



## **BLM Authorized Officer Biweekly Report**

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**Project:** Ocotillo Wind Energy Facility Project

### **Weekly Project Update**

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**Reporting Period:** 8.5.13 through 8.18.13

### **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. This biweekly report covers construction activities for the reporting period of 8.5.13 through 8.18.13.

### **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 Debris (MM-Wild-1J)* – Construction debris was identified by a BLM surface compliance technician near the location where the turbine blade fell to the ground at Wind Turbine 156. The lead biologist and construction crews were notified of the construction debris and upon notification being provided both the lead biologist and construction crews worked together to remove construction debris.

*Habitat Restoration/Revegetation Plan (HRRP) (MM-VEG-2b)* – Tire tracks were identified by a BLM surface compliance technician in areas that had been previously restored along the access

road leading to Wind Turbine 155. The lead biologist was notified of the tire tracks and the following day a crew was observed raking out the tire tracks. Area restoration signs along with features such as rocks and straw wattles have been installed to notify the public where restoration is occurring.

### **Construction Activities**

As identified in Weekly Report #62, ongoing construction activities along the right-of-way consist of repairing wind turbine blades via use of cranes (see photo 1) and reinforcing gate posts associated with the access control gates (see photo 2).

### **Compliance**

ECMs conducted daily site observations that 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.

OE 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.

Construction activities were observed being completed in accordance with the Dust Control Plan (MM-AIR-1) throughout the reporting period. Water trucks were routinely observed watering down areas of active construction to ensure dust emissions were minimized during construction in accordance with the Dust Control Plan (see photo 3).

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. Construction crews were observed placing plywood over excavations associated with the gate reinforcement activities at the completion of daily construction activities to prevent wildlife entry in accordance with MM-WILD-1B (see photo 4). In accordance with MM-WILD-2b and the Nesting Bird Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, a survey for avian nesting will be conducted no more than 7 days prior to construction activities. Biologists approved by the BLM were observed completing pre construction nesting bird surveys in accordance with the Nesting Bird Mitigation and Monitoring Plan and MM-Wild-2b throughout the reporting period (see photo 5). Biological monitors were also present in areas of ground disturbance to ensure construction activities remain within the approved work areas per MM-VEG-1A (see photo 6).

Construction activities related to site restoration of areas re-disturbed during blade replacement work continued this week, including placement of vertical mulch in accordance with MM-VEG-2b and the associated Habitat Restoration/Revegetation Plan (HRRP) (see photo 7). Re-vegetation activities also included de-compacting and replacing topsoil in areas where construction activities are complete.

Construction crew members were observed implementing good site management practices in accordance with Section 4.3.4 of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and MM-HYD-9. Containment bins were observed beneath portable toilets and construction equipment staged along the right-of-way (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: Construction activities anticipated for next week includes reinforcing access control gates and reclamation activities at the turbine blade replacement sites.

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>• Buried Site Sensitivity Testing</li> </ul> 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.  Structure installation at the SDG&E Energy switchyard.	Yes

**Notice to Proceed (NTP)**

NTP No.	Date Issued	Project Component	Conditions Included (Y/N)
2	6.27.12	<p>Clearing and grading of the following facilities:</p> <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> <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>	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 ROD.	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 established crane pad sites and wind turbine blade staging areas for blade replacement activities during this reporting period.



**Photo 2:** Crews reinforce access control gates located at the entrances to wind turbine pad sites. The access control gates are required in accordance with the Access Control Plan approved by the BLM (MM-CUL-11).



**Photo 3:** Water trucks are utilized during construction activities to minimize dust emissions in accordance with the Dust Control Plan (MM-AIR-1).



**Photo 4:** Construction crews place plywood over excavations at the completion of daily construction activities to prevent wildlife entry (MM-WILD-1B).



**Photo 5:** A BLM approved biologist completes nesting bird surveys prior to construction activities (MM-WILD-2B).



**Photo 6:** Construction crews place survey stakes to identify the approved work limits prior to ground disturbing activities (MM-VEG-1A).



**Photo 7:** In accordance with Section 4.5.9 of the HRRP vertical mulch is placed in temporary work areas to reduce wind speed at ground level (MM-VEG-2B).



**Photo 8:** Containment bins are placed beneath construction equipment to minimize the potential for equipment fluids to be discharged onto the ground in accordance with the SWPPP (MM-HYD-9).