



## BLM Authorized Officer Weekly Report

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**Project:** Ocotillo Wind Energy Facility Project

### Weekly Project Update

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**Reporting Period:** 4.15.13 through 4.21.13

### Summary

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for overseeing implementation of the mitigation measures (MM) 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 4.15.13 through 4.21.13.

### 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

*Standing Water (Raven Control Plan – MM-Wild-1j)* – In accordance with MM-Wild-1j, biological monitors are required to check for areas of standing water, determine their cause, eliminate them and determine how to avoid the situation in the future. On 4.18.13, an ECM reported standing water in a concrete washout bin located adjacent to a wind turbine foundation. The incident was reported to the lead biological monitor onsite to develop a method for covering the concrete washout bin. Crews were observed removing the water and concrete waste on 4.26.13.

*Work Within the Approved Limits (ROW5.d):* ECMs observed reclamation activities that resulted in spoil being placed beyond the approved work limits by approximately 3 to 5 feet. The lead biological monitor was observed working with crews to rake back the spoil located beyond the approved work limits upon notification being provided.

## **Construction Activities**

Construction activities consisted of erecting wind turbines associated with Phase II, constructing low water crossings along Dos Cabezas Road, and reclamation activities associated with turbine access roads.

## **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 through #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 (ESAs) remained intact. Furthermore, archeological monitors ensured that construction crews stayed clear of all ESAs during the erection of turbines associated with Phase II and ongoing reclamation/revegetation activities.

Construction activities were observed being completed in accordance with the Dust Control Plan (MM-AIR-1) throughout the reporting period. Water wagons and water trucks were routinely observed watering down areas of active grading and excavation (see photo 1).

Construction activities related to site restoration continued this week, including re-vegetation activities at turbine pad sites and along access roads in accordance with Mitigation Measure Veg-2b and the associated Habitat Restoration/Revegetation Plan (HRRP) (see photo 2). Re-vegetation activities included de-compacting and replacing topsoil in areas where construction activities are complete. In accordance with Section 4.5.9 of the HRRP, vertical mulch was observed being placed in temporary work areas to help reduce wind speed at ground level (see photo 3).

In accordance with Section 4.1 of the Raven Control Plan, all trash onsite must be kept in covered trash receptacles. ECMs observed dumpsters being covered in accordance with the Raven Control Plan (see photo 4). In accordance with Mitigation Measure Wild-1b, at the end of each work day, the lead biologist is to inspect all potential wildlife pitfalls to ensure that the construction crew slopes the ends of the excavation to provide wildlife escape ramps or completely and securely covers the excavation to prevent wildlife entry. Environmental

Monitors completed routine inspections to ensure all wildlife pitfalls include wildlife escape ramps and/or have been covered per Mitigation Measure Wild-1b.

In accordance with MM Wild-2b and the Nesting Bird Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, a pre-vegetation clearing survey for avian nesting is required to be conducted no more than 7 days prior to vegetation clearing. ECM's observed biologists under contract with OE LLC conducting the proper clearance surveys prior to grading activities and were present during the daily work activity. Daily Nesting Bird Survey reports are provided to BLM identifying the results of the surveys. Biological monitors were also observed being present in areas of initial ground disturbance along the ROW throughout the reporting period.

Secondary containment basins located adjacent to each transformer at wind turbines were observed being constructed during the reporting period in accordance with the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) MM-Water-9 (see photo 5).

Crews were observed erecting towers via the use of large cranes during this reporting period (see photo 6). All work activities were observed being completed within the approved work limits. Biological and archeological monitors were onsite during turbine assembly activities to verify that all activities were being completed within the approved work limits.

Construction activities along the access road between Highway S2 and the substation/switchyard continued during this reporting period. Crews were observed pouring concrete at the low water crossings along Dos Cabezas Road (see photo 7) and grading the road in preparation for paving, which is anticipated to occur during the following reporting period (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 4.22.13 through 4.28.13 includes:

- Access Roads – Install low water crossings on Dos Cabezas Road.
- Substation/Switchyard – Grading and gravel preparation for Dos Cabezas paving.
- O&M Facility – Final punch-list items.
- Collection, Trenching Cables – Demobilization.
- Turbine Installation – Complete.
- Revegetation – WT 120, 122, 126 and 128.

### 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.	Approved	4.12.13

## Photographs from Week



**Photo 1:** Construction crews water down access roads during construction activities in accordance with the Dust Control Plan (MM-Air-1).



**Photo 2:** A Habitat Restoration Specialist implements restoration activities within temporary work areas in accordance with MM-Veg-2b and the Habitat Restoration/ Revegetation Plan (HRRP).



**Photo 3:** In accordance with Section 4.5.9 of the HRRP, vertical mulch is placed in temporary work areas to help reduce wind speed at ground level.



**Photo 4:** Waste bins are covered at the Laydown Yard in accordance with the Raven Control Plan (MM-Wild-1j).



**Photo 5:** A secondary containment area is constructed around the perimeter of transformers located adjacent to wind turbines.



**Photo 6:** Large cranes are utilized to erect wind turbines associated with Phase II.



**Photo 7:** Work activities continued during this reporting period associated with constructing low water crossings along Dos Cabezas Road.



**Photo 8:** Grading activities being completed along the access road from Highway S-2 to the Substation/Switchyard in preparation for paving.