underlying NEPA analysis in the Proposed PA/FEIS/EIR.

- Pages 3.1-7 and 3.1-8. Unnecessary text regarding the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power is deleted:

Additionally, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) has its own RPS, with a goal of providing 35 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2020 (LADWP, 2013a). As of 2011, LADWP's current portfolio contained approximately 19 percent renewable energy (LADWP, 2012). As of 2013, LADWP also provided 39 percent of its electricity from coal-fired power plants in Arizona and Utah, but intends to end all coal-fired electricity imports by 2025, in part by procuring new renewable energy sources (LADWP, 2013b).

- Page 3.4-14. Text is revised to clarify that BLM conducted golden eagle surveys in 2012 and the results of those surveys are included in the analysis:

Survey Results

No golden eagles were identified near the Project ROW during aerial and ground surveys in 2009 ~~and~~ or in surveys conducted by BLM in 2012; however, in 2011 surveyors identified an active eagle nest on the south face of Cave Mountain approximately 8 miles southwest of Project site (Figure 3.4-4) (Panorama Environmental, Inc., 2013a; Appendix L). A pair of eagles was observed incubating an unknown number of eggs, and a second alternate nest was detected directly below the active nest.

Biologists observed an additional sub-adult golden eagle interacting with the adult male, perching and soaring around the summit of Cave Mountain.

Two inactive nests were also identified in the north Soda Mountains during BLM surveys in 2012. The results of the BLM survey are shown in Figure 2.3-1 in Appendix L-6. The inactive nests included a large nest on a north-northwest facing slope and a dilapidated nest located in a cave. The two previously-observed golden eagle nests in the north Soda Mountains were not relocated during the 2012 survey and are characterized as historical in Figure 2.3-1 in Appendix L-6.

- Page 3.4-36: Text is revised to clarify that the proposed Project would not affect known, suspected, or inactive golden eagle nests:

A golden eagle nest was observed 7.75 miles from the Project site during surveys and a possible nest may exist in the Mojave National Preserve approximately 4 miles east of the Project site (Panorama Environmental, Inc., 2013c). Noise, night lighting, and visual impacts during Project construction would not impact golden eagle nesting behavior at these known and suspected or inactive nests due to their distance from the Project site.

- Page 3.4-42. Mitigation measure references are corrected:

a) Impact Veg-B1: Alternative B would indirectly affect special-status plants. (Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)

As described for Alternative A, direct and indirect impacts to special-status plants would be less than significant with implementation of APM 50 and Mitigation Measures 3.3-2 and 3.3-3. For the reasons discussed in Section 3.3.7, the contribution of Alternative B to cumulative impacts to special-status plants would not be cumulatively considerable.

b) Impact Veg-B2: Alternative B would result in direct and indirect impacts to waters of the State. (Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)

Alternative B would impact up to 348.89 acres of waters of the State, representing a significant impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.3-2 and 3.3-54 would avoid, or reduce some of the direct and indirect construction-related impacts to these features to less than significant.

- Page 3.4-43. Mitigation measure references are corrected:

a) Impact Veg-C1: Alternative C would indirectly affect special-status plants. (Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)

As described for Alternative A, direct and indirect impacts to special-status plants would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.3-2 and 3.3-3, and the contribution of Alternative C to cumulative impacts to special-status plants would not be cumulatively considerable.

b) Impact Veg-C2: Alternative C would result in direct and indirect impacts to waters of the State. (Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)

Alternative C would impact up to 462.72 acres of waters of the State, representing a significant impact. The implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.3-2 and 3.3-54 would avoid, or reduce some of the direct and indirect construction-related impacts to these features.

- Pages 3.4-43 and 3.3-44. Mitigation measure references are corrected:

a) Impact Veg-D1: Alternative D would indirectly affect special-status plants. (Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)

As described for Alternative A, direct and indirect impacts to special-status plants would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.3-2 and 3.3-3, and the contribution of Alternative D to cumulative impacts to special-status plants would not be cumulatively considerable.

b) Impact Veg-D2: Alternative D would result in direct and indirect impacts to waters of the State. (Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)

Alternative D would impact up to 446.44 acres of waters of the State, representing a significant effect. The implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.3-2 and 3.3-54 would avoid, or reduce some of the direct and indirect construction-related impacts to these features.

- Page 3.4-35. Mitigation measure applicability is clarified:

Indirect effects to Mojave fringe-toed lizard would be minimized through implementation of APM 50 (Integrated Weed Management Plan or IWMP) and of Mitigation Measures 3.3-2 (specific requirements for IWMP), 3.4-1a (compliance monitoring by a designated biologist), 3.4-1b (biological monitoring during construction); and 3.4-1c (WEAP).

- Page 3.4-51. Mitigation measure applicability is clarified:

Potential indirect effects to Mojave fringe-toed lizard from the Proposed Action and all action alternatives would be minimized through implementation of APMs 44 (WEAP training), 50 (IWMP) (Appendix E-2), and 72 (Raven Monitoring and Control Plan), and of Mitigation Measures 3.3-2 (specific requirements for IWMP), 3.4-1a (compliance monitoring by a designated biologist), 3.4-1b (biological monitoring during construction), and 3.4-1c (WEAP).

- Page 3.4-74. Mitigation measure applicability is clarified:

Impact Wild-2: The Proposed Action would have substantial adverse indirect effects on Mojave fringe-toed lizard. (Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)

Indirect effects to Mojave fringe-toed lizard would be minimized through implementation of APM 50 (IWMP) and Mitigation Measures 3.3-2 (specific requirements for IWMP), 3.4-1a (compliance monitoring by a designated biologist), 3.4-1b (biological monitoring during construction), and 3.4-1c (WEAP). Following the implementation of these measures, impacts to Mojave fringe-toed lizard would be less than significant.

Impact Wild-3: The Proposed Action could have substantial adverse direct and indirect effects on special-status birds. (Significant and Unavoidable)

Nesting Birds

Direct and indirect impacts may occur to nesting special-status birds in and near the Project site or foraging habitat for these species, including burrowing owl, golden eagle, loggerhead shrike, and other birds that are protected by the MBTA and California Fish and Game code. These impacts

would be minimized through implementation of APM 50 (IWMP) and Mitigation Measures 3.3-2 (specific requirements for IWMP), 3.4-1a (compliance monitoring by a designated biologist), 3.4-1b (biological monitoring during construction), and 3.4-1c (WEAP).

- Page 3.4-76. Mitigation measure applicability is clarified:

Impact Wild-7: The Proposed Action would have a substantial adverse effect on special-status bats. (Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)

Direct and indirect impacts to special-status bats would be reduced to less than significant through implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.4-1a (monitoring by a designated biologist), 3.4-1b (biological monitoring during construction), 3.4-1c (WEAP), 3.4-1e (lighting specifications to minimize bird and bat impacts), ~~and~~ 3.4-1g (BBCS), and 3.4-1h (AMMP).

- Page 3.14-14. Area of potential electricity consumption is clarified:

The Proposed Action would not indirectly induce substantial population growth by introducing a new source of electricity because although it would produce additional electricity and increase service capacity, it is intended to meet the demand for energy that is already projected based on growth in demand for electricity in ~~LADWP's service area~~ California, which extends well beyond the regional study area, and therefore would not induce substantial growth or concentration of population in either the regional or local study areas.

- Page 3.14-27. Area of potential electricity consumption is clarified:

The Proposed Action would not indirectly induce substantial population growth through the extension of infrastructure because although it would produce additional electricity and increase service capacity, it is intended to meet the demand for energy that is already projected based on growth in demand for electricity in ~~LADWP's service area~~ California, and therefore would not be growth-inducing.

- Page 3.21-3. Area of potential electricity consumption is clarified:

LADWP operates the Market Place-Adelanto 500 kV transmission line to which the Project would interconnect ~~and~~. LADWP provides electricity to approximately 3.9 million people in a service area covering 465 square miles (LADWP, 2013).

- Page 3.21-6. Area of potential electricity consumption is clarified:

The Project would begin generating electricity upon the connection of the first solar arrays completed, resulting in a net increase in electricity resources available to the regional grid, and would help ~~LADWP~~ California meet its goal of increased reliance on renewable energy sources and decreased reliance on coal power.

and

Additionally, Project operation would have a beneficial effect on the electricity supply to the grid and would help ~~LADWP~~ California meet its goal of increased reliance on renewable energy sources and decreased reliance on coal power.

- Page 3.21-7. Area of potential electricity consumption is clarified:

Electricity generated by the Project would be sold in the competitive market, ~~most likely under the terms of a 30-year Power Purchase Agreement with LADWP.~~ Consequently, the Project would contribute toward meeting ~~LADWP's~~ California's requirements under the Renewables Portfolio Standard.

- Page 4-24. Estimated compensatory mitigation acreage is clarified:

Thus, it is estimated that the proposed Project would require ~~2,455.77~~ 2,455.77 acres of compensatory lands; and this number would be revised to reflect final site impacts in accordance with Mitigation Measure 3.4-2d.