



# BLM Authorized Officer Weekly Report

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**Project:** Ocotillo Wind Energy Facility Project

## Weekly Project Update

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**Reporting Period:** 2.11.13 through 2.17.13

## Summary

The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for overseeing implementation of the mitigation measures set forth in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Ocotillo Wind Energy Facility Project. The Bureau of Land Management (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 Final Environmental Impact Statement 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 Bureau of Land Management's third-party Environmental Compliance Monitors (ECMs), 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 reporting period of 2.11.13 through 2.17.13.

## Site Inspections/Mitigation Monitoring

The following issues/concerns have been observed by the Bureau of Land Management Environmental Compliance Monitors during daily site observations. The following issues/concerns are being monitored to ensure follow-up is completed in a reasonable amount of time to avoid potential impacts to sensitive environmental resources per the intent of the ECCMP.

### Issues/Concerns with Applicable Conditions of Certification

*Raven Control Plan (MM-Wild 1j)*—Standing water was observed in proximity to two turbine sites on the project site. In accordance with the Raven Control Plan, potential for standing water needs to be eliminated during construction activities, so as not to serve as a wildlife attractant. The lead biological monitor and construction contractor were notified of the standing water by the ECM on 2.8.13. The construction contractor and lead biological monitor followed-up on 2.9.13 to identify methods that could be utilized to remove the water. A construction crew was observed removing the standing water on 2.12.13.

*Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) (MM-Water-9)* – In accordance with the SWPPP vehicle and equipment refueling is not to occur within 100 feet from downstream drainage facilities and water courses. An ECM observed refueling occurring within 100 feet from a

jurisdictional drainage during the reporting period. The ECM notified the construction contractor and lead biological monitor of this requirement upon the observation being made in the field. The lead biological monitor and construction contractor responded to this concern by providing a reminder to all crew members of the re-fueling requirements at the morning tailboard meeting and by providing all fuel operators with a map identifying the location of jurisdictional drainages onsite.

## **Construction Activities**

Construction activities consisted of re-vegetation activities, installing security fencing, metal siding, and trash enclosures at the O&M facility, continuing turbine foundation pours, resuming backfill turbine pad sites, grading of the phase II substation and substation berm work, boring for the collection lines in the southeast portion of the project, and boring access roads south of Interstate 8.

## **Compliance**

ECMs conducted site inspections of the active construction areas on a daily basis, which 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 including but not limited to development and implementation of preconstruction plans have been completed as indicated in Notice to Proceed #1 thru #3.

Ocotillo Express LLC has contracted with an archeological consulting firm approved by the BLM to complete day-to-day monitoring of the construction activities in accordance with the ECCMP. Archeological monitors were observed completing ongoing monitoring in accordance with the project requirements and ensuring that flagging of Environmentally Sensitive Areas remained intact and that all ground disturbing activity was conducted within the delineated work limits (see photo 1).

Ocotillo Express LLC has also contracted with a biological consulting firm approved by the BLM to complete day-to-day monitoring of the construction activities in accordance with the ECCMP. ECMs observed biological monitors and authorized Flat Tail Horned Lizard (FTHL) monitors present where ground disturbance occurred within FTHL habitat. ECM's also observed biological monitors inspecting construction piping with a diameter greater than three inches in accordance with MM-Wild-1m (see photo 2).

In addition to construction activities, ECMs observed crews removing weeds within the approved work limits in accordance with the Integrated Weed Management Plan (MM-Veg-1d) (see photo 3).

ECMs continued to observe the biological monitor operating the Advanced Biological Observation Command and Control Center (ABOCCC), located adjacent to the O&M facility, from sunup to sundown. In accordance with the approved Avian and Bat Protection Plan, the designated monitor at the ABOCCC specifically monitors movement of eagles and other wildlife for the first 10 years of the project. The ABOCCC itself has a state of the art Merlin radar system mounted on the roof, tiered to collect data to potentially curtail turbines in order to minimize direct impacts to golden eagles. The Merlin system incorporates vertical and horizontal radar

data and the information detected on the radar is linked to a high-resolution camera also mounted on the top of the ABOCCC (see photo 4).

Based on the ECMs observations, all crew members working on the project site have completed the Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP). Construction-phase WEAP trainings continue to occur on the project site once a week as needed.

See Section “Issues/Concerns with Applicable Conditions of Certification” above for a further discussion regarding environmental compliance status.

**Construction Schedule:**

Scheduled Activities for Next Week: The anticipated construction activities associated for 2.18.13 through 2.24.13 includes:

- O&M Facility – Install security fencing, metal siding, trash enclosure, site clean-up.
- Foundation Pours—Site clean- up.
- Foundation Excavation — No new excavation activities.
- Foundation Backfill - Backfill activities at 5 turbine sites.
- Substation/Switchyard - Phase II grading; substation berm.
- Collection, Trenching Cables - Trenching south of Interstate 8 and Boring at Hwy 98, south of Interstate 8 and north of Interstate 8.
- Access Roads—Install low water crossings on Dos Cabezas Road.

Potential Delays to the Online Date of the Project

- None identified at this time.

**Notice to Proceed (NTP)**

| NTP No. | Date Issued | Project Component   | Conditions Included (Y/N) |
|---------|-------------|---|---------------------------|
| 1       | 5.14.12     | Clearing and grading of the following facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12-acre temporary laydown yard</li> <li>• 30-acre Substation/Switchyard</li> <li>• Temporary and permanent access road/collection corridors and permanent turbine area for 71 turbines.</li> <li>• Performance of all required geotechnical studies within the Project site with access along planned access road corridors.</li> <li>• Buried Site Sensitivity Testing</li> <li>• Structure installation at the SDG&amp;E Energy switchyard.</li> </ul> | Yes                       |
| 2       | 6.27.12     | Clearing and grading of the following facilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 112 turbines.</li> <li>• 2 MET towers</li> <li>• 3.4-acre O&amp;M facility</li> <li>• 10-acre temporary laydown area</li> <li>• Temporary connex storage areas</li> </ul>  | Yes                       |

## Notice to Proceed (NTP)

| NTP No. | Date Issued | Project Component  | Conditions Included (Y/N) |
|---------|-------------|--|---------------------------|
|         |             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporary crane walk corridors</li> </ul> <p>Excavation and installation for all project infrastructure including foundations, collection system, electrical utility, and communication systems.</p> <p>Structural erection for all approved project features including concrete foundations, structural steel, wind turbine towers, MET towers, and the wind farm substation.</p> <p>Electrical wiring, testing, and pre-commissioning of wind turbines, MET towers, collection electrical system and wind farm Substation/Switchyard.</p> <p>Construction of all buildings and associate facilities including the O&amp;M building, biological observation tower, control buildings at Substation/Switchyard.</p> <p>Structure installation at the SDG&amp;E energy switchyard.</p> |                           |
| 3       | 12.21.12    | Full commercial operations for 112 wind turbines and all associated project facilities.  | 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                    | 7.2.12    | Turbine micro-siting and road re-alignments to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources.   | Approved | 7.12.12       |
| 6                    | 7.3.12    | Additional temporary work space for construction and permanent access to the transmission line turning structures at the substation/switchyard.   | Approved | 7.24.12       |
| 7                    | 6.26.12   | Modify alternate turbine locations included in the Record of Decision.  | Approved | 8.1.12        |
| 8                    | 7.20.12   | Re-alignment of an access road to wind turbine #9 to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources.   | Approved | 7.27.12       |
| 9                    | 7.20.12   | Re-alignment of underground collection line corridor between County Route S2 and Dos Cabezas Road.  | Approved | 7.30.12       |
| 10                   | 7.31.12   | Re-alignment of an access road to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources.  | Approved | 8.10.12       |

## Variance Requests

| Variance Request No. | Submitted | Description   | Status   | Approval Date |
|----------------------|-----------|---|----------|---------------|
| 11                   | 7.27.12   | Micro-siting turbine location to accommodate a third party interest group.  | Approved | 8.16.12       |
| 12                   | 8.14.12   | Work space for wind turbine 103, 134 and 135  | Approved | 8.17.12       |
| 13                   | 8.16.12   | Collection line routing for wind turbines 155, 156 and 159.   | Approved | 8.17.12       |
| 14                   | 8.21.12   | Micro-siting wind turbines 86 and 87 and a road re-alignment to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources.  | Approved | 8.21.12       |
| 15                   | 8.22.12   | Micro-siting wind turbines 26, 27, and 28 to accommodate a third party interest group.  | Approved | 9.4.12        |
| 16                   | 8.20.12   | Work space requirements associated with support safety tag lines.   | Approved | 8.23.12       |
| 17                   | 8.22.12   | Work space modifications at wind turbine 69 pad site.   | Approved | 8.30.12       |
| 18                   | 8.28.12   | Re-alignment of underground collection line corridors near wind turbines 88 and 131.  | Approved | 9.5.12        |
| 19                   | 8.31.12   | Re-alignment of an access road to wind turbine 73 to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources.   | Approved | 9.17.12       |
| 20                   | 8.31.12   | Re-alignment of two access roads to wind turbines 30 and 78 to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources.   | Approved | 9.13.12       |
| 21                   | 9.13.12   | Re-alignment of two access between wind turbines 10 and 11 and wind turbines 81 and 87 roads to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources   | Approved | 9.28.12       |
| 22                   | 9.19.12   | Re-alignment of underground collection line corridor from wind turbine 90 to 93 and extension of two turning radii near wind turbines 92 and 95.  | Approved | 10.2.12       |
| 23                   | 9.21.12   | Re-alignment of underground collection line corridor along County Highway S2, relocation of a crane walk corridor from wind turbine 107, and medication of a collection line corridor and access road near wind turbine 64. | Approved | 10.15.12      |
| 24                   | 9.27.12   | Re-alignment of an access road between wind turbines 19 and 20 and micro-siting a turbine location to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources.  | Approved | 10.9.12       |
| 25                   | 10.4.12   | Re-alignment of an access road between wind turbines 16 and 17 to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources.  | Approved | 10.10.12      |
| 26                   | 10.11.12  | Re-alignment of an access road to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources.  | Approved | 11.14.12      |
| 27                   | 10.12.12  | Micro-siting a turbine location to accommodate a third party interest group.  | Approved | 10.22.12      |
| 28                   | 10.16.12  | Micro-siting a turbine location to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources.   | Approved | 10.19.12      |
| 29                   | 10.16.12  | Re-alignment of an access road and shifting a turbine location to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources.  | Approved | 10.26.12      |
| 30                   | 10.17.12  | Re-alignment of an access road and micro-siting a turbine location to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources.  | Approved | 10.25.12      |
| 31                   | 10.17.12  | Micro-siting a turbine location to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources.   | Approved | 10.25.12      |

## Variance Requests

| Variance Request No. | Submitted | Description   | Status   | Approval Date |
|----------------------|-----------|---|----------|---------------|
| 32                   | 10.19.12  | Re-alignment of an access road and underground collection line corridor.  | Approved | 10.25.12      |
| 33                   | 10.20.12  | Re-alignment of an access road to minimize potential disturbance to environmentally sensitive resources.  | Approved | 10.24.12      |
| 34                   | 11.1.12   | Shifting turbine locations to accommodate a third party interest group, re-alignment of an access road to minimize potential disturbances, and removal of an approved equipment laydown area. | Approved | 12.6.12       |
| 35                   | 11.21.12  | Work space modifications at wind turbine pad sites.   | Approved | 12.7.12       |
| 36                   | 11.27.12  | Micro-siting a turbine location to mitigate geotechnical siting considerations.   | Approved | 12.19.12      |

## Photographs from Week



**Photo 1:** ECM's observed crews working within the approved work limits in accordance with MM-Veg-1a. All work limits were clearly staked prior to initial ground disturbance.



**Photo 2:** ECM's observed biological monitors inspecting construction piping greater than three inches in diameter in accordance with MM-Wild-1m.



**Photo 3:** ECMs observed biological crews conducting weed abatement activities within the approved work limits in accordance with Integrated Weed Management Plan (MM-Veg-1d).



**Photo 4:** ECMs observed the biological monitor operating the Advanced Biological Operation Command and Control Center (ABOCCC) during daily operations in accordance with the Avain and Bat Protection Plan (ABPP) (MM-Wild-1p) and Eagle Conservation Plan (ECP) (MM-Wild-1o).