



# BLM Authorized Officer Weekly Report

**EI Centro Field Office**  
1661 S. 4th Street  
EI Centro, California 92243  
Website: [www.OcotilloECCMP.com](http://www.OcotilloECCMP.com)

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**Project:** Ocotillo Wind Energy Facility Project

## Weekly Project Update

**Prepared By:** David Hochart, DUDEK, 605 Third Street, Encinitas, CA 92024

**Reporting Period:** 3.25.13 through 3.31.13

## Summary

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) 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 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 BLM'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 3.25.13 through 3.31.13.

## Site Inspections/Mitigation Monitoring

The following issues/concerns have been observed by the BLM ECM's 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

*Trash Management (Raven Control Plan – MM-Wild-1j)* – In accordance with Section 4.1 of the Raven Control Plan, all trash on-site must be disposed of in covered receptacles. On 3.27.13 an ECM observed trash adjacent to wind turbines being constructed via use of cranes. The observation was immediately reported to the lead biological monitor and the construction contractor. On 3.28.13 the construction contractor was observed removing the trash and placing it into a covered receptacle (see photo 1). In response to this incident, the lead environmental monitor and the construction contractor have provided a focused environmental awareness training during an all hands-on meeting focused on trash management and have equipped all crew members with trash bags to ensure that all trash is picked up and properly disposed of per the project requirements.

## **Construction Activities**

Construction activities consisted of building the berm for the Phase II substation (see photo 2), erecting wind turbines associated with Phase II (see photo 3), and weed abatement activities. All turbine component deliveries associated with Phase II were completed during this reporting period.

## **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. Furthermore, archeological monitors ensured that construction crews stayed clear of all ESAs during the erection of turbines associated with Phase II.

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. ECM's observed trash bins being covered in accordance with MM-Wild-1j and the Raven Control Plan and secondary containment under portable sanitary facilities in accordance with best management practices identified in the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) MM-Water-9 (see photo 4). In addition, ECM's continued to observe the removal of non-native invasive weeds by workers using hand tools within the approved disturbance limits in accordance with the Integrated Weed Management Plan (MM-Veg-1d) (see photo 5).

Crews were observed implementing the Habitat Revegetation Plan at wind turbine pad sites in accordance with MM-Veg-2b. Temporary work spaces were observed being decompacted and topsoil that had been salvaged during initial ground was placed within the temporary work limits (see photo 6).

In accordance with MM-Wild-1t and the Bighorn Sheep Mitigation Monitoring Plan, a biological consultant is to be approved by the BLM, USFWS, and CDFG to serve as the Bighorn Sheep Monitor during construction activities within USFWS Essential Habitat. The BLM, USFWS and CDFG approved a biological consultant to perform the roles and responsibilities outlined in MM-Wild-1t and the Bighorn Sheep Mitigation and Monitoring Plan.

The Bighorn Sheep Monitor was observed monitoring emergency repair activities to an operational Phase I turbine located in bighorn sheep essential habitat. The emergency repair work consisted of crews erecting a crane in order to gain access to the wind turbine's gear box (see photo 7). In accordance with the Bighorn Sheep Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, the Bighorn Sheep Monitor was observed searching for signs of bighorn sheep activity to minimize any potential impacts to bighorn sheep during the emergency repair activities.

Water wagons and water trucks were routinely observed watering down areas of active construction and restoration activities to ensure dust emissions were minimized in accordance with the dust control plan (see photo 8).

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.

### **Construction Schedule**

Scheduled Activities for Next Week: The anticipated construction activities associated for 4.1.13 through 4.7.13 includes:

- Access Roads – Install low water crossings on Dos Cabezas Road.
- Substation/Switchyard – Phase II grading; substation berm and security fencing.
- O&M Facility – Carport installation and miscellaneous punchlist items.
- Turbine Deliveries – Complete.
- Turbine Installation – Turbine installation throughout the week.
- Revegetation – Weed abatement activities throughout the project site.

### 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> <li>• Temporary crane walk corridors</li> </ul> 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/Switchyard.  Construction of all buildings and associate facilities including the O&M building, biological observation tower, control buildings at Substation/Switchyard.  Structure installation at the SDG&E energy switchyard.	Yes
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
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

## Variance Requests

Variance Request No.	Submitted	Description	Status	Approval Date
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
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
37	2.20.13	Work space modifications at two planned low water crossings on the asphalt paved road between Highway S-2 and the 30-acre Substation/Switchyard	Approved	3.5.13
38	2.22.13	Micro-siting three turbine locations to mitigate geotechnical siting considerations.	Approved	3.5.13
39	3.29.13	Additional temporary work space for construction activities to address drainage between wind turbines 161 and 168.	Pending	N/A

## Photographs from Week



**Photo 1:** ECMs observed a construction crew member picking up trash in accordance with the Raven Control Plan (MM-Wild-1j).



**Photo 2:** Construction activities associated with the berm along the perimeter of the Phase II substation continued during this reporting period.



**Photo 3:** Construction crews utilize large cranes to lift the rotor and blade for assembly to the nacelle.



**Photo 4:** ECM's observed trash bins being covered in accordance with the Raven Control Plan (MM-Wild-1j) and secondary containment under portable sanitary facilities in accordance with best management practices identified in the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) (MM-Water-9).



**Photo 5:** ECMs observed biological crews conducting weed abatement activities within the approved work limits in accordance with the Integrated Weed Management Plan (MM-Veg-1d).



**Photo 6:** In accordance with MM-Veg-2b, crews place topsoil salvaged during initial ground disturbance within the limits of the temporary work areas.



**Photo 7:** The Bighorn Sheep Monitor was observed monitoring unscheduled emergency repair activities in accordance with the Bighorn Sheep Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (MM-Wild-1t).



**Photo 8:** Water trucks are utilized to water down construction activities in accordance with MM-Air-1.