BLM Authorized Officer
Weekly Report

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Project: Ocotillo Wind Energy Facility Project

Weekly Project Update

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Reporting Period: 7.2.12 through 7.8.12

Summary:

The BLM is responsible for overseeing implementation of the mitigation measures set forth in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Ocotillo Wind Energy Facility Project. The BLM has established a third-party monitoring program and adopted an Environmental and Construction Compliance Monitoring Plan (ECCMP) to ensure that measures approved in the FEIS to mitigate or avoid significant impacts are implemented in the field. This ECCMP status report is intended to provide a description of construction activities on the project, a summary of site inspections conducted by the BLM's third-party environmental compliance monitors (ECM's), the compliance status of mitigation measures required by the ECCMP, and anticipated construction activities for the following week. This weekly report covers construction activities for the period of 7.2.12 through 7.8.12.

Site Inspections/Mitigation Monitoring:

Issues/Concerns with Applicable Conditions of Certification

Work Limits: An ECM observed grading activities on 7.2.12 at WT 95 that occurred beyond the approved work limits. The area disturbed beyond the approved work limits was approximately 25 ft by 10 ft. The area was impacted as a result of operator error and it was determined that no corrective actions were required beyond completing restoration activities in accordance with the Habitat Restoration/Revegetation Plan (MM-Veg-2b).

Track-out: An ECM observed concrete and gravel tracked-out along County Highway S2, near the primary point of ingress/egress adjacent to the Laydown Yard on 7.5.12. An ECM reported the issue/concern to SDG&E crews at 9:30 AM and the roadway was cleaned by 11:30 AM.

Trash Management: In accordance with Section 4.1 of the Raven Control Plan (MM-Wild-1j), all trash on site must be kept in covered trash receptacles with lids that can be securely fastened. An ECM identified a trash bin located within the SDG&E substation yard that had not been covered on 7.3.12. The issue/concern was reported to the foreman onsite at the time of the observation and a cover was observed in place on 7.5.12.

Surface Water Management: In accordance with Section 4.2 of the Raven Control Plan (MM-Wild-1j), biological monitors on site are required to check for areas of standing water, determine their cause, eliminate them, and determine how to avoid the situation in the future. An ECM observed standing water developing in the concrete washout area at the SDG&E substation yard on 7.3.12. The issue/concern was reported to the lead biological monitor at 11:00 AM. The standing water within the concrete washout was covered with visquine at 3:30 PM.

Issues of Concern with or by the Applicant

None.

Construction Activities:

Construction activities conducted for this period consisted of clearing and grading access roads for wind turbines and above-grade installation of substation/switchyard components at the 30-acre substation/switchyard.

Wind Turbine Access Roads and Pad Sites: Crews were observed building the subgrade between WT-95 to 97.
30-acre Substation/Switchyard: Construction activities during this reporting period consisted of staging construction equipment and initiating work efforts to erect above-grade components associated with the 30-acre substation/switchyard.

Compliance:

Environmental compliance monitors conducted site inspections of the active construction areas on a 7.2.12, 7.3.12, 7.5.12, 7.7.12 and 7.8.12. Areas of active construction were observed to verify implementation of the measures stipulated in the project's ECCMP as they pertain to current construction activities. Daily observations were documented on daily site inspection forms and applicable mitigation measures were reviewed.

Pre-construction mitigation measures have been completed as indicated in NTP #1 and NTP#2. The Project Applicant has contracted with a biological and archeological consulting firm approved by the BLM to complete day-to-day monitoring of the construction activities in accordance with the ECCMP.

An ECM observed grading activities on 7.2.12 at WT 95 that occurred beyond the approved work limits. The area disturbed beyond the approved work limits was approximately 25 ft by 10 ft. The area was impacted as a result of operator error and it was determined that no corrective actions were required beyond completing restoration activities in accordance with the Habitat Restoration/Revegetation Plan (MM-Veg-2b).

An ECM observed concrete and gravel tracked-out along County Highway S2, near the primary point of ingress/egress adjacent to the Laydown Yard on 7.5.12. An ECM reported the issue/concern to SDG&E crews at 9:30 AM and the roadway was cleaned by 11:30 AM.

In accordance with Section 4.1 of the Raven Control Plan (MM-Wild-1j), all trash on site must be kept in covered trash receptacles with lids that can be securely fastened. An ECM identified a trash bin located within the SDG&E substation yard that had not been covered on 7.3.12. The issue/concern was reported to the foreman onsite at the time of the observation and a cover was observed in place on 7.5.12 (see photo 1).

In accordance with Section 4.2 of the Raven Control Plan (MM-Wild-1j), biological monitors on site are required to check for areas of standing water, determine their cause, eliminate them, and determine how to avoid the situation in the future. An ECM observed standing water developing in the concrete washout area at the SDG&E substation yard on 7.3.12. The issue/concern was reported to the lead biological monitor at 11:00 AM. The standing water within the concrete washout was covered with visquine at 3:30 PM.

Pre-construction burrowing owl surveys are being completed in accordance with Section 4.3 of the Burrowing Owl Mitigation and Monitoring Plan. Pre-construction surveys identified the potential for burrowing owl to be present in proximity to construction activities on 6.19.12. In accordance with Section 4.4 of the Burrowing Owl Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, should any of the pre-construction surveys yield positive results for the presence of burrowing owl or active burrowing owl burrows within 250 feet of the work area, the lead biological monitors will coordinate with the construction contractor to avoid and minimize impacts to burrowing owl by implementing the mitigation measures described in the Final EIS/EIR and as further defined in Section 4.4 of the Burrowing Owl Mitigation and Monitoring Plan. Per Section 4.4.3 of the Burrowing Owl Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, if an inactive, but potentially suitable burrow is identified during the pre-construction surveys, the burrows will be excavated and filled in. The inactive, but potential suitable burrow was monitored for several days to determine activity in the area. Based on the monitoring program that was implemented to determine activity at the burrow, the burrow was determined to be inactive. Per concurrence received from California Department of Fish and Game on 6.22.12, the burrow was hand excavated by biologists on 6.23.12.

Construction crews were observed utilizing water for dust suppression purposes during the grading of turbine string access roads and construction of the substation/switchyard. Multiple water trucks were observed being present with each excavation crew to ensure dust emissions were minimized during construction in accordance with the dust control plan.

Drip-pans are being placed beneath construction equipment being stored onsite overnight to ensure equipment does not leak directly onto the ground surface (see photo 2).

In accordance with MM-Wild-1b, if potential wildlife pitfalls will not be immediately backfilled at the end of the day, the Biological Monitor will ensure that the construction crew slopes the ends of the excavation (3:1 slope) to provide wildlife escape ramps or will ensure that the construction crew completely and securely covers the excavation to prevent wildlife entry. Wildlife escape ramps were observed being constructed at foundations for the substation components in accordance with MM-Wild-1b (see photo 3). Covers were also observed being placed over areas that had been excavated in accordance with MM-Wild-1b (see photo 4).

Construction activities occurring at the 30-acre substation/switchyard were observed being completed within the approved work limits (see photo 5 and 6). Dust emissions were monitored on a regular basis and no issues/concerns were reported throughout the week.

In accordance with Section 4.2 of the Raven Control Plan, in order to prevent ravens and other wildlife from accessing the water storage pond constructed onsite, armor balls will be used to completely cover the surface of the water. Armor balls have been placed on the surface of the temporary water pond in accordance with the Raven Control Plan (see photo 7).

Signage has been placed at the point of ingress/egress to turbine string roads intersecting with public roads in order to notify motorists and the public that construction access is only permitted along turbine string roads for public safety purposes (see photo 8)

Based on environmental compliance monitors observations, all crew members working on the project site have been WEAP trained and sensitive environmental resources requiring avoidance within proximity to the active construction areas are being identified in accordance with the project requirements.

Construction Schedule:

Scheduled Activities for Next Week: The anticipated construction activities associated with week ending 7.15.12 consist of the following:

- Temporary Laydown Yard
  - Construction of chain-link fence along limits of laydown yard and installation of septic system.
- Turbine String Access Roads
  - Build and gravel Dos Cabezas Road.
- Turbine Pad Sites Clearing
  - WT 151, 131, 110, 99, 102, and 135.
- Turbine Foundation Excavations
  - WT 151, 131, 147, 148, 149, 169, 176, 133, 173 and 132.
- Collection Cable System
  - Homerun collection cable lines to Switchyard from S2.
- Switchyard/Substation
  - Continue construction of above grade components at SDG&E substation and initiate construction of above grade components at Pattern Switchyard.
- Geotechnical Testing
  - Continue geotechnical testing at turbine pad sites.

Potential Delays to the Online Date of the Project

- None identified at this time.

Plan Review Submittal Items

Submittal Type	Description
Paleontological Monitoring & Treatment Plan	In accordance with MM-Paleo-1 a monitoring plan shall be developed by a qualified paleontologist hired by the proponent who holds a current California BLM Paleontology Use Permit. The plan must be appropriately scaled to the size and complexity of the anticipated monitoring.

Notice to Proceed

NTP No.	Date Issued	Project Component	Conditions Included (Y/N)
1	5.14.12	Clearing and grading of the following facilities: • 12-acre temporary laydown yard • 30-acre Substation/Switchyard • Temporary and permanent access road/collection corridors and permanent turbine area for 71 turbines. • Performance of all required geotechnical studies within the Project site with access along planned access road corridors. • Buried Site Sensitivity Testing • Structure installation at the SDG&E Energy switchyard.	Yes
2	6.27.12	Clearing and grading of the following facilities. • 112 turbines. • 2 MET towers • 3.4-acre O&M facility • 10-acre temporary laydown area • Temporary connex storage areas • Temporary crane walk corridors Excavation and installation for all project infrastructure including foundations, collection system, electrical utility, and communication systems. Structural erection for all approved project features including concrete foundations, structural steel, wind turbine towers, MET towers, and the wind farm substation. Electrical wiring, testing, and pre-commissioning of wind turbines, MET towers, collection electrical system and wind farm substation. Construction of all buildings and associate facilities including the O&M building, biological observation tower, control buildings at substation and switchyard. Structure installation at the SDG&E energy switchyard.	Yes

Variance Requests

Variance Request No.	Submitted	Description	Status	Approval Date
1	5.23.12	Shift of the 30-acre substation/switchyard approximately 565 feet to the north in order to minimize disturbance to areas that have the potential of cultural importance.	Approved	6.4.12
2	5.31.12	Conduct geotechnical investigations at 12 turbines sites that are within 500 feet of the Palm Springs formation.	Approved	6.12.12
3	6.4.12	Temporary use of the BLM's Western Colorado Desert Routes of Travel (WECO) in order to complete pre-construction surveys as identified in the Final EIR/EIS and Record of Decision (ROD).	Approved	6.12.12
4	6.4.12	Temporary use of BLM WECO routes outside those designated as approved project roads in the ROD for geotechnical rigs to access turbine locations to conduct the required further geotechnical investigations.	Approved	6.20.12
5	6.8.12	Turbine micro-siting and road re-alignments to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources.	Pending	Pending
6	6.13.12	Additional temporary work space for construction and permanent access to the transmission line turning structures at the substation/switchyard.	Pending	Pending

Photographs from Week

	
Photo 1: Covers are placed over trash bins in accordance with Section 4.1 of the Raven Control Plan (MM-Wild-1j).	**Photo 2:** Drip-pans are placed beneath construction equipment staged onsite to ensure equipment does not leak directly onto the ground surface.
	
Photo 3: Wildlife escape ramps are constructed at foundations within the substation/switchyard in accordance with MM-Wild-1b.	**Photo 4:** Covers are placed over areas excavated within the substation/switchyard in accordance with MM-Wild-1b.

	
Photo 5: Crews construct foundations that will be utilized to erect above grade components associated within the SDG&E substation.	**Photo 6:** A drill rig is utilized to construct foundations for the SDG&E substation.
	
Photo 7: Armor balls have been placed on the surface of the temporary water pond in accordance with the Raven Control Plan (MM-Wild-1j).	**Photo 8:** Signage has been placed at the point ingress/egress to turbine string roads that intersect with public roads to notify motorists and the public that construction access is only permitted along turbine string roads for public safety purposes.