



County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE LITTLE BEAR SOLAR PROJECT

Pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act, notice is hereby given that a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) (EIR No. 7225) has been prepared for the Little Bear Solar Project (Project), Unclassified Conditional Use Permit (CUP) Application Nos. 3550, 3551, 3552, 3553, and 3577, and is available for review.

Project Location: The Project site is located approximately 13 miles east of Interstate 5 (I-5), approximately 2 miles southwest of the City of Mendota, and adjacent to and west of State Route 33 (SR-33), in unincorporated Fresno County (County). The Project site is comprised of approximately 1,288 acres of Westlands Water District-owned lands, and would encompass the six parcels bounded by West California Avenue to the north, SR-33 to the east, West Jensen Avenue to the south, and San Bernardino Avenue to the west. A figure showing the location of the Project is provided below. All of the parcels are within the jurisdictional boundaries of Fresno County, and located within Sections 13 and 14 of Township 14 South and Range 14 East of the Mt. Diablo Baseline and Meridian.

Project Description: The Project is proposed by Little Bear Solar 1, LLC, Little Bear Solar 3, LLC, Little Bear Solar 4, LLC, Little Bear Solar 5, LLC, and Little Bear Solar 6, LLC (collectively, Applicant). The Applicant has applied to the Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning for five County CUPs to construct, operate, and ultimately decommission up to 180-megawatt (MW) photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating facilities and associated infrastructure, to be known as Little Bear Solar 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6. The Project would consist of five individual facilities (each, a Facility), ranging from approximately 161 to 322 acres, with a 60-foot monopole design telecommunications tower and associated equipment proposed at the Little Bear Solar 1 site. Each Facility would include a substation, inverters, transformers, and a 34.5 kilovolt (kV) overhead collection system, and could include an energy storage system. Other necessary infrastructure would include a permanent operation and maintenance (O&M) building, water storage, meteorological data system, access roads, telecommunications infrastructure, and security fencing. These Facilities would connect to the electrical grid at the existing Mendota Substation, which is owned and operated by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) approximately 2 miles west.

Little Bear 1 would require the installation of a new 115 kV interconnection to the adjacent North Star Solar Project's existing substation, which is located on the northeast corner of San Bernardino Avenue and California Avenue. Interconnection of Little Bears 3, 4, 5, and 6 would require the installation of a new, approximately 2-mile 115 kV generation-tie (gen-tie) line across the Project site. The new gen-tie line would connect in to the existing North Star gen-tie line at the southwest corner of San Bernardino Avenue and California Avenue to complete the interconnection to PG&E's existing Mendota Substation. The Project would operate year-round to generate electricity during daylight hours.

Potential Project Impacts Identified in the DEIR: This DEIR examines the potential impacts of the Project and alternatives on the environment. All of the resource areas identified in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Appendix G Checklist were studied: Aesthetics; Agriculture and Forestry Resources; Air Quality; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources; Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology and Water Quality; Land Use and Planning; Mineral Resources; Noise and Vibration; Population and Housing; Public Services; Recreation; Transportation and Traffic; Tribal Cultural Resources; and Utilities and Service Systems. Energy Conservation, addressed in CEQA Guidelines Appendix F, also has been examined.

Significant and Unavoidable Impacts Identified in the DEIR: The Project would not result in any significant and unavoidable impacts. The Project would have a less-than-significant impact, or a less-than-significant impact with the implementation of recommended mitigation measures, regarding the following resource considerations: Aesthetics; Agriculture and Forestry Resources; Air Quality; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Energy Conservation; Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources; Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology and Water Quality; Noise and Acoustics; Population and Housing; Transportation and Traffic; Tribal Cultural Resources; and Utilities and Service Systems. The Project would have no impact to any of the following resource considerations: Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Public Services, and Recreation.

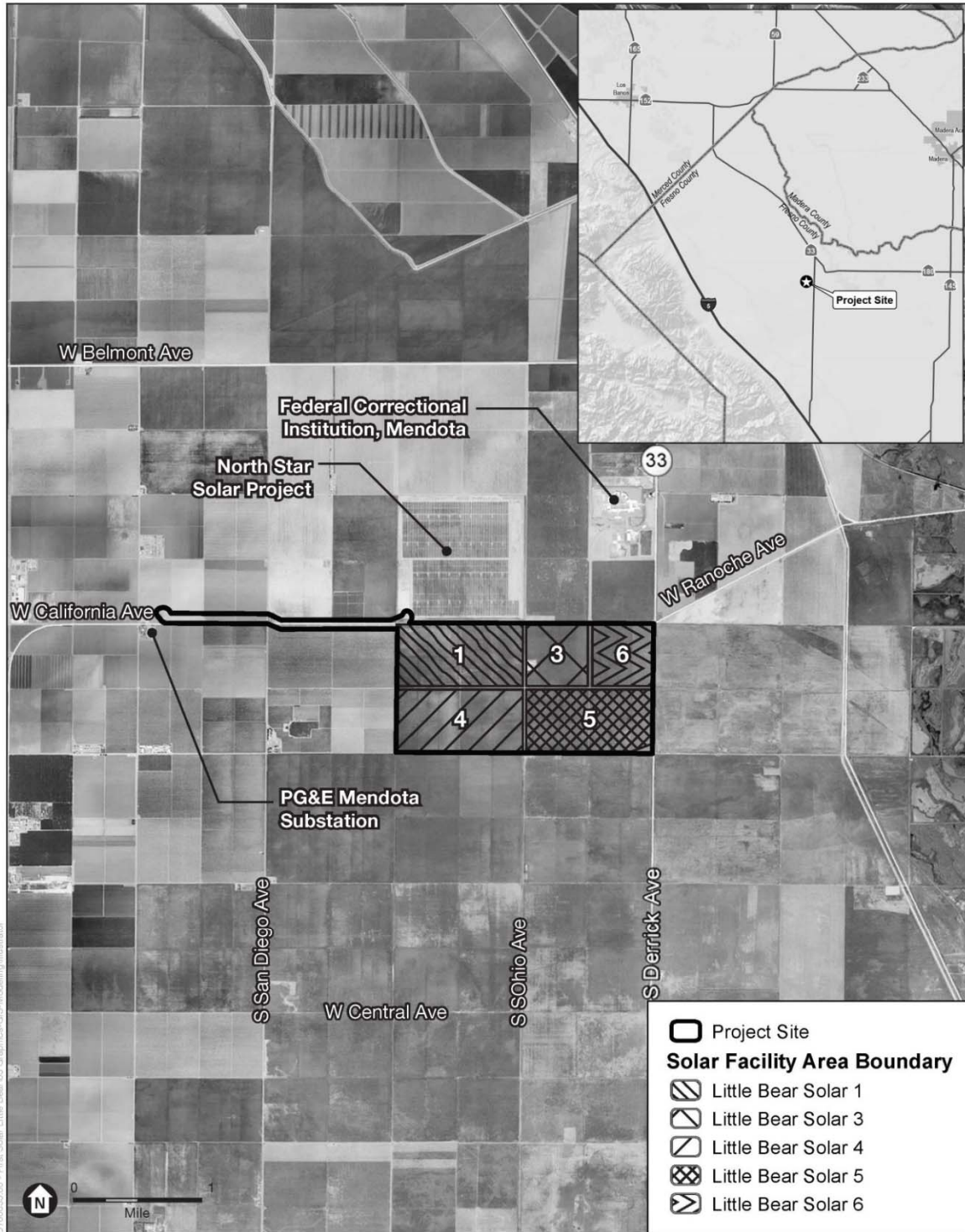
DEIR Review and Public Comment: The 45-day review and comment period for the DEIR begins August 31, 2018 and ends at 5 p.m. October 15, 2018. Printed copies or a CD copy of the DEIR and the documents referenced in the DEIR are available for inspection at each of the following locations:

- Fresno County Public Works and Planning Department, 2220 Tulare Street, Fresno, CA;
- Fresno County Main Library, Reference Department, 2420 Mariposa Street, Fresno; CA;
- Fresno County Mendota Branch Library, 1246 Belmont Avenue, Mendota, CA; and
- Fresno County website: <http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/EIR>

County staff will hold a public meeting so members of community and other interested parties will have an opportunity to provide comments to County staff. The meeting will be held from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm October 2, 2018, at the City of Mendota City Council Chambers, located at 643 Quince Street, Mendota, CA 93640. The primary objectives of the meeting are to distribute DEIR information and to receive comments on the DEIR. Comments should be addressed to:

Attn: Christina Monfette
Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning
Development Services and Capital Projects Division
2220 Tulare Street, Sixth Floor
Fresno, CA 93721
Phone: (559) 600-4245 Fax: (559) 600-4200
Email: cmonfette@FresnoCountyCA.gov

In your written comment letter please reference: EIR #7225, Little Bear Solar Project. Please include your name, address, and phone number and/or email address so that we may contact you for clarification, if necessary. Persons with questions or requests for a public hearing notice may call Christina Monfette at (559) 600-4245 or email at cmonfette@FresnoCountyCA.gov. Electronic copies of the DEIR also are available upon request.



SOURCE: ESA, 2017

First Solar Little Bear

Figure 1
Little Bear Solar Project Site Location

