

# Document Root (Read-Only)

## Selected Document

**(New SCH Number) - MND - Initial Study No. 8116 and Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3718.**

Fresno County

Created - 3/27/2023 | Submitted - 3/28/2023

Ejaz Ahmad

## Document Details

### Lead Agency

Fresno County

### Document Type

Mitigated Negative Declaration

### Document Status

Submitted

### Title

Initial Study No. 8116 and Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3718.

### Present Land Use

Farmland

## Document Description

Allow the construction, operation, and ultimate decommissioning of a battery energy storage system consisting of lithium-ion based battery modules housed in purpose-built metal enclosures with integrated power conversion equipment, fire suppression system, transformer and 115kV transmission poles for the overhead wires crossing McCall Avenue for interconnection to nearby PG&E Sanger substation. The project will be located on an approximately 11.3-acre portion of a 37.56-acre parcel in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture; 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District. The project site is located on the northeast corner of S. McCall and E. Jensen Avenues approximately 1.26 miles west of the city limits of City of Sanger (APN 314-080-36) (10018 E. Jensen Avenue) (Sup. Dist. 4).

## Attachments (Upload Project Documents)

CUP 3718 IS cklist.pdf

CUP 3718 IS. wu.pdf

CUP 3718 MMRP (Draft) 1.pdf

CUP 3718 MND(proposed).pdf

CUp 3718 NOC.pdf

CUP 3718 Routing Pkg.pdf

CUP 3718 Summary Form 1.pdf

CUP NOI .pdf

## Contacts

County of Fresno - *Ejaz Ahmad*

2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, Street Level

Fresno, CA 93721

Phone : (559) 600-4204

eahmad@fresnocountyca.gov

## Regions

## Counties

Fresno

## Cities

## Location Details

### Cross Streets

Northeast corner of S. McCall and E. Jensen Avenues

**Total Acres** - 37.56 | **Parcel Number** - 31408036 | **Township** - 14S | **Range** - 22E |  
**Section** - 17 | **Base** - Mt.Diab

## Local Action Types

Use Permit

## Development Types

Commercial (Sq. Ft. 493534, Acres 37.56, Employees 2)

## Project Issues

Aesthetics | Agriculture and Forestry Resources | Air Quality | Biological Resources |  
Cultural Resources | Energy | Flood Plain/Flooding | Geology/Soils |  
Greenhouse Gas Emissions | Hazards & Hazardous Materials | Hydrology/Water Quality |  
Land Use/Planning | Mandatory Findings of Significance | Mineral Resources | Noise |  
Population/Housing | Public Services | Recreation | Schools/Universities | Septic System |  
Solid Waste | Transportation | Tribal Cultural Resources | Utilities/Service Systems |  
Wetland/Riparian | Wildfire

## State Review Agencies (For State Review Period Only)

**Is this document subject to California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 15205 - Revi...**

Yes

**Is this document subject to California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 15206 - Proj...**

No

Air Resources Board | Conservation, Department of |  
Fish and Wildlife, Region 4 - Central, Fresno | Food and Agriculture, Department of |  
Forestry and Fire Protection, Department of |  
Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 5 - Fresno |  
SWRCB, Division of Drinking Water, District 23 | Water Resources, Department of

**State Review Period**

**State Review Started**

4/1/2023

**State Review Ended**

5/1/2023

**Local Review Period**

**Local Review Started**

4/1/2023

**Local Review Ended**

5/1/2023

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Signature

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Title

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Date



# Summary Form for Electronic Document Submittal

Form F

Lead agencies may include 15 hardcopies of this document when submitting electronic copies of Environmental Impact Reports, Negative Declarations, Mitigated Negative Declarations, or Notices of Preparation to the State Clearinghouse (SCH). The SCH also accepts other summaries, such as EIR Executive Summaries prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15123. Please include one copy of the Notice of Completion Form (NOC) with your submission and attach the summary to each electronic copy of the document.

SCH #: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Title: Initial Study No. 8116; Unclassified Conditiona Application No. 3718.

Lead Agency: County of Fresno

Contact Name: Ejaz Ahmad

Email: eahmad@fresnocountyca.gov Phone Number: (559) 600-4204

Project Location: Fresno Fresno  
*City* *County*

Project Description (Proposed actions, location, and/or consequences).

Allow the construction, operation, and ultimate decommissioning of a battery energy storage system consisting of lithium-ion based battery modules housed in purpose-built metal enclosures with integrated power conversion equipment, fire suppression system, transformer and 115kV transmission poles for the overhead wires crossing McCall Avenue for interconnection to nearby PG&E Sanger substation. The project will be located on an approximately 11.3-acre portion of a 37.56-acre parcel in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture; 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District. The project site is located on the northeast corner of S. McCall and E. Jensen Avenues approximately 1.26 miles west of the city limits of City of Sanger (APN: 314-080-36) (10018 E. Jensen Avenue) (Sup. Dist. 4).

Identify the project's significant or potentially significant effects and briefly describe any proposed mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid that effect.

AESTHETICS, D. The proposed project may result in the creation of new sources of light and glare in the area. The proposed mitigation requiring all lighting to be hooded and directed away from adjacent properties and Public right-of-ways would result in a less than significant impact.

AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES, A. The project may have an impact on agricultural land. The proposed mitigation measures requiring restoration of site to its original condition for farming after 20-years of project operation , would result in a less than significant impact.

CULTURAL RESOURCES, A. B. C. The project may have an impact on cultural resources. The proposed mitigation measure requiring all work to be halted and an archeologist be called in to evaluate the findings and make any necessary mitigation recommendations, would result in a less than significant impact.

If applicable, describe any of the project's areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public.

No Known Controversies

Provide a list of the responsible or trustee agencies for the project.

None other than the Lead Agency (Fresno County)

### Notice of Completion & Environmental Document Transmittal

Mail to: State Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 3044, Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 (916) 445-0613  
For Hand Delivery/Street Address: 1400 Tenth Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

SCH #

Project Title: Initial Study No. 8116 (Apache Energy Storage 1, LLC )

Lead Agency: County of Fresno Contact Person: Ejaz Ahmad  
Mailing Address: 2220 Tulare Street, Sixth Floor Phone: (559) 600-4204  
City: Fresno Zip: 93721 County: Fresno

Project Location: County: Fresno City/Nearest Community: City of Sanger  
Cross Streets: Northeast corner of McCall and Jensen Ave, 1,26 miles west of the City of Sanger . Zip Code:  
Longitude/Latitude (degrees, minutes and seconds): ° ' " N / ° ' " W Total Acres: 37.58  
Assessor's Parcel No.: 314-080-36 Section: 17 Twp.: 14S Range: 22E Base: Mt. Diablo  
Within 2 Miles: State Hwy #: Waterways:  
Airports: - Railways: - Schools: -

#### Document Type:

CEQA:  NOP  Draft EIR NEPA:  NOI Other:  Joint Document  
 Early Cons  Supplement/Subsequent EIR  EA  Final Document  
 Neg Dec (Prior SCH No.)  Draft EIS  Other:  
 Mit Neg Dec Other:  FONSI

#### Local Action Type:

General Plan Update  Specific Plan  Rezone  Annexation  
 General Plan Amendment  Master Plan  Prezone  Redevelopment  
 General Plan Element  Planned Unit Development  Use Permit  Coastal Permit  
 Community Plan  Site Plan  Land Division (Subdivision, etc.)  Other:

#### Development Type:

Residential: Units \_\_\_\_\_ Acres \_\_\_\_\_  
 Office: Sq.ft. \_\_\_\_\_ Acres \_\_\_\_\_ Employees \_\_\_\_\_  
 Commercial: Sq.ft. \_\_\_\_\_ Acres 37.56 Employees \_\_\_\_\_  
 Industrial: Sq.ft. \_\_\_\_\_ Acres \_\_\_\_\_ Employees \_\_\_\_\_  
 Educational: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Recreational: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Water Facilities: Type \_\_\_\_\_ MGD \_\_\_\_\_  
 Transportation: Type \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mining: Mineral \_\_\_\_\_  
 Power: Type \_\_\_\_\_ MW \_\_\_\_\_  
 Waste Treatment: Type \_\_\_\_\_ MGD \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hazardous Waste: Type \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Project Issues Discussed in Document:

Aesthetic/Visual  Fiscal  Recreation/Parks  Vegetation  
 Agricultural Land  Flood Plain/Flooding  Schools/Universities  Water Quality  
 Air Quality  Forest Land/Fire Hazard  Septic Systems  Water Supply/Groundwater  
 Archeological/Historical  Geologic/Seismic  Sewer Capacity  Wetland/Riparian  
 Biological Resources  Minerals  Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading  Growth Inducement  
 Coastal Zone  Noise  Solid Waste  Land Use  
 Drainage/Absorption  Population/Housing Balance  Toxic/Hazardous  Cumulative Effects  
 Economic/Jobs  Public Services/Facilities  Traffic/Circulation  Other:

#### Present Land Use/Zoning/General Plan Designation:

Farmland/AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural)/Agriculture

#### Project Description: (please use a separate page if necessary)

Allow the construction, operation, and ultimate decommissioning of a battery energy storage system consisting of lithium-ion based battery modules housed in purpose-built metal enclosures with integrated power conversion equipment, fire suppression system, transformer and 115kV transmission poles for the overhead wires crossing McCall Avenue for interconnection to nearby PG&E Sanger substation. The project will be located on an approximately 11.3-acre portion of a 37.56-acre parcel in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture; 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District. The project site is located on the northeast corner of S. McCall and E. Jensen Avenues approximately 1,26 miles west of the city limits of City of Sanger (APN 314-080-36) (10018 E. Jensen Avenue, Sanger) (SUP. DIST. 4).

Note: The State Clearinghouse will assign identification numbers for all new projects. If a SCH number already exists for a project (e.g. Notice of Preparation or previous draft document) please fill in.

**Reviewing Agencies Checklist**

Lead Agencies may recommend State Clearinghouse distribution by marking agencies below with and "X".  
If you have already sent your document to the agency please denote that with an "S".


- |                                                                                 |                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Resources Board                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Office of Historic Preservation                                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boating & Waterways, Department of                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Office of Public School Construction                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> California Emergency Management Agency                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation, Department of                                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> California Highway Patrol                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Pesticide Regulation, Department of                                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans District # _____                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Utilities Commission                                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Division of Aeronautics                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional WQCB #5 _____                                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Planning                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Resources Agency                                                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Central Valley Flood Protection Board                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Resources Recycling and Recovery, Department of                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coachella Valley Mtns. Conservancy                     | <input type="checkbox"/> S.F. Bay Conservation & Development Comm.                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Commission                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> San Gabriel & Lower L.A. Rivers & Mtns. Conservancy                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colorado River Board                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> San Joaquin River Conservancy                                              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation, Department of                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Santa Monica Mtns. Conservancy                                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corrections, Department of                             | <input type="checkbox"/> State Lands Commission                                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Delta Protection Commission                            | <input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Clean Water Grants                                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education, Department of                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Quality                                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Commission                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Rights                                                        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fish & Game Region #4 _____                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Tahoe Regional Planning Agency                                             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Food & Agriculture, Department of           | <input type="checkbox"/> Toxic Substances Control, Department of                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forestry and Fire Protection, Department of | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Resources, Department of                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Services, Department of                        |                                                                                                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health Services, Department of              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>US Fish &amp; Wildlife</u>                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing & Community Development                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Native American Heritage Commission                    |                                                                                                     |

**Local Public Review Period (to be filled in by lead agency)**

Starting Date April 1, 2023 Ending Date May 1, 2023

**Lead Agency (Complete if applicable):**

Consulting Firm: <u>County of Fresno</u>	Applicant: <u>Apache Energy Storage 1, LLC c/o Cory Haynes</u>
Address: <u>2220 Tulare Street, 6th Floor</u>	Address: <u>55 Rechnology Drive, Suite 102</u>
City/State/Zip: <u>Fresno, CA 93721</u>	City/State/Zip: <u>Lowell, MA 01851</u>
Contact: <u>Ejaz Ahmad, Project Planner</u>	Phone: <u>(706)296-4184</u>
Phone: <u>(550)600-4204</u>	

Signature of Lead Agency Representative:  Date: 3-24-23

Authority cited: Section 21083, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 21161, Public Resources Code.



E202310000083

# County of Fresno

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

## NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

FILED  
MAR 27 2023 TIME

By \_\_\_\_\_  
FRESNO COUNTY CLERK  
DEPUTY

For County Clerk's Stamp

Notice is hereby given that the County of Fresno has prepared Initial Study Application (IS) No. 8116 pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act for the following proposed project:

**INITIAL STUDY NO. 8116 for UNCLASSIFIED CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION NO. 3718** filed by **APACHE ENERGY STORAGE 1, LLC**, proposing to allow the construction, operation, and ultimate decommissioning of a battery energy storage system consisting of lithium-ion based battery modules housed in purpose-built metal enclosures with integrated power conversion equipment, fire suppression system, transformer and 115kV transmission poles for the overhead wires crossing McCall Avenue for interconnection to nearby PG&E Sanger substation. The project will be located on an approximately 11.3-acre portion of a 37.56-acre parcel in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture; 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District. The project site is located on the northeast corner of S. McCall and E. Jensen Avenues approximately 1.26 miles west of the city limits of City of Sanger (APN: 314-080-36) (10018 E. Jensen Avenue) (Sup. Dist. 4).

(hereafter, the "Proposed Project")

The County of Fresno has determined that it is appropriate to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Proposed Project. The purpose of this Notice is to (1) provide notice of the availability of IS Application No. 8116 and the draft Mitigated Negative Declaration and request written comments thereon; and (2) provide notice of the public hearing regarding the Proposed Project.

### Public Comment Period

The County of Fresno will receive written comments on the Proposed Project and Mitigated Negative Declaration from April 1, 2023 through May 1, 2023.

Email written comments to [eahmad@co.fresno.ca.us](mailto:eahmad@co.fresno.ca.us), or mail comments to:

Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning  
Development Services and Capital Projects Division  
Attn: Ejaz Ahmad  
2220 Tulare Street, Suite A  
Fresno, CA 93721

E202310000083

IS Application No. 8116 and the draft Mitigated Negative Declaration may be viewed at the above address Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (except holidays). An electronic copy of the draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Proposed Project may be obtained from Ejaz Ahmad at the addresses above.

**PROGRAM ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II covers the programs, services, activities, and facilities owned or operated by state and local governments like the County of Fresno ("County"). Further, the County promotes equality of opportunity and full participation by all persons, including persons with disabilities. Towards this end, the County works to ensure that it provides meaningful access to people with disabilities to every program, service, benefit, and activity, when viewed in its entirety. Similarly, the County also works to ensure that its operated or owned facilities that are open to the public provide meaningful access to people with disabilities.

To help ensure this meaningful access, the County will reasonably modify policies/ procedures and provide auxiliary aids/services to persons with disabilities. If, as an attendee or participant at the meeting, you need additional accommodations such as an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter, an assistive listening device, large print material, electronic materials, Braille materials, or taped materials, please contact the Current Planning staff as soon as possible during office hours at (559) 600-4497 or at [jpotthurst@fresnocountyca.gov](mailto:jpotthurst@fresnocountyca.gov). Reasonable requests made at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting will help to ensure accessibility to this meeting. Later requests will be accommodated to the extent reasonably feasible.

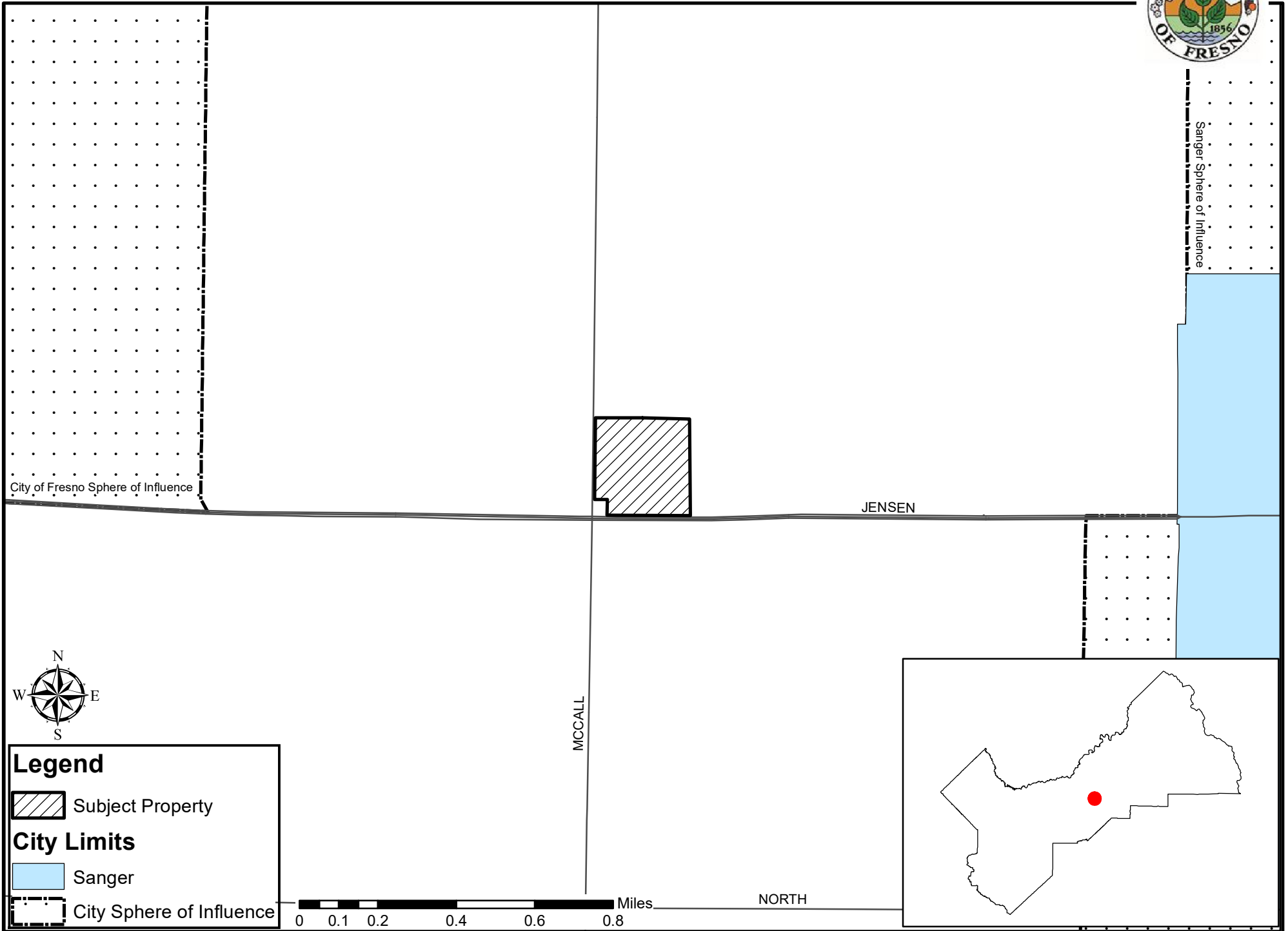
### **Public Hearing**

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider approving the Proposed Project and the Mitigated Negative Declaration on May 18, 2023, at 8:45 a.m., or as soon thereafter as possible, in Room 301, Hall of Records, 2281 Tulare Street, Fresno, California 93721. Interested persons are invited to appear at the hearing and comment on the Proposed Project and draft Mitigated Negative Declaration.

For questions, please call Ejaz Ahmad at (559) 600-4204.

Published: March 31, 2023

# LOCATION MAP





# County of Fresno

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

## INITIAL STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

1. **Project title:**  
Initial Study No. 8116 and Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3718
2. **Lead agency name and address:**  
Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning  
Development Services and Capital Projects Division  
2220 Tulare Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Fresno, CA 93721-2104
3. **Contact person and phone number:**  
Ejaz Ahmad, Planner, (559) 600-4204
4. **Project location:**  
The project site is located on the northeast corner of McCall and Jensen Avenues and is approximately 1.24 miles west of the city limits of City of Sanger (APN: 314-080-36) (10018 E. Jensen Avenue) (Sup. Dist. 4).
5. **Project sponsor's name and address:**  
Apache Energy Storage 1, LLC.  
55 Technology Dr. Suite 102.  
Lowell, MA 01851
6. **General Plan designation:**  
Agriculture
7. **Zoning:**  
AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size)
8. **Description of project: (Describe the whole action involved, including, but not limited to, later phases of the project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for its implementation. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)**  
Allow the construction, operation, and ultimate decommissioning of a battery energy storage system consisting of lithium-ion based battery modules housed in purpose-built metal enclosures with integrated power conversion equipment, fire suppression system, transformer and 115kV transmission poles for the overhead wires crossing McCall Avenue for interconnection to nearby PG&E Sanger substation. The project will be located on an approximately 11.3-acre portion of a 37.56-acre parcel in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture; 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District.
9. **Surrounding land uses and setting: Briefly describe the project's surroundings:**  
The surrounding land uses are active and non-active farmland with sparse single-family homes.
10. **Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.)**  
None.
11. **Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that**



**includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?**

NOTE: Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (See Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.2.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code Section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code Section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

The project site is not located in an area sensitive to archeological resources. Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52, the project was routed to participating California Native American Tribes namely Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe, Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians, Dumna Wo Wah Tribal Government, and Table Mountain Rancheria offering them an opportunity to consult under Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080.3(b) with a 30-day window to formally respond to the County letter. No tribe expressed concerns with the project or requested for consultation. The Table Mountain Rancheria indicated that in the unlikely event cultural resources are identified, the tribe should be notified. With the implementation of Mitigation Measure included in Section V CULTURAL ANALYSIS of this report, any potential impact to tribal cultural resources would be reduced to a less than significant.

**ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:**

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- |                                                             |                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials      | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems          | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |                                                             |

**DETERMINATION OF REQUIRED ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT:**

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

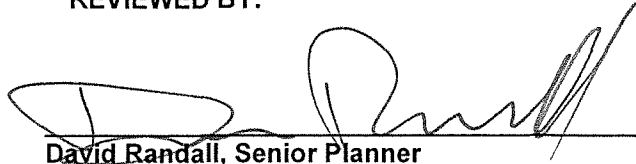
- I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment. **A NEGATIVE DECLARATION WILL BE PREPARED.**
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the Mitigation Measures described on the attached sheet have been added to the project. **A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION WILL BE PREPARED.**
- I find the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required
- I find that as a result of the proposed project, no new effects could occur, or new Mitigation Measures would be required that have not been addressed within the scope of a previous Environmental Impact Report.

**PERFORMED BY:**

**REVIEWED BY:**



Ejaz Ahmad, Planner



David Randall, Senior Planner

Date: 3-24-2023

Date: 3/28/23

EA:  
G:\4360Devs&Pln\PROJSEC\PROJDOCS\CUP\3700-3799\3718\IS-CEQA\CUP 3718 IS cklist.doc

**INITIAL STUDY  
ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM  
(Initial Study No. 8116 and  
Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No.  
3718)**

The following checklist is used to determine if the proposed project could potentially have a significant effect on the environment. Explanations and information regarding each question follow the checklist.

1 = No Impact

2 = Less Than Significant Impact

3 = Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated

4 = Potentially Significant Impact

**I. AESTHETICS**

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

- 1   a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?
- 1   b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?
- 2   c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?
- 3   d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

**II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES**

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

- 3   a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?
- 1   b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?
- 2   c) Conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production?
- 2   d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?
- 2   e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

**III. AIR QUALITY**

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

- 2   a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan?
- 2   b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?
- 2   c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?
- 2   d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

**IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

Would the project:

- 1   a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- 1   b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- 1   c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally-protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?
- 1   d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?
- 1   e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?
- 1   f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state Habitat Conservation Plan?

**V. CULTURAL RESOURCES**

Would the project:

- 3   a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?
- 3   b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?
- 3   c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

**VI. ENERGY**

Would the project:

- 1   a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation?
- 1   b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

**VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

Would the project:

- a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
  - 1 i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?
  - 1 ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?
  - 1 iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
  - 1 iv) Landslides?
- 2 b) Result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil?
- 2 c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?
- 1 d) Be located on expansive soil as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?
- 1 e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?
- 1 f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

**VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

Would the project:

- 2 a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?
- 2 b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

**IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

Would the project:

- 2 a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?
- 2 b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?
- 1 c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?
- 1 d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?
- 1 e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?
- 1 f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
- 2 g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

**X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY**

Would the project:

- 2 a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?
- 1 b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?
- 2 c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?
  - 2 i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site;
  - 2 ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off site;
  - 2 iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or
  - 2 iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?
- 1 d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of
- e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

**XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING**

Would the project:

- 1 a) Physically divide an established community?
- 2 b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

**XII. MINERAL RESOURCES**

Would the project:

- 1 a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?
- 1 b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local General Plan, Specific Plan or other land use plan?

**XIII. NOISE**

Would the project result in:

- 2 a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?
- 2 b) Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?
- 1 c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, exposing people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

**XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING**

Would the project:

- 1 a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

- 1 b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.)

#### XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

- 2 a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically-altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically-altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:
- 2 i) Fire protection?
- 1 ii) Police protection?
- 1 iii) Schools?
- 1 iv) Parks?
- 1 v) Other public facilities?

#### XVI. RECREATION

Would the project:

- 1 a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?
- 1 b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

#### XVII. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

- 2 a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?
- 2 b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?
- 2 c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?
- 1 d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

#### XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- 2 a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:
- 2 i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or
- 2 ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section

#### XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

- 1 a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?
- 1 b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?
- 1 c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?
- 1 d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?
- 1 e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

#### XX. WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

- 1 a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
- 1 b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?
- 1 c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?
- 1 d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

#### XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

- 2 a) Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?
- 2 b) Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)
- 2 c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Documents Referenced:

This Initial Study is referenced by the documents listed below. These documents are available for public review at the County of Fresno, Department of Public Works and Planning, Development Services and Capital Projects Division, 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, Fresno, California (corner of M & Tulare Streets).

Fresno County General Plan, Policy Document and Final EIR  
Fresno County Zoning Ordinance  
Important Farmland 2016 Map, State Department of Conservation  
Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Analysis by Jacobs Engineering Inc, dated December 9, 2022  
Pest Management Plan by New Leaf Energy, dated February 23, 2023  
Reclamation Plan by New Leaf Energy, dated March 2, 2023

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# County of Fresno

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

## EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

- APPLICANT: Apache Energy Storage 1, LLC
- APPLICATION NOS.: Initial Study No. 8116 and Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3718
- DESCRIPTION: Allow the construction, operation, and ultimate decommissioning of a battery energy storage system consisting of lithium-ion based battery modules housed in purpose-built metal enclosures with integrated power conversion equipment, fire suppression system, transformer and 115kV transmission poles for the overhead wires crossing McCall Avenue for interconnection to nearby PG&E Sanger substation. The project will be located on an approximately 11.3-acre portion of a 37.56-acre parcel in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture; 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District.
- LOCATION: The project site is located on the northeast corner of S. McCall and E. Jensen Avenues approximately 1.26 miles west of the city limits of City of Sanger (APN 314-080-36) (10018 E. Jensen Avenue) (Sup. Dist. 4).

### I. AESTHETICS

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

- A. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; or
- B. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The 37.56 acres project site borders with McCall and Jensen Avenues. McCall Avenue is not designated as a scenic drive/highway, but Jensen Avenue is in the Open Space and Conservation element of County General Plan (Scenic Roadways, Figure OS-2).

Under General Plan Policy OS-L.3, development on a Scenic Roadway shall adhere to a 200-foot setback of natural open space. In the case of subject proposal, the 11.3-acre portion of the 37.56-acre project site to be developed with the proposed battery energy storage system is located within the northerly most portion of the property more than 500 feet from Jensen Avenue and therefore is not interfering with the scenic setback. There are no scenic vistas or scenic resources, including trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings on or near the site that will be impacted by the subject proposal. The project will have no impact on scenic resources.

- C. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project would allow battery modules housed in metal enclosures with integrated power conversion equipment, and 115kV transmission poles for the overhead wires crossing McCall Avenue for interconnection to PG&E Sanger substation located at the northwest corner of McCall and Jensen Avenues. The energy storage enclosures would be at a maximum of 12 feet in height enclosed by 7-foot-high perimeter fencing. The transmission poles will be 55 feet in height.

The project site has been farmed on and off since 1937. The area consists of agricultural fields with sparse single-family homes. Given the landscape of the area, low height modules secured by perimeter fencing, and the proposed electric pole being comparable in height to poles in the area would not significantly change the visual characteristics of the project area. The visual impact would be less than significant.

- D. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

Per the Applicant's Operational Statement, outdoor light will be used during construction, but not during the project operation. Should any outdoor lighting be installed, potential of generating glare in the area increases. To minimize any light and glare impact, the project will adhere to the following Mitigation Measure.

\* **Mitigation Measure:**

1. *All outdoor lighting shall be hooded and directed downward so as not to shine on adjacent properties and public streets.*

## II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES



In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

- A. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION  
INCORPORATED:

The project is not in conflict with agricultural zoning and is allowed on agriculture land with discretionary approval and by adherence to the applicable General Plan Policies. The project site is classified as Prime Farmland on 2016 Fresno County Important Farmland Map and is not encumbered by Williamson Act Land Conservation Contract.

The Applicant, Borrego Solar Systems, Inc., has provided a response to a 14-point *Solar Facility Guidelines* (Guidelines) approved by the Fresno County Board of Supervisors on December 12, 2017. The applicant's response addresses all 14-points Guidelines information required of the project and has been provided to various agencies/departments for review and comments.

As noted in Item 1 and Item 2 of the Guidelines related to Agricultural History and Water Supply, the project site has been farmed on and off since 1937 and is located within the boundary of Consolidated Irrigation District. Per the applicant's Operational Statement, there is no onsite well, and the water needed for construction will come from offsite water resources. No water usage is anticipated during operation of the project.

As noted in Item 4 of the Guidelines related to the Soil Type, the soil of the subject parcel is Ramona Sandy Loam. This soils type is defined as ideal for growing crops because of its ability to release nutrients freely to plants, retain water to feed plants and allow excess water to flow away quickly and easily.

The agricultural nature of the project site will be impacted due to the loss of Prime Farmland while the site is being utilized for the proposed battery energy storage system. However, this loss is expected to be temporary and less than significant in that the project will occupy the site for a maximum of 20 years after which time all onsite improvements will be dismantled and removed from the site, and the site will be restored to its pre-project conditions for farming operations.

As noted in Item 6 of the Guidelines related to Reclamation Plan and corresponding information contained in the specifics of the Reclamation Plan, at the termination of the project operations, the system will be disconnected and transported offsite, and the site will be re-graded to the existing conditions. As part of the Reclamation Plan, an engineering cost estimate of reclaiming the site to its previous agricultural condition was required and has been provided by the Applicant.

The site restoration requirements will be included as a Mitigation Measure and be stipulated in a covenant between the applicant/property owner and the County of Fresno. Another Mitigation Measure which pertains to Item 8 of the Reclamation Plan would require that prior to issuance of building permits, financial assurances equal to the cost of reclaiming the land to its previous condition as nearly as possible based on an engineering cost estimate prepared for the project by Borrego Solar Systems, Inc., shall be submitted to ensure that the reclamation is performed according to the approved Plan.

Although, Fresno County Agricultural Commissioner's Office (Ag Commissioner) reviewed and expressed no concerns with the project, mitigation measures would require that the applicant shall keep the site free of weeds and rodents during the life of the project.

\* **Mitigation Measures:**

1. *A covenant shall be signed between the Applicant/property owner and the County of Fresno and shall run with the land requiring the site to be restored to agricultural uses at the cessation of 20 years of battery energy storage system.*
2. *Prior to the County of Fresno's issuance of the grading or any development permit, the project developer must enter into a reclamation agreement with the County of Fresno on terms and conditions acceptable to the County of Fresno, which reclamation agreement will require the project owner to (1) decommission, dismantle, and remove the project and reclaim the site to its pre-project condition in accordance with the approved Reclamation Plan, and (2) maintain a financial assurance to the County of Fresno, to secure the project owner's obligations under the reclamation agreement, in an amount sufficient to cover the costs of performing such obligations, as provided herein. Such financial assurance shall be in the form of cash and maintained through an escrow arrangement or other form of security acceptable at the discretion of the Board of Supervisors. The amount of the financial assurance under the reclamation agreement shall (1) initially cover the project owner's cost of performing its obligations under the reclamation agreement, as stated above, based on the final County of Fresno-approved design of the project, which cost estimate shall be provided by the project owner to the County of Fresno, and be subject to approval by the County of Fresno, and (2) be automatically increased annually, due to increases in costs, using the Engineering News-Record construction cost index. This initial cost estimate will consider any project components, other than Improvements, that are expected to be left in place at the request of and for the benefit of the subsequent landowner as long as the improvements are directly supportive*

*restoring the site to a viable agricultural use. (e.g., access roads, electrical lines, O&M building).*

- 3. The project shall substantially adhere to the provisions in the Draft Reclamation Plan as submitted to the Planning Commission and prepared for the decommissioning of the facility when operation ceases. Reasonable modifications may be made to the Plan to address changes of scope and configuration of the final Site Plan and improvements. The draft Reclamation Plan shall be reviewed and approved as final by the County of Fresno, Department of Public Works and Planning prior to the issuance of any development permits.*
- 4. The Reclamation Plan shall be revised to provide for an annual increase in costs at three percent (3%) or tied to the Engineering News-Record construction cost index, or other mechanism acceptable to the Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning.*
- 5. The project operator, throughout the life of the project operation, shall keep the project site free of rodent's infestation in accordance with the Pest Management Plan prepared for the project by New Leaf Energy dated February 23, 2023.*
- 6. The project operator, throughout the life of the project operation, shall keep the project site free of weeds and other vegetation that could harbor pests or become a fire hazard in accordance with the Pest Management Plan prepared for the project by New Leaf Energy dated February 23, 2023.*

As noted above, the project site is not under a Williamson Act Land Conservation Contract. Review of the project by Fresno County Agricultural Commissioners' Office (Ag Commissioner) and other departments/agencies did not require Conservation Easement for the project as a method to protect agricultural land of equal or greater value as the land being converted to the proposed use. The proposed development is temporary in nature and the farmland it would occupy will be restored back to farming operations upon cessation of the use.

B. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project is not in conflict with current zoning and is an allowed use on land designated for AE (Exclusive Agricultural 20-acre minimum parcel size) with discretionary approval and adherence to the applicable General Plan Policies. The project site is not in Williamson Act Land Conservation Contract.

C. Conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production; or

D. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or

- E. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project site is not in an area designated for timberland or zoned for timberland production. No forests occur in the vicinity; therefore, no impacts to forests, conversion of forestland, or timberland zoning would occur because of the subject proposal.

According to the County Zoning Ordinance, the project site is zoned AE (Exclusive Agricultural 20-acre minimum parcel size) for farming and related uses. The project will temporarily convert a 11.3-acre portion of a 37.56-acre site (farmland) to a non-agricultural use (battery energy storage facility) for 20 years. At the end of 20 years of operation, all improvements on the property will be decommissioned, and the site will be brought back to its original condition for agriculture.

### III. AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

- A. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

*An Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Impact Analysis (AQ/GHG Analysis)* was prepared for the project by Jacobs Engineering Inc, dated December 9, 2022, to analyze air quality, greenhouse gas emissions and potential health risk impacts related to the proposed battery energy storage system. The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) reviewed the AQ/GHG Analysis and stated that the project specific annual criteria pollutant emissions from construction and operation are not expected to exceed any of the significance thresholds as identified in the District's Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts. The project, however, will be subject to the following regulatory requirements: District Rules 2010 and 2201 (Air Quality Permitting for Stationary Sources); District Rule 9510 (Indirect Source Review); District Rule 4002 (National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants); District Rule 4601 (Architectural Coatings); District Regulation VIII (Fugitive PM10 Prohibitions); District Rule 4102 (Nuisance) and District Rule 4641 (Cutback, Slow Cure, and Emulsified Asphalt, Paving and Maintenance Operations).

The primary pollutants of concern during project construction and operation are ROG, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) Guidance for Assessing and Monitoring Air Quality Impacts (GAMAQI) adopted in 2015 contains threshold for CO, NO<sub>x</sub>, ROG, SO<sub>x</sub> PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. The SJVAPCD's annual emission significance thresholds used for the project define

the substantial contribution for both operational and construction emissions are 10 tons per year ROG, 10 tons per year NO<sub>x</sub>, 100 tons per year CO, 27 tons per year SO<sub>x</sub>, 15 tons per year PM<sub>10</sub> and 15 tons per year PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

Per the *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Impact Analysis (AQ/GHG Analysis)*, the total 2024-25 project construction emissions (ton per year) would be 0.64 for ROG, 3.85 for NO<sub>x</sub>, 9.74 for CO, 0.02 for SO<sub>2</sub>, 1.7 for PM<sub>10</sub> and 0.57 for PM<sub>2.5</sub> which are less than the SJVAPCD CEQA thresholds for all pollutants analyzed.

Equipment to be used for project construction would meet applicable emission standards. The project will comply with applicable requirements of SJVAPCD Regulation VIII for prevention, reduction, and mitigation of fugitive dust emissions. The area disturbed during project construction would be greater than 5 acres; therefore, a dust control plan will be prepared for the project construction to identify fugitive dust sources at the construction site and describe the dust-control measures to be implemented before, during, and after any dust-generating activity for the duration of the project construction.

Estimated construction emissions from the Project would exceed 2 tons per year for NO<sub>x</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>. Therefore, the project will comply with Rule 9150 requirements to reduce the NO<sub>x</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> construction emissions through onsite emission reductions, offsite emission offsets, or a combination of the two. Because the project would comply with applicable SJVAPCD rules and the construction emissions would be below the CEQA emission thresholds, the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan; thus, it would have less than significant impacts during construction.

During the operational phase, the facility would be unstaffed. Vehicle trips associated with the routine inspection and maintenance activities would be infrequent (one to two trips per quarter) and the emissions would be negligible. Therefore, the project operation is not expected to cause emissions that would exceed any significance threshold or violate any SJVAPCD rule or regulation.

In summary, the project's construction and operation emissions would be lower than the SJVAPCD air emissions significance thresholds and would comply with applicable federal, state, and local rules and regulations. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan and would result in a less than significant impact.

- B. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) has determined that any project that would individually have a significant air quality impact would also be considered to have a significant cumulative air quality impact (SJVAPCD 2015a). As noted in III. A.

above, construction of the project will cause temporary emissions of criteria air pollutants; however, these short-term construction emissions will not exceed the applicable significance thresholds for any criteria pollutant for which the region is nonattainment.

Emissions occurring at or near the project area have the potential to create a localized impact also referred to as an air pollutant hotspot. Localized emissions are considered significant if when combined with background emissions, they would result in exceedance of air quality standard. In the Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts (GAMAQI), the SJVAPCD has provided guidance for screening localized impacts that establishes a threshold of 100 pounds per day of any criteria pollutant. If a project exceeds this screening threshold, ambient air quality modeling would be necessary. If the Project does not exceed 100 pounds per day of any criteria pollutant, it can be assumed that it would not cause a violation of an ambient air quality standard.

Per the *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Impact Analysis (AQ/GHG Analysis)*, onsite daily emissions from project construction were calculated by combining the emissions from construction activities that would potentially overlap during the same day. Onsite emissions include only those from the off-road construction equipment that would be operating at the construction site; emissions from worker commute, pickup trucks, and haul trucks are not included.

Per the *AQ/GHG Analysis*, the worst-case onsite daily emissions (pounds per day) would be 5.73 for ROG, 32.52 for NO<sub>x</sub>, 93.44 for CO, 0.17 for SO<sub>2</sub>, 13.71 for PM<sub>10</sub> and 8.03 for PM<sub>2.5</sub> which are less than less than the 100 pounds per day screening level for each criteria pollutant.

Localized construction impacts would be short term in nature and would last only for the duration of construction. The onsite construction emissions would be less than 100 pounds per day for each of the criteria pollutants from the construction site. Therefore, further analysis of localized air quality impacts using air dispersion modeling is not required. The project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any pollutant for which the region is in nonattainment under the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), and therefore would result in a less than significant impact.

Per AQ/GHG Analysis, the project will not result in emissions exceeding the SJVAPCD significance threshold, the project will not be subject to the implementation of Voluntary Emission Reduction Agreement (VIRA).

C. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Sensitive receptors for air quality include facilities or land uses that serve or house members of the population that are particularly sensitive to the effects of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly, and people with illnesses. Examples of sensitive receptors include schools, hospitals, and residential areas.

The project site is surrounded by open agricultural fields with sparse single-family homes. No schools or hospitals as sensitive receptors are located within 1.25 miles of the project site. The closest single-family residence is approximately 276 feet northwest of the project construction site.

As noted in III. B. above, the worst-case onsite daily emissions (pounds per day) for the project will be less than the SJVAPCD Air Quality Screening Thresholds of 100 for all pollutants analyzed. Therefore, the Project emissions of criteria pollutants would not cause localized impacts or expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

Exhaust emissions from construction equipment would contain Toxic Air Contaminants (TAC), such as Diesel Particulate Matter (DPM), with potential to cause cancer and noncancer chronic health effects in exposed populations. However, health risks from DPM are associated with long-term exposure and are typically evaluated based on lifetime exposure. As noted above, a single-family home is located approximately 276 feet northwest of the project construction site. The construction activities would be short term and would be limited to a relatively small area where only a few pieces of construction equipment would be operating at any time. Therefore, the project's construction emissions are not expected to result in long-term exposure of the nearby sensitive receptors to substantial DPM concentrations.

As described, exposure to TAC emissions from construction activities would be short term in nature, with minimal effects on the nearby sensitive receptors; long-term exposure to DPM from construction would not occur. In addition, the project would implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) during construction, including limits on idling times and maintaining equipment to minimize emissions and exposure of nearby sensitive receptors to construction-related pollutants. Emissions from the project construction would not cause substantial exposure of sensitive receptors. The associated health risks would be well below the SJVAPCD health risk thresholds.

The project operation would be unmanned, with negligible emissions from operational activities resulting in minimal emissions of air pollutants including TACs and would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

The project is not expected to result in significant Valley Fever-related impacts because fugitive dust-control measures, such as watering of exposed surfaces and disturbed areas, would reduce dust and minimize potential for exposure of workers and other receptors to *Coccidioides* spores. Further, employers in California are required to equip workers who may be exposed to dust with National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health-approved respiratory protection with particulate filters rated as N95, N99, N100, P100, or high-efficiency particulate air. Therefore, project-related impacts related to Valley Fever exposure would be less than significant.

- D. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Per the *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Impact Analysis (AQ/GHG Analysis)*, construction could potentially result in odorous exhaust emissions from use of gasoline- and diesel-fueled vehicles and equipment. However, these emissions would be intermittent and temporary and would dissipate with an increase in distance from the construction location. Given the temporary and intermittent nature of odor-generating construction activities, and the dispersion of emissions compared to the limited proximity and low number of potential receptors, construction of the project would not expose people to objectionable odors for an extended period or lead to odorous emissions that would adversely affect substantial numbers of people. Impacts associated with odors during construction would be less than significant.

The project would be a battery energy storage system, which is not expected to result in objectionable odors during operation. Therefore, the project operation would not result in emissions leading to odors that would adversely affect substantial numbers of people, and the impact would be less than significant.

#### IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- A. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- B. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposes construction and operation of a battery energy storage system on an 11.3-acre portion of a 37.56-acre parcel.

The project site has been disturbed by farming operation and contains no river or stream to hold riparian features that could potentially be impacted by the project. The immediate surrounding area is comprised of cultivated and uncultivated land with sparse single-family residences, including the PG&E Sanger substation to the west of the site.

The project will not have substantial adverse impact, directly or indirectly, on any special status species or their habitat, nor any plans, policies or regulations related to the protection of such resources.

The project was routed to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for review and comments. Neither agency offered any comments concerning the impact on biological resources.



- C. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

A query of the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Map shows no drainage pattern, aquatic feature, wetlands, waters of the United States or waters of the State of California present on or near the project site. The project will have no impact on wetland.

- D. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

As noted above, the project site and surrounding area is agricultural in nature and is located approximately 1.26 miles west of the City of Sanger's existing urban development. The area is not designated as a migratory wildlife corridor and the project site contains no water feature to provide for the migration of resident or migratory fish.

- E. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site contains no trees that would require removal due to the proposed development. There were no policies or ordinances for protecting biological resources identified as conflicting with the project.

- F. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state Habitat Conservation Plan?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state Habitat Conservation Plan were identified in conflict with the project.

## V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- A. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or

- B. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or
- C. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The project site is not in an area designated as highly or moderately sensitive for archeological resources. However, per the discussion in Section XVIII TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES below, in the unlikely event that cultural resources are unearthed during future construction activities on the property, the following actions shall be required to ensure that impacts to such cultural resources remain less than significant.

\* **Mitigation Measure:**

1. *In the event that cultural resources are unearthed during ground-disturbing activities, all work shall be halted in the area of the find. An Archeologist shall be called to evaluate the findings and make any necessary mitigation recommendations. If human remains are unearthed during ground-disturbing activities, no further disturbance it to occur until the Fresno County Sheriff-Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition. All normal evidence procedures should be followed by photos, reports, video, etc. If such remains are determined to be Native American, the Sheriff-Coroner must notify the Native American Commission within 24 hours.*

VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

- A. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation; or
- B. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will have a beneficial impact for energy resources and is not in conflict with state and local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

The project, consisting of a battery energy storage system, will add reliability to the California grid system to help meet the June 2021 California Public Utility Commission’s decision requiring 11,500 megawatts of new capacity additions to the California Independent System Operator system.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

A. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

1. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to Figure 9-3 of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report and the Earthquake Hazard Zone web application (EQZapp) maintained by the California Department of Conservation, the project site is not located near a known earthquake fault or rupture of a known earthquake fault. The project development will be subject to the applicable seismic standards of the California Building Standards Code.

2. Strong seismic ground shaking; or
3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Per Figure 9-5 of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report, in the event of a seismic hazard occurring, the project site is located on land identified as having a zero percent to 20 percent peak horizontal ground acceleration assuming a 10 percent probability in 50 years. The FCGPBR indicates that the potential of ground shaking is minimal in Fresno County. Due to the minimal peak horizontal ground acceleration risk and minimal ground shaking risk, the project is not subject to adverse risk from ground shaking or seismic-related ground failure.

4. Landslides?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Per Figure 9-6 of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report, the project site is not located in areas identified as having a landslide hazard. Review of the project site and surrounding area indicate that there are no steep slope areas in the vicinity.

B. Result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project development will increase the amount of impervious surface on the site. This increase would result in the loss of topsoil. However, the effects of the project on soil erosion and loss of topsoil would not be substantial as the project site is relatively flat with planned drainage facilities reducing effects of erosion and topsoil loss. The impact would be less than significant.

- C. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

No geologic unit or unstable soil was identified on the project site. The proposed development is subject to the most current building code which will ensure safe development of the site taking into consideration existing site conditions.

- D. Be located on expansive soil as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Per Figure 7-1 of the FCGPBR, the project site is not located in areas of Fresno County identified as having expansive soils.

- E. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project does not require construction of a wastewater disposal system.

- F. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No paleontological or unique geologic feature was identified on the project site. As such, the project will not destroy a unique paleontological or unique geologic feature.

## VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

- A. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Per the *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Impact Analysis (AQ/GHG Analysis)*, prepared for the project, a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis was conducted to estimate project emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>e (Carbon Dioxide Emissions) for construction and operation of the project. Estimated construction emissions over a two-year schedule would total 2190.78 metric tons per year of CO<sub>2</sub>. As the project would last for 20 years, the

amortized construction emission over 20 years would be 109.54 metric tons per year of CO<sub>2</sub>. As construction emissions are short-term impacts, the increase in GHG emissions is considered less than significant.

Direct emissions of GHG from the operation of vehicles or equipment would be negligible. The proposed facility would be unstaffed and would require minimal maintenance vehicle trips to the project site. GHG emissions during operation would result primarily from energy consumption. The indirect GHG emissions associated with long-term operation of the project were estimated shows that the indirect GHG emissions from the Project operation would be 582.73 MT per year.

The anticipated total GHG emissions of the amortized project construction emissions and operation emissions would be 692.27 MT per year, which is less than the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) interim GHG emission threshold of 900 MT per year.

- B. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

According to the *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Impact Analysis (AQ/GHG Analysis)* the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's CEQA guidance for GHGs states that a project would not have a significant GHG impact if it is consistent with an applicable plan to reduce GHG emissions. The project involves the construction, operation, and maintenance of a battery energy storage system that would add reliability to the California's electric grid.

Per the *AQ/GHG Analysis*, the project would be consistent with the provisions of Assembly Bill (AB) 32, Senate Bill (SB) 32, 2022 Scoping Plan (CARB 2022) and the Fresno Council of Governments (FCOG) Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). The project would also be consistent with SB 375 which requires metropolitan planning organizations to prepare an SCS in the RTP (Regional Transportation Plan). The FCOG's 2022 RTP/SCS links transportation funding decisions to land use to decrease GHG emissions from cars and light-duty trucks. The project would be unstaffed, and operational control would be from an offsite control room. Operational staff would perform periodic inspections and maintenance as necessary; therefore, the project would not affect the transportation and land use patterns analyzed or assumed in long-range planning in the FCOG's RTP/SCS.

No reviewing agencies and departments expressed concern with the project to indicate a significant impact from GHG generation or a conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. The project would therefore not contribute substantially to cumulative greenhouse gas emissions.

## VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

- A. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; or
- B. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Per the Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division review of the project, the following shall be required as Project Notes: 1) Facilities that use and/or store hazardous materials and/or hazardous wastes shall meet the requirements set forth in the California Health and Safety Code (HSC), Division 20, Chapter 6.95 and the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 22, Division 4.5; and 2) the project will handle hazardous materials and/or hazardous waste and will require submittal of a Hazardous Materials Business Plan pursuant to the HSC, Division 20, Chapter 6.95.

In considering the project scope and required compliance of Local and State requirements for hazardous materials as noted above, the project would have a less than significant impact.

- C. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

There are no existing or proposed schools within a quarter mile of the project site. The nearest school, Reagan Elementary School, is located approximately 1.27 miles east of the project site. The project will have no impact on the area schools.

- D. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Per the U.S. EPA's NEPAassist, the project site is not listed as a hazardous materials site. No impact would occur.

- E. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located within an airport land use plan and not within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. The nearest airport, Fresno-Yosemite International Airport, is approximately 6.45 miles northwest of the project site.

- F. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is in an area where existing emergency response times for fire protection, emergency medical services, and sheriff protection meet adopted standards. The project does not include any characteristics (e.g., permanent road closures) that would physically impair or otherwise interfere with emergency response or evacuation in the project vicinity. These conditions preclude the possibility of the proposed project conflicting with an emergency response or evacuation plan. No impacts would occur.

- G. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will not expose persons or structures to wildland fire hazards. Per Figure 9-9 of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report, the project site is outside of the State Responsibility area for wildland fire protection.

## X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

- A. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Per the Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division (Health Department) review of the project the following shall be included as Project Notes: 1) If any underground storage tank(s) are found during construction, an Underground Storage Tank Removal Permit shall be applied for and secured from the Health Department; and 2) all water wells and/or septic systems that exist or have been abandoned within the project area shall be properly destroyed by a licensed contractor.

- B. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

As the project will not utilize groundwater, no impact on groundwater supplies would occur.

The Water and Natural Resources Division of the Department of Public Works and Planning and the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking water expressed no concerns with the project regarding water usage. During construction water will be brought in by trucks for dust control and miscellaneous construction activities. No water usage is anticipated during operations.

- C. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?
1. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site; or
  2. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite; or
  3. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?
  4. Impede or redirect flood flows?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project development will cause no significant changes in the absorption rates, drainage patterns, or the rate and amount of surface run-off with adherence to the mandatory construction practices contained in the Grading and Drainage Sections of the County Ordinance Code. As per the Development Engineering Section, the project shall require approval of an Engineered Grading and Drainage Plan and shall obtain a grading permit or voucher prior to any onsite grading work.

No natural drainage channels run through the project site. The project is located within Consolidated Irrigation District (CID). No comments were received from CID.

- D. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) FIRM Panel 2155H, the project site is not subject to flooding from the 100-year storm. The project will not be subject to flood hazard.

- E. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?



FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Per the Applicant's Operational Statement, no water usage is required during the project operation. The project is not in conflict with any Water Quality Control Plan for Fresno County. Regarding sustainable groundwater management plan, the project site is in the Central Kings Groundwater Sustainability Area (CKGSA) which is administered by Consolidated Irrigation District (CID). The CID provided no comments on the project.

## XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

- A. Physically divide an established community?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will not divide an established community. The project site is in an agricultural area outside of any city or unincorporated community. The nearest city, City of Sanger, is approximately 1.26 miles east of the site.

- B. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project site is designated Agriculture in the Fresno County General Plan which allows certain non-agricultural uses such as the proposed use by discretionary approval. The project would allow a battery energy storage system with related facilities on a 11.3-acre portion of a 37.56-acre AE- Zoned parcel. The project is consistent with the following General Plan policies:

Regarding consistency with General Plan Policy LU-A.1, the project will temporarily occupy a Prime Farmland for 20 years and then it will be decommissioned, and the property will be put back into agricultural use. The project does not require public facilities such as sewer, water, and storm drainage from a city or an unincorporated community.

Regarding consistency with Policy LU-A.12, Policy LU-A.13, Policy LU-A.14, the project is allowed on farmland and meets General Plan Policy LU-A.1 as discussed above; will be fenced off by a 7-foot-high perimeter fencing for separation from the surrounding farmland; and will adhere to all mitigation measures in this report, including the implementation of a Restoration Plan to restore the site to farming operations after the facility operations cease.

## XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- A. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state; or
- B. Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local General Plan, Specific Plan or other land use plan?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Per Figure 7-8 of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report, the project site is outside of a mineral-producing area of the County.

### XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:

- A. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies; or
- B. Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will generate temporary construction-related noise and virtually no long-term operation-related noise.

According to the Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division, the project can potentially expose nearby residents (The closest is approximately 276 feet northwest of the construction site) to elevated noise level, and therefore, shall adhere to the Noise Elements of the County Ordinance Code. No Noise Study was required for the project.

- C. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Per the discussion in Section IX. E. above, the project will not be impacted by airport noise.

### XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

- A. Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure); or
- B. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project involves no housing. As such, no increase in population would occur.

## XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

- A. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services?

- 1. Fire protection?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

According to the Fresno County Fire Protection District (FCFPD) the project shall comply with California Code of Regulations Title 24 – Fire Code; construction plans shall be submitted to the County prior to receiving FCFPD conditions of approval for the project; and shall annex into Community Facilities District No. 2010-01 of FCFPD.

- 2. Police protection; or
- 3. Schools; or
- 4. Parks; or
- 5. Other public facilities?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Reviewing Agencies and Departments did not express concern with the project to indicate that it would result in adverse impacts to service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives of the listed services.

## XVI. RECREATION

Would the project:

- A. Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or
- B. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will not induce population growth which may require new or expanded recreational facilities in the area.

## XVI. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

- A. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will not conflict with any policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. The project area is rural in nature and is not planned for any transit, bikeways, or pedestrian facilities per the Transportation and Circulation Element of the Fresno County General Plan.

According to the Transportation Planning Unit (TPU) of the Department of Public Works and Planning, the daily traffic generated by the project is expected to be minimal and does not warrant the need for a Traffic Impact Study (TIS). However, in lieu of TIS, a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) shall be prepared for the project to address potential impacts during the construction phase of the project. The TMP shall be provided prior to the issuance of building permits and required as a Condition of approval, implementation of TMP will reduce traffic impacts to less than significant.

According to the Road Maintenance and Operations (RMO) Division, McCall Avenue is a County maintained road classified as an Arterial with an existing 60-foot of prescriptive road right-of-way. McCall Avenue requires 106 feet of ultimate right-of-way per the Fresno County General Plan. A Condition of Approval would require that 23 feet of the property frontage along McCall Avenue shall be dedicated in additional right-of-way for McCall Avenue.

- B. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The State of California Governor's Office of Planning and Research document entitled

*Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA* dated December 2018 (OPR Technical Advisory) indicates that projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day generally may be presumed to cause a less-than-significant transportation impact.

Per the project review by Transportation Planning Unit of the Department of Public Works and Planning, the project operation will be monitored remotely and requires no regular staff on site. Regular site visit for operations and maintenance will occur four times in a year by service personnel generating traffic trips of up to two vehicles per quarter. As the project will generate fewer than 110 trips per day, no VMT analysis was required for the project. The impact on transportation would be less than significant.

- C. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Review of project design with the proposed access from McCall Avenue is not expected to create traffic hazards due to the current roadway configuration and additional right-of-way to be provided for McCall Avenue.

- D. Result in inadequate emergency access?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project review by Traffic Planning Unit and Road Maintenance and Operations Division of the Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning including the Fresno County Fire Protection District did not identify any concerns regarding emergency access. The project development will be subject to all local and state requirements for site access for emergency vehicles.

## XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- A. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:
1. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or
  2. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in

subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project site is not located in an area sensitive to archeological resources. Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52, the project was routed to participating California Native American Tribes namely Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe, Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians, Dumna Wo Wah Tribal Government, and Table Mountain Rancheria offering them an opportunity to consult under Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080.3(b) with a 30-day window to formally respond to the County letter. No tribe expressed concerns with the project or requested for consultation. The Table Mountain Rancheria indicated that in the unlikely event cultural resources are identified, the tribe should be notified. With the implementation of Mitigation Measure included in Section V CULTURAL ANALYSIS of this report, any potential impact to tribal cultural resources would be reduced to a less than significant.

#### XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

- A. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

See discussion in Section VII. E. GEOLOGY AND SOILS above. The project will temporarily occupy farmland with less than significant environmental effect. No relocation or construction of new electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities is expected from the project.

- B. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

See discussion in Section X. B. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY above.

- C. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project does not require construction of any wastewater disposal system.

- D. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals; or
- E. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project is not expected to generate significant amount of solid waste during construction. Once built, the project will not produce any waste.

Reviewing agencies and departments did not express concern with the project to indicate conflict with State or local standards for solid waste management, reduction, or capacity goals.

## XX. WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

- A. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects; or
- B. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire; or
- C. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment; or
- D. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not within or near State Responsibility Area or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. No impacts would occur.

## XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

- A. Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop

below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project would establish a battery energy storage system with a 20 years of life span on agricultural land. No reviewing agency expressed any concern with the project having an adverse impact on fish or wildlife species, or on any potential suitable habitat for special status species.

No impact is expected on biological resources and the impact on cultural resources have been reduced to a less than significant level with the incorporation of a Mitigation Measure included in Section V. CULTURAL RESOURCES of this report.

- B. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Each of the projects located within Fresno County has been or would be analyzed for potential impacts, and appropriate project-specific Mitigation Measures are developed to reduce that project’s impacts to less than significant levels. Projects are required to comply with applicable County policies and ordinances. The incremental contribution by the subject proposal to overall development in the area is less than significant.

The project will adhere to the permitting requirements and rules and regulations set forth by the Fresno County Grading and Drainage Ordinance, San Joaquin Air Pollution Control District, and California Code of Regulations Fire Code at the time development occurs on the property. No cumulatively considerable impacts relating to Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, or Transportation were identified in the project analysis. Impacts identified for Aesthetics, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Cultural Resources, and Transportation will be addressed with the Mitigation Measures discussed above in Section I, Section II, Section V, and Section XVI.

- C. Have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based on comments received from reviewing agencies and County Departments, the project will not cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly



## **CONCLUSION/SUMMARY**

Based upon the Initial Study No. 8116 prepared for Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3718, staff has concluded that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment. It has been determined that there would be no impacts to, biological resources, energy, mineral resources, population and housing, recreation, utilities and service systems, and wildfire.

Potential impacts related to air quality, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emission, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, public resources, transportation, and tribal cultural resources have been determined to be less than significant.

Potential impacts to aesthetics, agricultural and forestry resource, and cultural resources have been determined to be less than significant with the identified Mitigation Measure.

A Mitigated Negative Declaration is recommended and is subject to approval by the decision-making body. The Initial Study is available for review at 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, street level, located on the southwest corner of Tulare and "M" Street, Fresno, California.

EA:jp

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File original and one copy with: <b>Fresno County Clerk 2221 Kern Street Fresno, California 93721</b>		Space Below for County Clerk Only.  CLK-2046.00 E04-73 R00-00	
Agency File No: IS 8116	<b>LOCAL AGENCY PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION</b>		County Clerk File No: <b>E-</b>
Responsible Agency (Name): Fresno County	Address (Street and P.O. Box): 2220 Tulare St. Sixth Floor	City: Fresno	Zip Code: 93721
Agency Contact Person (Name and Title): Ejaz Ahmad, Planner	Area Code: 559	Telephone Number: 600-4204	Extension: N/A
Applicant (Name): Apache Energy Storage 1, LLC	Project Title: Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3718		
<p>Project Description:</p> <p>Allow the construction, operation, and ultimate decommissioning of a battery energy storage system consisting of lithium-ion based battery modules housed in purpose-built metal enclosures with integrated power conversion equipment, fire suppression system, transformer and 115kV transmission poles for the overhead wires crossing McCall Avenue for interconnection to nearby PG&amp;E Sanger substation. The project will be located on an approximately 11.3-acre portion of a 37.56-acre parcel in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture; 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District. The project site is located on the northeast corner of S. McCall and E. Jensen Avenues approximately 1.25 miles west of the city limits of City of Sanger (APN 314-080-36) (10018 E. Jensen Avenue, Sanger) (SUP. DIST. 4).</p>			
<p>Justification for Mitigated Negative Declaration:</p> <p>Based upon the Initial Study (IS 8116) prepared for Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3718, staff has concluded that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment.</p> <p>No impacts were identified related biological resources, energy, mineral resources, population and housing, recreation, utilities and service systems or wildfire.</p> <p>Potential impacts related to, air quality, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emission, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, public resources, transportation, and tribal cultural resources have been determined to be less than significant.</p> <p>Potential impacts related to aesthetics, agriculture and forestry resources, and cultural resources have been determined to be less than significant with the included Mitigation Measure.</p> <p>The Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) is available for review at 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, Street Level, located on the southeast corner of Tulare and "M" Street, Fresno, California.</p>			
<p>FINDING:</p> <p>The proposed project will not have a significant impact on the environment.</p>			
Newspaper and Date of Publication: Fresno Business Journal – March 31, 2023		Review Date Deadline: Planning Commission – May 18, 2023	
Date: March 24,, 2023	Type or Print Name: David Randall, Senior Planner	Submitted by (Signature):	

State 15083, 15085

County Clerk File No. \_\_\_\_\_

**LOCAL AGENCY  
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program  
Initial Study No. 8116  
Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3718**

<b>Mitigation Measures</b>					
<b>Mitigation Measure No.*</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation Measure Language</b>	<b>Implementation Responsibility</b>	<b>Monitoring Responsibility</b>	<b>Time Span</b>
*1.	Aesthetics	All outdoor lighting shall be hooded and directed downward as to not shine toward adjacent properties and public streets.	Applicant	Applicant/Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning (PWP)	On-going; for duration of the project
*2.	Agricultural and Forestry Resources	A covenant shall be signed between the Applicant/property owner and the County of Fresno and shall run with the land requiring the site to be restored to agricultural uses at the cessation of 20 years of battery energy storage system.	Applicant	Applicant/PWP	Prior to issuance of building permits
*3.	Agricultural and Forestry Resources	Prior to the County of Fresno's issuance of the grading or any development permit, the project developer must enter into a reclamation agreement with the County of Fresno on terms and conditions acceptable to the County of Fresno, which reclamation agreement will require the project owner to (1) decommission, dismantle, and remove the project and reclaim the site to its pre-project condition in accordance with the approved Reclamation Plan, and (2) maintain a financial assurance to the County of Fresno, to secure the project owner's obligations under the reclamation agreement, in an amount sufficient to cover the costs of performing such obligations, as provided herein. Such financial assurance shall be in the form of cash and maintained through an escrow arrangement or other form of security acceptable at the discretion of the Board of Supervisors. The amount of the financial assurance under the reclamation agreement shall (1) initially cover the project owner's cost of performing its obligations under the reclamation agreement, as stated above, based on the final County of Fresno-approved design of the project, which cost	Applicant	Applicant/PWP	Prior to issuance of grading and building permits

		estimate shall be provided by the project owner to the County of Fresno, and be subject to approval by the County of Fresno, and (2) be automatically increased annually, due to increases in costs, using the Engineering News-Record construction cost index. This initial cost estimate will consider any project components, other than Improvements, that are expected to be left in place at the request of and for the benefit of the subsequent landowner as long as the improvements are directly supportive restoring the site to a viable agricultural use. (e.g., access roads, electrical lines, O&M building).			
*4.	Agricultural and Forestry Resources	The project shall substantially adhere to the provisions in the Draft Reclamation Plan as submitted to the Planning Commission and prepared for the decommissioning of the facility when operation ceases. Reasonable modifications may be made to the Plan to address changes of scope and configuration of the final Site Plan and improvements. The draft Reclamation Plan shall be reviewed and approved as final by the County of Fresno, Department of Public Works and Planning prior to the issuance of any development permits.	Applicant	PWP – Verified by Current Planning	Prior to issuance of building permits
*5.	Agricultural and Forestry Resources	The Reclamation Plan shall be revised to provide for an annual increase in costs at three percent (3%) or tied to the Engineering News-Record construction cost index, or other mechanism acceptable to the Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning	Applicant	PWP – Verified by Current Planning	Prior to the implementation of Reclamation Plan
*6.	Agricultural and Forestry Resources	The project operator, throughout the life of the project operation, shall keep the project site free of rodent's infestation in accordance with the Pest Management Plan prepared for the project by New Leaf Energy dated February 23, 2023.	Applicant	PWP – Site Inspection	On-going; for duration of the project
*7.	Agricultural and Forestry Resources	The project operator, throughout the life of the project operation, shall keep the project site free of weeds and other vegetation that could harbor pests or become a fire hazard in accordance with the Pest Management Plan prepared for the project by New Leaf Energy dated February 23, 2023.	Applicant	PWP – Site Inspection	On-going; for duration of the project

*8.	Cultural Resources	In the event that cultural resources are unearthed during ground-disturbing activities, all work shall be halted in the area of the find. An Archeologist shall be called to evaluate the findings and make any necessary mitigation recommendations. If human remains are unearthed during ground disturbing activities, no further disturbance is to occur until the Fresno County Sheriff-Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition. All normal evidence procedures shall be followed by photos, reports, video, and etc. If such remains are determined to be Native American, the Sheriff-Coroner must notify the Native American Commission within 24 hours.	Applicant	Applicant/PWP	During ground disturbance
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\*MITIGATION MEASURE – Measure specifically applied to the project to mitigate potential adverse environmental effects identified in the environmental document.

EA:

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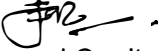


# County of Fresno

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

DATE: June 21, 2022

TO: Development Services and Capital Projects, Attn: William M. Kettler, Division Manager  
Development Services and Capital Projects, Attn: Chris Motta, Principal Planner  
Development Services and Capital Projects, Current Planning, Attn: David Randall, Senior Planner  
Development Services and Capital Projects, Policy Planning, ALCC, Attn: Mohammad Khorsand, Senior Planner  
Development Services and Capital Projects, Zoning & Permit Review, Attn: Daniel Gutierrez/James Anders  
Development Services and Capital Projects, Site Plan Review, Attn: Hector Luna  
Development Services and Capital Projects, Building & Safety/Plan Check, Attn: Dan Mather  
Development Engineering, Attn: Laurie Kennedy, Grading/Mapping  
Road Maintenance and Operations, Attn: Martin Querin/Wendy Nakagawa/Nadia Lopez  
Design Division, Transportation Planning, Attn: Mohammad Alimi/Gloria Hensley/Erin Haagenson  
Water and Natural Resources Division, Attn: Augustine Ramirez/ Roy Jimenez  
Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division, Attn: Deep Sidhu/ Kevin Tsuda  
San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District (PIC-CEQA Division), Attn: PIC Supervisor  
Consolidated Irrigation District; Attn: Phil Desatoff  
CA Regional Water Quality Control Board, Attn: [centralvalleyfresno@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:centralvalleyfresno@waterboards.ca.gov)  
CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, Attn: [R4CEQA@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:R4CEQA@wildlife.ca.gov)  
US Fish & Wildlife Service, Attn Mathew Nelson  
State Department of Health Services, Office of Drinking Water, Fresno District, Attn: Jose Robledo, Cinthia Reyes  
Nisei Farmers League, Attn: Manuel Cunha, Jr.  
Central King GSA, Attn: [pdesatoff@cidwater.com](mailto:pdesatoff@cidwater.com)  
Fresno County Fire Protection District; Attn: [FKU.Prevention-Planning@fire.ca.gov](mailto:FKU.Prevention-Planning@fire.ca.gov)

FROM: Ejaz Ahmad, Planner   
Development Services and Capital Projects Division

SUBJECT: Initial Study No. 8116; Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3718  
**(REVISION)**

APPLICANT: Borrego Solar Systems, Inc.

DUE DATE: July 6, 2022

The Department of Public Works and Planning, Development Services and Capital Projects Division is reviewing the subject applications proposing to allow a public utility battery storage facility on a 11.30-acre portion of a 37.56-acre parcel in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture; 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District. The site is located on the northeast corner of E. Jenson Avenue and S. McCall Avenue approximately 1.25 miles west of the City of Sanger (APN 314-080-36) (SUP. DIST. 5).

**The project has been revised to include the following modifications:**

**The battery storage array has been increased in size from the proposed 7 acres to 11.3 acres. This change is reflected in the revised Site Plan and the documents included in this routing.**

Based upon this review, a determination will be made regarding conditions to be imposed on the project, including necessary on-site and off-site improvements.

We must have your comments by **July 5, 2022**. Any comments received after this date may not be used.

**If you do not have comments, please provide a “NO COMMENT” response to our office by the above deadline (e-mail is also acceptable; see email address below).**

Please address any correspondence or questions related to environmental and/or policy/design issues to me, Ejaz Ahmad, Planner, Development Services and Capital Projects Division, Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning, 2220 Tulare Street, Sixth Floor, Fresno, CA 93721, or call (559) 600-4204 or email [eahmad@fresnocountyca.gov](mailto:eahmad@fresnocountyca.gov).

EA

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*Activity Code (Internal Review): 2384*

Enclosures





# Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning

CUP3718  
(Revision)  
(Application No.)

### MAILING ADDRESS:

Department of Public Works and Planning  
Development Services Division  
2220 Tulare St., 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Fresno, Ca. 93721

### LOCATION:

Southwest corner of Tulare & "M" Streets, Suite A  
Street Level  
Fresno Phone: (559) 600-4497  
Toll Free: 1-800-742-1011 Ext. 0-4497

### APPLICATION FOR:

- Pre-Application (Type) \_\_\_\_\_
- Amendment Application  Director Review and Approval
- Amendment to Text  for 2<sup>nd</sup> Residence
- Conditional Use Permit  Determination of Merger
- Variance (Class )/Minor Variance  Agreements
- Site Plan Review/Occupancy Permit  ALCC/RLCC
- No Shoot/Dog Leash Law Boundary  Other \_\_\_\_\_
- General Plan Amendment/Specific Plan/SP Amendment)
- Time Extension for \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED USE OR REQUEST:

Revision to CUP3718 to increase battery storage array from 7 acres to 11.30 acres on a 37.56 acres parcel in AE-20 zone District.

CEQA DOCUMENTATION:  Initial Study  PER  N/A

PLEASE USE FILL-IN FORM OR PRINT IN BLACK INK. Answer all questions completely. Attach required site plans, forms, statements, and deeds as specified on the Pre-Application Review. **Attach Copy of Deed, including Legal Description.**

LOCATION OF PROPERTY: North side of E Jensen Ave  
between S McCall Ave and S. Dockery Ave  
Street address: 10018 E Jensen Ave, Sanger, CA 93657

APN: 314-080-36 Parcel size: 37.56 acre Section(s)-Twp/Rg: S 853 - T B.14 S/R 816.5 E

ADDITIONAL APN(s): \_\_\_\_\_

I, Cory Haynes (signature), declare that I am the owner, or authorized representative of the owner, of the above described property and that the application and attached documents are in all respects true and correct to the best of my knowledge. The foregoing declaration is made under penalty of perjury.

Craig Richard Constance	P.O. Box 819	Sanger, CA	93657	
Owner (Print or Type)	Address	City	Zip	Phone
Borrego Solar Systems Inc.	5005 Texas St, Ste 400	San Diego, CA	92108	
Applicant (Print or Type)	Address	City	Zip	Phone
Jacobs Engineering, Cory Haynes	4 Embarcadero Center Ste. 3800.	San Francisco, CA	94105	(706) 296-4184
Representative (Print or Type)	Address	City	Zip	Phone

CONTACT EMAIL: Cory.Haynes@jacobs.com and Anthony.Kingman@jacobs.com

### OFFICE USE ONLY (PRINT FORM ON GREEN PAPER)

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Application Type / No.:	<u>CUP(U) 3718 - Revision</u>	Fee: \$	<u>2,280.75</u>
Application Type / No.:		Fee: \$	
Application Type / No.:		Fee: \$	
Application Type / No.:		Fee: \$	
PER/Initial Study No.:		Fee: \$	
Ag Department Review:		Fee: \$	
Health Department Review:		Fee: \$	
Received By: <u>Mam'sa for EJ.</u>	Invoice No.:	TOTAL: \$	<u>2,280.75</u>

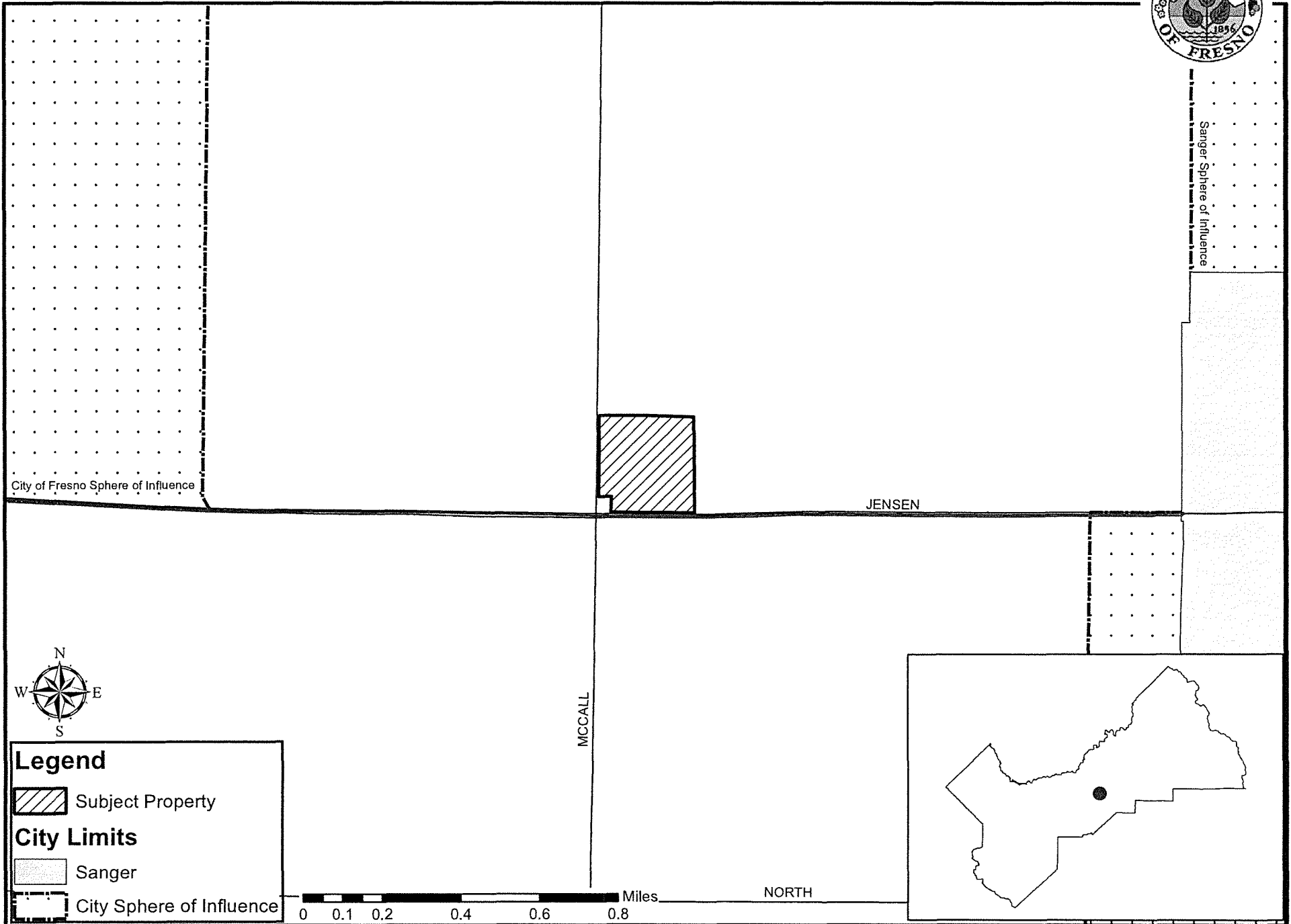
STAFF DETERMINATION: This permit is sought under Ordinance Section:

Related Application(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Zone District: \_\_\_\_\_

Parcel Size: \_\_\_\_\_

# LOCATION MAP



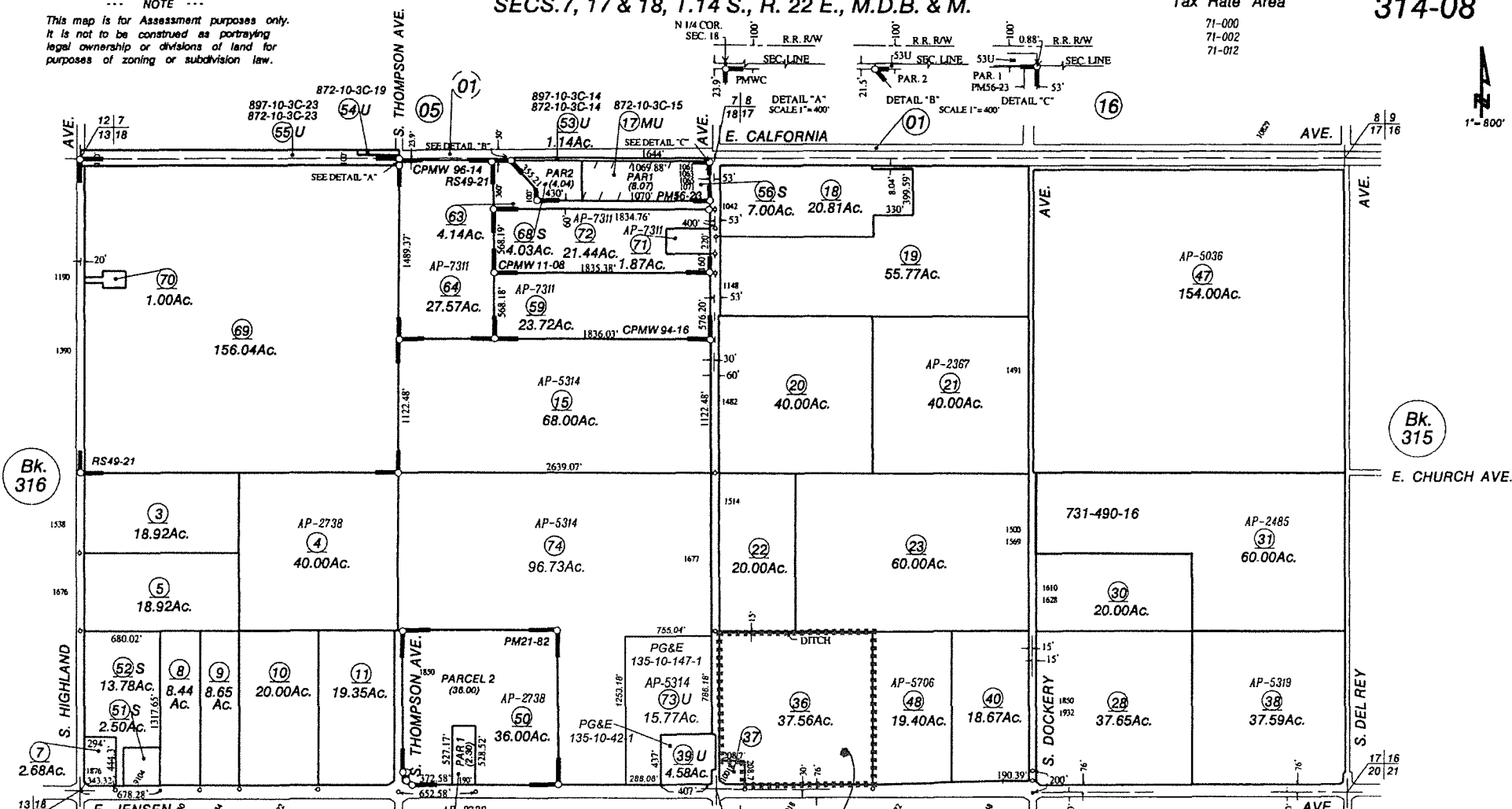
SECS. 7, 17 & 18, T. 14 S., R. 22 E., M.D.B. & M.

Tax Rate Area

314-08

71-000  
71-002  
71-012

--- NOTE ---  
This map is for Assessment purposes only.  
It is not to be construed as portraying  
legal ownership or divisions of land for  
purposes of zoning or subdivision law.



Bk. 316

Bk. 315

Bk. 332

PROJECT SITE

Agricultural Preserve  
Parcel Map No. 3034 - Bk. 21, Pg. 82  
Parcel Map No. 7629 - Bk. 56, Pg. 23  
Certificate of Parcel Map Waiver No. 96-14, Doc. 6804 1/16/1997  
Certificate of Parcel Map Waiver No. 11-08, Doc. 82369 6/13/2012  
Record of Survey - Bk. 49, Pg. 21

Assessor's Map Bk. 314 - Pg. 08  
County of Fresno, Calif.

NOTE - Assessor's Block Numbers Shown in Ellipses.  
Assessor's Parcel Numbers Shown in Circles.

**Project Description – Battery Energy Storage Project**  
**10018 E Jensen Avenue, Fresno, CA**



## Table of Contents

<b>1.0 Overview</b>	3
<b>2.0 Project Objectives</b>	3
<b>3.0 Project Location and Site History</b>	3
3.1 Project Location	3
3.2 Site History	3
<b>4.0 Project Sites</b>	4
<b>5.0 Schedule</b>	4
<b>6.0 Surrounding Land Uses and Conditions</b>	4
6.1 Regional Setting	4
6.2 Local Setting	5
<b>7.0 County Zoning</b>	5
<b>8.0 Detailed Project Description</b>	5
8.1 Facilities & Design	5
8.1.1 Overview of BESS Technology	5
8.1.2 Access and Parking	5
8.1.3 Perimeter Fencing	5
8.1.4 Control Systems	5
8.1.5 Signage and Lighting	6
8.1.6 Stormwater Facilities	6
8.1.7 Other Infrastructure	6
8.1.8 Applicant Proposed Best Management Practices	6
8.2 Construction	6
8.3 Operations and Maintenance	6
8.4 Decommissioning	6
<b>9.0 Permits</b>	7
<b>10.0 References</b>	7

# 1.0 Overview

The Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) will consist of lithium-ion based battery modules housed in purpose-built metal enclosures, with integrated power conversion equipment and fire suppression systems. In addition, the BESS will have interconnection equipment including transformers and the system will be completely enclosed within a 7-foot high perimeter fence. Interconnection to the PG&E substation will also require a 115kV transmission pole for the overhead wires.

The BESS will operate continuously for the expected project operational term of 20 years. Typical operation of the system will include charging from the grid during the day and discharging during peak electric demand at night.

## 2.0 Project Objectives

Borrego is proposing to develop and construct a battery energy storage system (BESS) adjacent to the PG&E Sanger substation at 10018 E Jensen Avenue. The project is being developed to add reliability to the California electric grid and help meet the June 2021 California Public Utility Commission's (CPUC) decision requiring 11,500 megawatts of new capacity additions to the California Independent System Operator (CAISO) system.

## 3.0 Project Location and Site History

### 3.1 Project Location

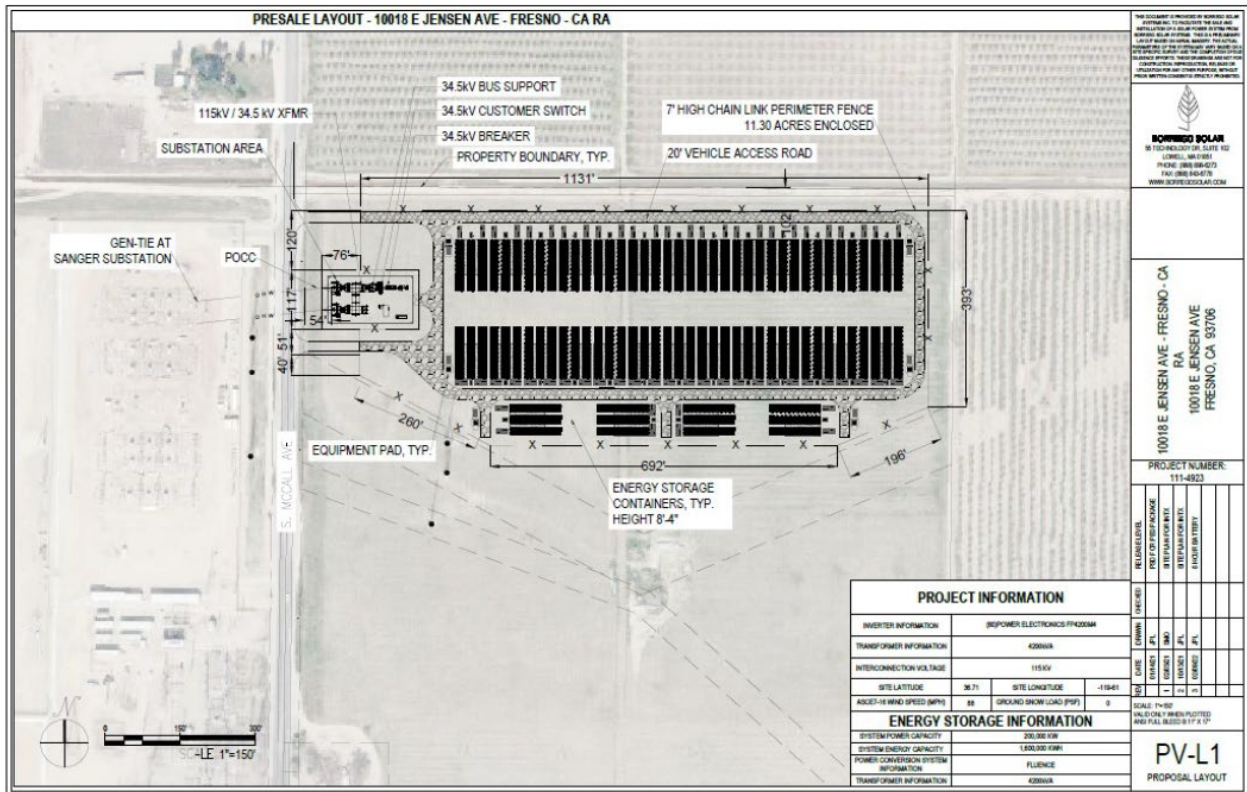
The project is located at 10018 E Jensen Ave in Fresno County, California. The APN for the parcel is 314-080-36.

### 3.2 Site History

The parcel has been Agriculture/vacant land since at least 1937. There are no structures on the parcel. The Phase 1 ESA done for this project did not find any Historical Recognized Environmental Conditions.

# 4.0 Project Sites

Project is located on APN 314-080-36.



# 5.0 Schedule

Expected construction start = 6/2024

Expected COD = 6/2025

# 6.0 Surrounding Land Uses and Conditions

## 6.1 Regional Setting

The project site is located in Fresno County, around primarily agriculture land. The city of Sanger lies approximately 2.5 miles to the east of the site, and the City of Fresno approximately 10 miles WNW of the site.

## 6.2 Local Setting

The project is primarily surrounded by Agriculture. To the SW of the site is a commercial building. To the west of the site is the Sanger substation operated by PG&E. The rest of the surrounding land is agriculture with some residences.

## 7.0 County Zoning

The parcel is located in the AE-20 county zoning district.

## 8.0 Detailed Project Description

### 8.1 Facilities & Design

#### 8.1.1 Overview of BESS Technology

The BESS will consist of lithium-ion based battery modules housed in purpose-built metal enclosures, with integrated power conversion equipment and fire suppression systems.

#### 8.1.2 Access and Parking

There are two site access points off of S. McCall Avenue, both with 2 access points with vehicle access gates. The access road is 20' wide with ample turning radius for trucks. There will be adequate area on the property for vehicle parking and equipment staging during construction and operational phases.

#### 8.1.3 Perimeter Fencing

The proposed perimeter fence will be 7' high. There will be two (2) vehicle gates at the entrances off S. McCall Avenue for access.

#### 8.1.4 Control Systems

The energy storage units will have control systems in place to monitor cell activity, voltages, and temperatures.

Control Architecture of the BMS section of the Fluence Control System is as shown below:

The BMS is provided by CATL and functions to monitor cell activity, taking measurements of cell voltage, module temperature, battery current and voltages. Fault alarms on the BMS level are sent to limit discharge or contactor operation. The safety alarms will indicate over-voltage,



under-voltage, high temperature, low temperature, over current, contactor(s) faults, etc. and are continuously streamed, along with all the battery information to Fluences' higher-level controllers. It is this data stream that is used to inform the intelligent management system of signs of distress with the battery system and prevention of further events. Estop functionality is triggered by the fire suppression system in the cube, an emergency shutdown signal from the core (system level) controller, cube emergency signal, a single CO smoke detection, or sudden changes in voltage of an individual cell.

### 8.1.5 Signage and Lighting

There will be no additional continuous lighting for the system or parking lot.

### 8.1.6 Stormwater Facilities

Stormwater facilities will be designed to meet all local, state, and federal requirements.

### 8.1.7 Other Infrastructure

Gen Tie to connect the system with Sanger substation across the street will include 115kv overhead wires.

A project substation with inverters and step-up transformers will also be located on the project area.

### 8.1.8 Applicant Proposed Best Management Practices

## 8.2 Construction

Construction duration is expected to take about 6 months. There will be no anticipated tree clearing associated with the project.

## 8.3 Operations and Maintenance

After completion of construction activities which are expected to take 6 months, the BESS will operate unstaffed. The system will be monitored remotely and regular operations and maintenance will be conducted approximately quarterly by service personnel estimated to be 1-2 persons with 1 vehicle.

## 8.4 Decommissioning

There will be a decommissioning bond established for decommissioning of the energy storage system at the end of its useful life.

## 9.0 Permits

TBD

## 10.0 References

## Operational Statement – Sanger Energy Storage Project

### 1900 S McCall Ave, Sanger, CA - Fresno County

#### 1. **Nature of Operation:**

Borrego is proposing to develop and construct a battery energy storage system (BESS) adjacent to the PG&E Sanger substation at 1900 S McCall Ave (APN #314-080-36), approximately 2 miles west of Sanger. The parent parcel is a 74 acre tract of land which is not under Williamson Act. The parcel is zoned *AE20 Exclusive Agricultural*. The project is being developed to add reliability to the California electric grid and help meet the November 2019 CPUC decision requiring capacity additions to the CAISO system.

In addition, the BESS will have interconnection equipment including transformers and the system will be completely enclosed within a 7-foot high perimeter fence. Interconnection to the PG&E substation will also require a 115kV transmission pole for the overhead wires crossing S McCall Ave. The project area is estimated to be approximately 11.30 acres.

#### 2. **Operational Time Limits:**

The BESS will operate continuously for the expected project operational term of 20 years. Typical operation of the system will include charging from the grid during the day and discharging during peak electric demand at night. At the property lines, the BESS will produce negligible sound and the system will have minimal lighting for safety at night.

#### 3. **Number of Customers or Visitors:**

After completion of construction activities which are expected to take 6 months, the BESS will operate unstaffed.

#### 4. **Number of Employees:**

The system will be monitored remotely, and regular operations and maintenance will be conducted approximately quarterly by service personnel estimated to be 1-2 persons.

#### 5. **Service and Delivery Vehicles:**

Quarterly service will be conducted using 1 vehicle.

**6. Access to the Site:**

Both during the construction and operation terms, access to the site will be via an existing road onto the property from S McCall Ave.

**7. Number of parking spaces for employees, customers, and service/delivery vehicles:**

There will be adequate area on the property for vehicle parking and equipment staging during construction and operational phases.

**8. Are any goods to be sold on-site?**

No goods are to be sold on-site.

**9. What equipment is used?**

Please see example project layout and example project image below for equipment to be used.

**10. What supplies or materials are used and how are they stored?**

No supplies are required to be stored on site.

**11. Does the use cause an unsightly appearance?**

The BESS appearance is in keeping with the character of the adjacent PG&E electrical substation and will not cause an unsightly appearance.

**12. List any solid or liquid wastes to be produced.**

Once built, the BESS will not utilize any water, produce any waste, or require any other public utilities.

**13. Estimated volume of water to be used (gallons per day).**

No water is anticipated to be used during operations.

**14. Describe any proposed advertising including size, appearance, and placement.**

No advertising will be present other than the required placards on the system as required by the National Electric Code and markings identifying the equipment manufacturer and system owner.

**15. Will existing buildings be used or will new buildings be constructed?**

The BESS will consist of newly constructed lithium-ion based battery modules housed in purpose-built metal enclosures, with integrated power conversion equipment and fire suppression systems.

**16. Explain which buildings or what portion of buildings will be used in the operation.**

Regular operations and maintenance will be conducted quarterly on the constructed BESS systems.

**17. Will any outdoor lighting or an outdoor sound amplification system be used?**

Outdoor light will be used during construction, but no outdoor lighting will exist during normal operations.

**18. Landscaping or fencing proposed?**

The BESS will be completely enclosed within a 7-foot high perimeter fence.

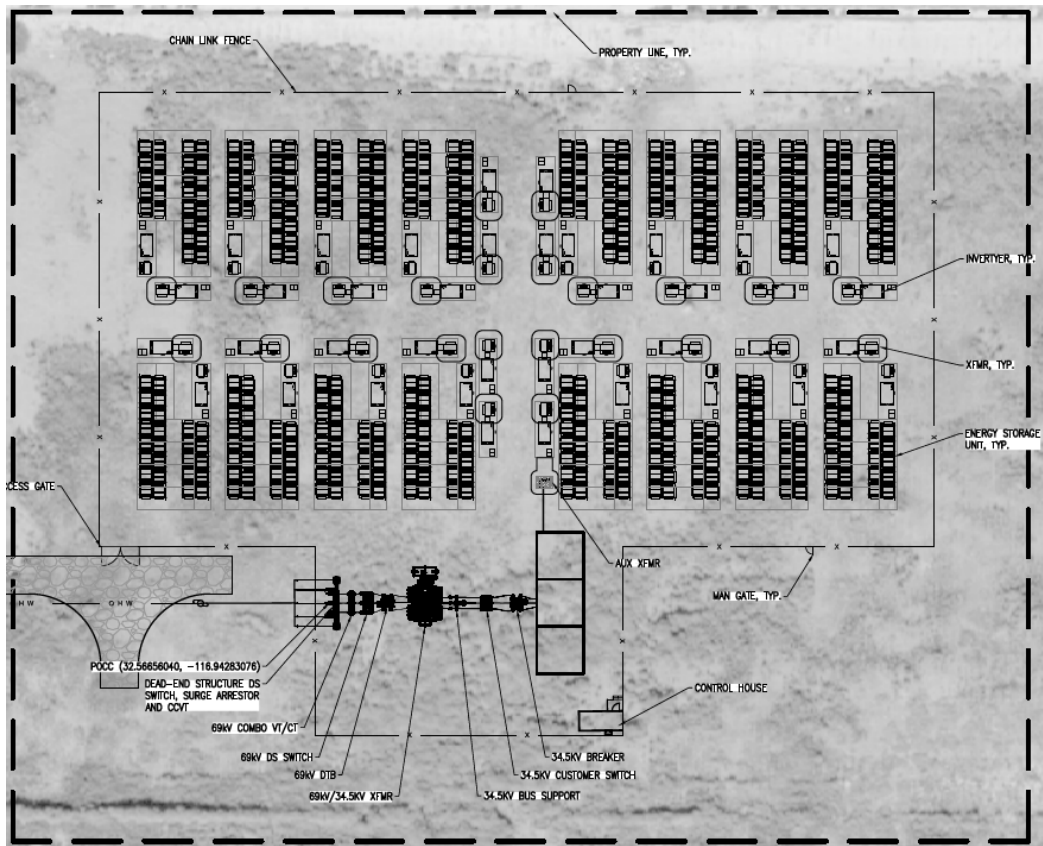
**19. Any other information that will provide a clear understanding of the project or operation.**

In addition, the BESS will have interconnection equipment including transformers. Interconnection to the PG&E substation will also require a 115kV transmission pole for the overhead wires crossing S McCall Ave.

**20. Identify all Owners, Officers and/or Board Members for each application.**

Owners, applicants, and representatives will be listed on the signed application forms.

## Example Project Layout



## Example Project Image





# County of Fresno

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

## Solar Facility Guidelines (Revised by BOS 12/12/17)

The need to accommodate new renewable energy technology must be balanced with the need to protect important farmlands and minimize impacts to existing agricultural operations. The land use process for evaluating solar facilities should rely on general guidelines and policies rather than specific standards which may not be flexible enough to accommodate the evolving technology.

Applicants for solar facilities shall address the following as part of the application review process:

1. Information shall be submitted regarding the historical agricultural operational/usage of the parcel, including specific crop type and crop yield, for the last ten years (if no agricultural operation in the last ten years, specify when land was last in agricultural use).

-The parcel has been Agriculture/vacant land since at least 1937. There are no structures on the parcel. The Phase 1 ESA done for this project did not find any Historical Recognized Environmental Conditions.

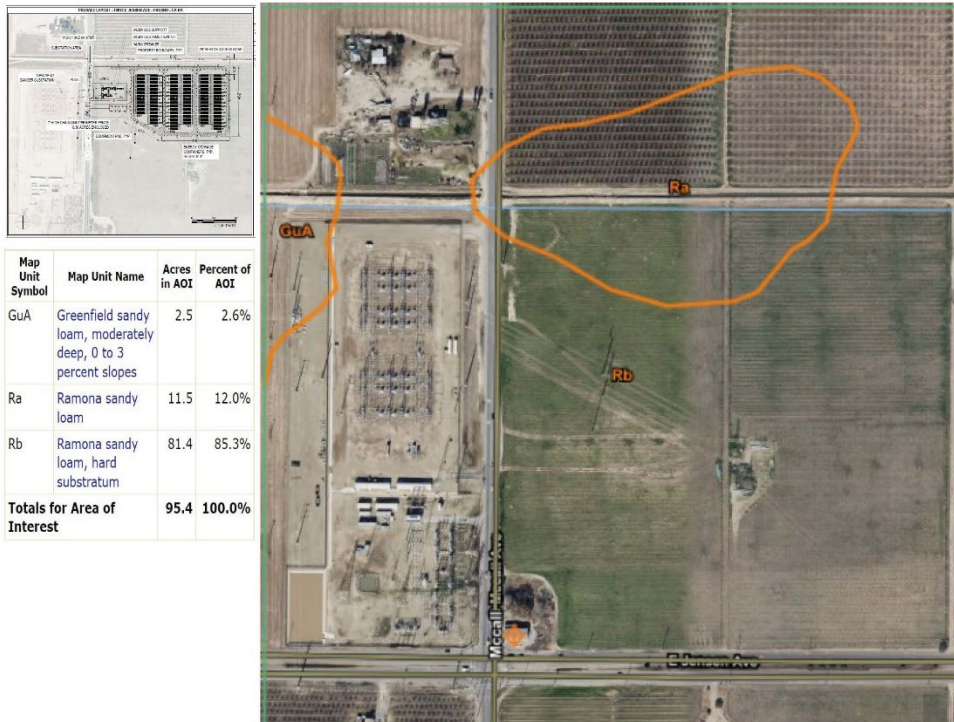
2. Information shall be submitted that identifies the source of water for the subject parcel (surface water from irrigation district, individual well(s), conjunctive system). If the source of water is via district delivery, the applicant shall submit information documenting the allocations received from the irrigation district and the actual disposition of the water (i.e. utilized on-site or moved to other locations) for the last ten years. If an individual well system is used, provide production capacity of each well, water quality data and data regarding the existing water table depth.

- Once built, the BESS will not utilize any water, produce any waste, or require any other public utilities. No water is anticipated to be used during operations. No well use is planned. Water use would be brought in by trucks (dust control) or just some small containers on site used for miscellaneous construction activities. Approximate amounts will depend on local weather patterns.

3. Identify the current status of the parcel (Williamson Act Contract, Conservation Easement, retired land, etc.), the purpose of any easement and limitations of the parcel. The applicant shall submit a Title Report or Lot Book Guarantee for verification.

- The parent parcel is a 74-acre tract of land which is not under Williamson Act. The parcel is zoned AE20 Exclusive Agricultural.

- Identify (with supporting data) the current soil type and mapping units of the parcel pursuant to the standards of the California State Department of Conservation and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.



- List all proposed measures and improvements intended to create a buffer between the proposed solar facility and adjacent agricultural operations (detailed information must be shown on Site Plan) and provide factual/technical data supporting the effectiveness of said proposed buffering measures.

- The BESS appearance is in keeping with the character of the adjacent PG&E electrical substation and will not cause an unsightly appearance. The BESS will be completely enclosed within a 7-foot-high perimeter fence.



6. Provide a Reclamation Plan detailing the lease life, timeline for removal of the improvements and specific measures to return the site to the agricultural capability prior to installation of solar improvements. If the project is approved, adequate financial security to the satisfaction of the County shall be provided to ensure site reclamation.

- The BESS will operate continuously for the expected project operational term of 20 years. Financial assurances (in accordance with County standards) equal to the cost of reclamation estimate will be submitted prior to the start of construction.

7. Provide information documenting efforts to locate the proposed solar facility on non-agricultural lands and non-contracted parcels and detailed information explaining why the subject site was selected.

- The primary driver for the site location is the adjacent PG&E substation. This is one of a select few substations in the California Independent System Operator (CAISO) grid with the characteristics required for interconnection of a transmission-scale energy storage project. Primarily because it has been recently upgraded and will not require cost-prohibitive and lengthy upgrades to the grid to interconnect. In addition, the site being immediately adjacent to the substation minimizes the amount of land that would be impacted by the overhead interconnection transmission lines from the project to the substation.

8. Develop and submit a project site Pest Management Plan to identify methods and frequency to manage weeds, insects, disease and vertebrate pests that may impact adjacent sites.

- Pest Management Plan attached

9. The applicant must acknowledge the County's Right to Farm Ordinance and shall be required to record a Right to Farm Notice prior to issuance of any permits. This shall be included as a recommended Condition of Approval of the land use entitlement.

-Right to Farm Notice will be recorded.

10. Note: The life of the approved land use permit will expire upon expiration of the initial life of the solar lease. If the solar lease is to be extended, approval of new land use permit will need to be obtained.

-New permits will be applied for if the lease is to be extended

11. If the project is approved, the applicant shall make all reasonable efforts to establish a point of sale in Fresno County for equipment and construction related items necessary for the project.

Reasonable efforts will be made to establish point of sale in Fresno County for equipment and construction related items necessary for the project

12. If the project is approved, the applicant shall make all reasonable efforts to conduct local recruitment efforts and/or coordinate with employment agencies in an attempt to hire from the local workforce.

-Reasonable efforts will be made to conduct local recruitment efforts and hire from the local workforce

13. In addition to disclosing the number of trips in the required project Operational Statement, the applicant shall disclose the weight of the shipments anticipated to the site. If the project is approved, pursuant to the CEQA analysis and based upon the existing road conditions and the weight/frequency of shipments to the site, the applicant shall mitigate impacts to County roads.

-Based on the CEQA analysis and existing road conditions, all impacts to County roads will be mitigated

14. If the project is approved, the applicant shall make all reasonable efforts to purchase products and equipment from local (Fresno County) manufacturing facilities and/or vendors.

-Reasonable efforts will be made to purchase products and equipment from local manufacturing facilities and vendors

**10018 E JENSEN AVE RECLAMATION PLAN  
RECLAMATION PLAN**

1. Description of present use of the site.

-Site is currently a vacant agricultural field. The land is currently fallow with low native grasses.
2. Describe the proposed alternate use of the land (all equipment to be installed above and underground, structures, fencing, etc.).

- New Leaf is proposing to develop and construct a battery energy storage system (BESS) adjacent to the PG&E Sanger substation at 1900 S McCall Ave (APN #314-080-36). The BESS will have interconnection equipment including transformers and the system will be completely enclosed within a 7-foot high perimeter fence. Interconnection to the PG&E substation will also require a 115kV transmission pole for the overhead wires crossing S McCall Ave. The project area is estimated to be approximately 11.30 acres. Please see attached project layout and example project photo.
3. Duration of the alternate use of the property (specify termination date).

- The BESS will operate continuously for the expected project operational term of 15-30 years depending on property owner options.
4. Address ownership of the property (lease or sale).

-Property is to be leased for the duration of the operational term (15-30 years).
5. Describe how the subject property will be reclaimed to its previous agricultural condition, specifically:
  - A) Timeline for completion of reclamation after solar facility lease has termed (identify phasing if needed); and

-The following are some typical timelines that can be expected during decommissioning. These will be revised during the owner/operators recurring estimation of the decommissioning cost and plan.
  - B) Removal of the BESS, Concrete Pads, and fencing: 1-3 months
  - X) Removal of all electrical equipment: 2-4 weeks
  - Δ) Removal of road and Stormwater features: 2-4 weeks
  - E) Re-establishment of vegetation: 1-3 months
6. Handling of any hazardous chemicals/materials to be removed; and

- The third-party vendor will ensure that local, state and federal waste-handling requirements are met. Additionally, they will determine if the batteries can be reused or recycled, reduce the charges in the batteries, disconnect the system, and make decisions on how to remove, transport and package the batteries and remove and transport the containers that house them.
7. Removal of all equipment, structures, buildings and improvements at and above-grade; and
8. Removal of any below-grade foundations;
9. Removal of any below-grade infrastructure (cables/lines, etc.) that are no longer deemed necessary by the local public utility company; and
10. Detail any grading necessary to return the site to original grade

- Activities associated with removing a battery storage system from service include removal of all other electrical equipment such as transformers, breaking up concrete pads and footings, removing electrical wiring, conduits, fencing, and power poles. The site will be re-graded to existing conditions.

- G) Type of crops to be planted; arid
- Crop type will be decided on by the property owner. Any disturbed areas not reverted to active agriculture will be reseeded with native grasses.
- H) Irrigation system details to be used {existing wells, pumps, etc. should remain throughout the solar facility use).
- No irrigation systems currently exist on the property, and no systems are planned to be installed.
6. A Site Plan shall be submitted along with the text of the Reclamation Plan showing the location of equipment, structures, above and underground utilities, fencing, buffer area, reclamation phasing, etc.
- Site Plan is attached
7. An engineering cost estimate of reclaiming the site to its previous agricultural condition shall be submitted for review and approval
- Reclamation cost estimate is attached
8. Financial assurances equal to the cost of reclaiming the land to its previous agricultural condition shall be submitted to ensure the reclamation is performed according to the approved plan. Financial assurances shall be made to the County of Fresno and may take the form of cash, letter of credit or bond that complies with Section 66499 of the California Government Code, et. seq.
- Financial assurances equal to the cost of reclamation estimate will be submitted prior to the start of construction
9. Evidence that all owners of record have been notified of the proposed Reclamation Plan.
- Owners will be notified via email of reclamation plan

**STANDARD INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS FOR ALL UTILITY-GRADE  
PHOTOVOLTAIC PROJECTS**

- " Applicants must work to achieve a minimum 50-foot buffer from the edges of the property boundaries to the closest structural improvements or equipment (excluding fencing). Required setbacks will be included in this buffer.
- " Salvage value estimates cannot be included to offset the estimated reclamation costs provided in the engineer's estimates.
- " The following condition of approval will be included for all projects: *The reclamation plan shall be revised to provide for an annual increase in costs at 3% or tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) or other mechanism acceptable to the Department of Public Work's and Planning.*



# Decommissioning Estimate

Date: 03/02/2023

10018 E Jensen Ave  
Sanger, CA 93657

This Decommissioning Estimate has been prepared by New Leaf Energy in an attempt to predict the cost associated with the removal of the proposed battery energy storage facility. The primary cost of decommissioning is the labor to dismantle and load equipment, as well as the cost of trucking materials off-site. All material will be removed from the site, including the concrete equipment pads and strip footings, which will be broken up at the site and hauled to the nearest transfer station.

The following values were used in this Decommissioning Estimate:

### System Specifications

Total Batteries	46,080
Total Battery Weight (lbs)	39,365,740
Number of Containers	2880
Number of Transformers	66
Number of Power Conversion Systems	0
Number of Neutral Grounding Reactors	1
Number of Meters	1
Electrical Wiring Length (ft)	23,535
Length of Perimeter Fence (ft)	3,538
Number of Power Poles	0
Total Disturbed Area (SF)	671,845
Total Fence Weight (lbs)	3,998

### Labor and Equipment Costs

Labor Rate (\$/hr)	\$ 63.53
Operator Rate (\$/hr)	\$ 95.47
Bobcat Cost (\$/hr)	\$ 125.00
Front End Loader Cost (\$/Day)	\$ 1,000.00
Excavator Cost (\$/Day)	\$ 1,000.00
Trucking Cost (\$/hr)	\$ 130.00
Backhoe Cost (\$/hr)	\$ 245.00
Power Pole Removal Cost (\$/pole)	\$ 1,500.00
Grader Cost (\$/day)	\$ 1,800.00
Seeding Cost (\$/SF)	\$ 0.10
Fuel Cost (\$/mile)	\$ 0.50
Battery Disposal Fee (\$/battery)	\$ 0.50

### Equipment & Material Removal Rates

Module Removal and Packaging (min/mod)	45
Large Equipment Removal Rate (hr/unit)	0.5
Electric Wiring Removal Rate (min/LF)	3
Fence Removal Rate (min/LF)	0.5
Days req. to break up concrete pads	376
Days req. with Rough Grader	8
Days req. with Fine Grader	16
Total Truckloads to Transfer Station	2568
Round-Trip Dist. to Transfer Station (miles)	20
Round-Trip Time to Transfer Station (hr)	1
Total Truckloads to Battery Recycling	1406
Round-Trip Dist. to Battery Rec. (miles)	20
Round-Trip Time to Battery Rec. (hr)	1

### Contingency & CAPM

Contingency Percentage	15%
Contract Admin and Proj Mgmt Sum	\$10,000



# Decommissioning Estimate/Plan

Date: 03/2/2023

10018 E Jensen Ave  
Sanger, CA 93657

## Labor, Material, and Equipment Costs

### 1. Battery Modules Removal and Packaging Cost

Remove and Package Individual Battery Module.

$$(Number\ of\ Battery\ Modules \cdot Module\ Removal\ Rate) / 60\ Min\ per\ Hour \cdot Labor\ Rate = \\ Battery\ Module\ Removal\ and\ Packaging\ Cost$$

**Total = \$ 2,195,596.80**

### 2. Load Electrical Equipment

Electrical equipment includes transformers and inverters. We assume that companies removing electrical equipment will provide trucking services and will reclaim valuable materials themselves.

$$(Number\ of\ containers \cdot containers\ Removal\ Rate + Number\ of\ Transformers \cdot Transformer \\ Removal\ Rate) \cdot (Operator\ Rate + Bobcat\ Cost) = \\ Electrical\ Equipment\ Removal\ Cost$$

**Total = \$ 324,752.31**

### 3. Break Up Concrete Pads

Concrete pads are broken up using an excavator and jackhammer.

$$Number\ of\ Demolition\ Days \cdot (Excavator\ Cost + Labor\ Cost) =$$

**Total = \$ 663,173.76**

### 4. Remove Electrical Wiring

Electrical wiring will be removed from all underground conduits.

$$Cable\ Length \cdot Cable\ Removal\ Rate \cdot (Operator\ Cost + Backhoe\ Cost) \\ = Total\ Cable\ Removal\ Cost$$

**Total = \$ 400,648.07**

### 5. Remove Fencing

Fencing posts, boards, and foundations will be loaded onto a truck and removed from site. Trucking costs included in this line item are for the removal process. Trucking to a recycling facility are included in item #8.

$$(Total\ Length\ of\ Fence \cdot Fence\ Removal\ Rate) \cdot (Operator\ Rate + Bobcat\ Cost + Trucking\ Cost) =$$

**Total = \$ 10,333.02**

**6. Remove Power Poles**

Power poles will be removed and shipped off site.

$$\text{Number of Power Poles} \cdot \text{Pole Removal cost} =$$

**Total = \$ 100,000.00**

**7. Seed Disturbed Areas**

Seeding cost includes labor and materials for reseeding all disturbed areas including the reclaimed gravel road area, former electrical areas, and areas disturbed by racking foundation removal.

$$\frac{\text{Seeding Cost} \cdot \text{Disturbed Area}}{\text{Total Seeding Cost}} =$$

**Total = \$ 67,184.50**

**8. Truck to CCDD**

All material will be trucked to the nearest CCDD station that accepts construction material (i.e. fence, concrete pads and gravel).

The nearest transfer station is TBD

$$\frac{(\text{Total Trucks to CCDD} \cdot \text{Roundtrip Time} \cdot \text{Trucking Cost})}{\text{Total Trucking Cost to CCDD}} =$$

**Total = \$ 333,840.00**

**9. Truck to Recycling Facility Plus Disposal Fee**

All batteries will be transported to the nearest recycling facility.

$$(\text{Total Trucks to Recycling Facility} \cdot \text{Roundtrip Distance} \cdot \text{Trucking Cost}) + (\text{Number Batteries} \cdot \text{Battery Disposal Fee}) =$$

**Total = \$ 205,820.00**

**10. Administrative Fees**

Development of bid Package, contract administration, and project management.

*Flat Fee*

**Total = \$ 10,000.00**



**11. 15% Contingency plan**

*(Subtotal of sections 1-10) • (15% Contingency plan)*

**Total = \$ 646,702.27**

Salvage Values

Salvage Value Not Included

**Summary of Decommissioning Costs and Salvage Values**

Line Item	Task	Cost
1	Remove and Package Battery Modules	\$ 2,195,596.80
2	Electrical Equipment Loading and Removal	\$ 324,752.31
3	Break Up Concrete Pads	\$ 663,173.76
4	Electrical Wiring Removal	\$ 400,648.07
5	Fence Removal	\$ 10,333.02
6	Power Pole Removal	\$ 100,000.00
7	Seed Disturbed Areas	\$ 67,184.50
8	Trucking to CCDD	\$ 333,840.00
9	Trucking to Recycling Facility Plus Disposal Fee	\$ 205,820.00
10	Administrative Fees	\$ 10,000.00
11	Contingency Plan	\$ 646,702.27
<b>Subtotal =</b>		<b>\$ 4,958,050.74</b>

Task	Number of Batteries	Battery removal Rate (Min/Battery)	Labor Rate	Total Cost
Remove and Package Battery Modules	46,080	45	\$ 63.53	<b>\$ 2,195,596.80</b>

Task	Number of Equipment	Loading rate (hr/unit)	Labor Rate	Total Cost
Transformer Loading and Removal	66	0.5	220.47	\$ 7,275.51
Inverter Loading and Removal	2880	0.5	220.47	\$ 317,476.80
Total Electrical Loading and Removal				<b>\$ 324,752.31</b>

Task	# of Demolition Days	FEL Cost/Day	Labor Rate	Total Cost
Break Up Concrete Pads	376	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 95.47	<b>\$ 663,173.76</b>

Task	Length of Cable	Cable Removal Rate	Labor Rate	Backhoe cost/Hr	Total Cost
Electrical Wiring Removal	23535	3 Min/L.F	95.47	\$ 245.00	<b>\$ 400,648.07</b>

Task	Total Length Fence	Fence Removal Rate	Labor Rate	Bobcat Cost/Hr	Truck Cost/Hr	Total Cost
Fence Removal	3538	0.5	\$ 95.47	\$ 125.00	\$ 130.00	<b>\$ 10,333.02</b>

Task	Number of Poles	Pole Removal Cost	Total Cost
Power Pole Removal	4	\$25,000	<b>\$ 100,000.00</b>

Task	Area to be seeded (sf)	Seeding Cost/sf w/Labor	Total Cost
Seed Disturbed Areas	671845	\$ 0.10	<b>\$ 67,184.50</b>

Task	Number of Trips	Length of trip (Hr)	Trucking Cost / Hr	Total Cost
Trucking to CCDD	2568	1	130	<b>\$ 333,840.00</b>

Task	Number of Trips	Length of Trip (Hr)	Trucking Cost / Hr	# of Batteries	Battery Disposal Cost	Total Cost
Trucking to Recycling Facility Plus Disposal Fee	1406	1	130	46080	0.5	<b>\$ 205,820.00</b>

Task	Fixed Fee	Total Cost
Administrative costs	\$ 10,000.00	<b>\$ 10,000.00</b>

Subtotal	\$ 4,311,348.47
15% Contingency	\$ 646,702.27
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$ 4,958,050.74</b>



**PRESALE LAYOUT - 10018 E JENSEN AVE - FRESNO - CA RA**

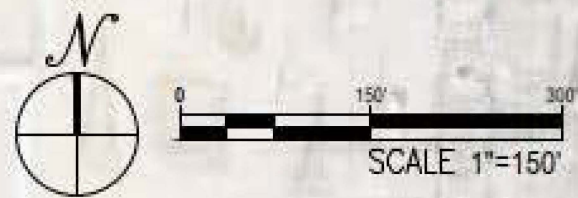
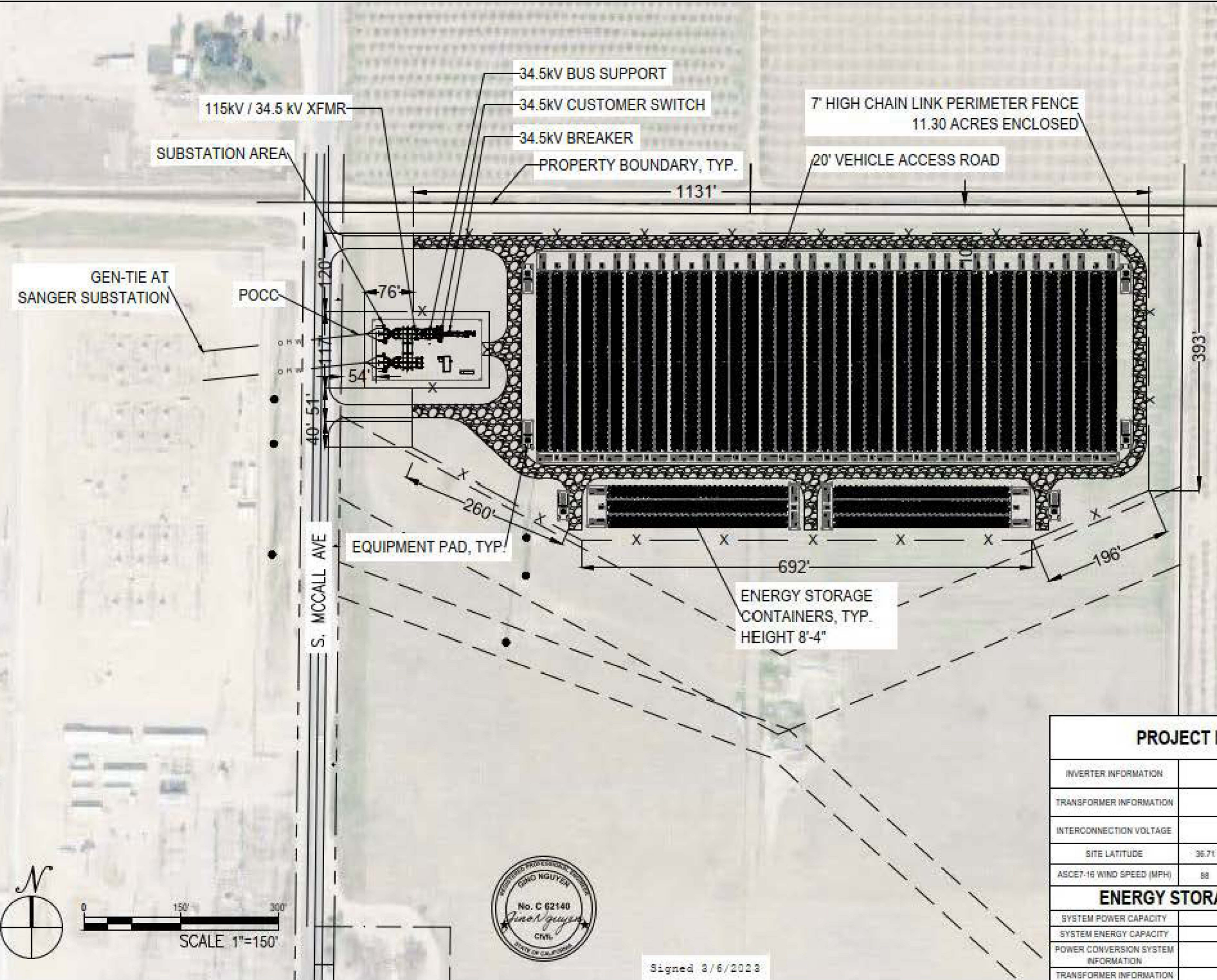
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 55 TECHNOLOGY DR, SUITE 102  
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 FAX: (888) 843-6778  
 WWW.BORREGOSOLAR.COM

10018 E JENSEN AVE - FRESNO - CA  
 RA  
 10018 E JENSEN AVE  
 FRESNO, CA 93706

PROJECT NUMBER:  
 111-4923

RELEASE LEVEL	CHECKED	DATE	BY
PSD FOR PDS PACKAGE			
SITE PLAN FOR INTX			
SITE PLAN FOR INTX			
8 HOUR BATTERY			



Signed 3/6/2023

PROJECT INFORMATION			
INVERTER INFORMATION	(60) POWER ELECTRONICS FP4200M4		
TRANSFORMER INFORMATION	4200MVA		
INTERCONNECTION VOLTAGE	115 KV		
SITE LATITUDE	36.71	SITE LONGITUDE	-119.61
ASCE7-16 WIND SPEED (MPH)	88	GROUND SNOW LOAD (PSF)	0
ENERGY STORAGE INFORMATION			
SYSTEM POWER CAPACITY	200,000 KW		
SYSTEM ENERGY CAPACITY	1,600,000 KWH		
POWER CONVERSION SYSTEM INFORMATION	FLUENCE		
TRANSFORMER INFORMATION	4200MVA		

DATE	BY	REVISION
01/14/21	JPL	1
03/02/21	SMO	2
10/02/21	JPL	3
03/08/22	JPL	

SCALE: 1"=150'  
 VALID ONLY WHEN PLOTTED  
 ANSI FULL BLEED 8.5" X 11"

**PV-L1**  
 PROPOSAL LAYOUT





# County of Fresno

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

## INITIAL STUDY APPLICATION

### INSTRUCTIONS

Answer all questions completely. An incomplete form may delay processing of your application. Use additional paper if necessary and attach any supplemental information to this form. Attach an operational statement if appropriate. This application will be distributed to several agencies and persons to determine the potential environmental effects of your proposal. Please complete the form in a legible and reproducible manner (i.e., USE BLACK INK OR TYPE).

OFFICE USE ONLY	
IS No.	_____
Project No(s).	_____
Application Rec'd.	_____

### GENERAL INFORMATION

- Property Owner :** Craig Richard Constance **Phone/Fax** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 819, Sanger, CA 93657

*Street* *City* *State/Zip*
- Applicant :** Borrego Solar Systems Inc. **Phone/Fax:** (424) 537-9168

**Mailing Address:** 5005 Texas St., Ste. 400, San Diego, CA 92108

*Street* *City* *State/Zip*
- Representative:** Jacobs Engineering, Cory Haynes **Phone/Fax:** (706) 296 4184

**Mailing Address:** 4 Embarcadero Center, Ste. 3800, San Francisco, CA 94105

*Street* *City* *State/Zip*
- Proposed Project:** Borrego is proposing to develop and construct a battery energy storage system (BESS) approximately 2 miles west of Sanger.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_
- Project Location:** Adjacent to the PG&E Sanger substation at 1900 S McCall Ave (APN #314-080-36)

\_\_\_\_\_
- Project Address:** 10018 Jensen Ave., Sanger, CA 93657

\_\_\_\_\_
- Section/Township/Range:** 853 / B.14 / 816.5      **Parcel Size:** 37.56 acre
- Assessor's Parcel No.** 314-080-36 OVER.....

10. Land Conservation Contract No. (If applicable): N/A

11. What other agencies will you need to get permits or authorization from:

- |                                                                      |                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> LAFCo (annexation or extension of services) | <input type="checkbox"/> SJVUAPCD (Air Pollution Control District) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CALTRANS                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Reclamation Board                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Division of Aeronautics                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Energy                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water Quality Control Board                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Airport Land Use Commission               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                                 |                                                                    |

12. Will the project utilize Federal funds or require other Federal authorization subject to the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969?  Yes  No

If so, please provide a copy of all related grant and/or funding documents, related information and environmental review requirements.

13. Existing Zone District<sup>1</sup>: AE-20

14. Existing General Plan Land Use Designation<sup>1</sup>: Agriculture

**ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION**

15. Present land use: Vacant agricultural field  
Describe existing physical improvements including buildings, water (wells) and sewage facilities, roads, and lighting. Include a site plan or map showing these improvements:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the major vegetative cover: Fallow agricultural field with low native grasses

Any perennial or intermittent water courses? If so, show on map: N/A

Is property in a flood-prone area? Describe:

No

16. Describe surrounding land uses (e.g., commercial, agricultural, residential, school, etc.):

North: Agricultural

South: Agricultural

East: Agricultural

West: PG&E Substation and Agricultural

17. What land use(s) in the area may be impacted by your Project?: None

18. What land use(s) in the area may impact your project?: None

19. Transportation:

NOTE: The information below will be used in determining traffic impacts from this project. The data may also show the need for a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) for the project.

A. Will additional driveways from the proposed project site be necessary to access public roads?  
       Yes   X   No

B. Daily traffic generation:

I. Residential - Number of Units \_\_\_\_\_  
Lot Size \_\_\_\_\_  
Single Family \_\_\_\_\_  
Apartments \_\_\_\_\_

II. Commercial - Number of Employees \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Salesmen \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Delivery Trucks \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Square Footage of Building \_\_\_\_\_

III. Describe and quantify other traffic generation activities:  
After completion of construction activities which are expected to take 6 months, the BESS will operate unstaffed. The system will be monitored remotely and regular operations and maintenance will be conducted approximately quarterly by service personnel estimated to be 1-2 persons with 1 vehicle. Both during the construction and operation terms, access to the site will be via an existing road onto the property from S McCall Ave. There will be adequate area on the property for vehicle parking and equipment staging during construction and operational phases.

20. Describe any source(s) of noise from your project that may affect the surrounding area: \_\_\_\_\_  
At the property lines, the BESS will produce negligible sound and the system will have minimal lighting for safety at night.

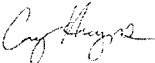
21. Describe any source(s) of noise in the area that may affect your project: None

22. Describe the probable source(s) of air pollution from your project: None

23. Proposed source of water:  
( ) private well  
( ) community system<sup>3</sup>—name: No water systems are proposed to be used at this time OVER.....

- 24. Anticipated volume of water to be used (gallons per day)<sup>2</sup>: None during operations
- 25. Proposed method of liquid waste disposal:  
( ) septic system/individual  
( ) community system<sup>3</sup>-name N/A
- 26. Estimated volume of liquid waste (gallons per day)<sup>2</sup>: None
- 27. Anticipated type(s) of liquid waste: N/A
- 28. Anticipated type(s) of hazardous wastes<sup>2</sup>: N/A
- 29. Anticipated volume of hazardous wastes<sup>2</sup>: N/A
- 30. Proposed method of hazardous waste disposal<sup>2</sup>: N/A
- 31. Anticipated type(s) of solid waste: N/A
- 32. Anticipated amount of solid waste (tons or cubic yards per day): N/A
- 33. Anticipated amount of waste that will be recycled (tons or cubic yards per day): N/A
- 34. Proposed method of solid waste disposal: N/A
- 35. Fire protection district(s) serving this area: N/A
- 36. Has a previous application been processed on this site? If so, list title and date: No
- 37. Do you have any underground storage tanks (except septic tanks)? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No X
- 38. If yes, are they currently in use? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, THE FOREGOING INFORMATION IS TRUE.

 Cory Haynes, JACOBS 2/22/2022  
SIGNATURE DATE

<sup>1</sup>Refer to Development Services and Capital Projects Conference Checklist

<sup>2</sup>For assistance, contact Environmental Health System, (559) 600-3357

<sup>3</sup>For County Service Areas or Waterworks Districts, contact the Resources Division, (559) 600-4259

## NOTICE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

### INDEMNIFICATION AND DEFENSE

*The Board of Supervisors has adopted a policy that applicants should be made aware that they may be responsible for participating in the defense of the County in the event a lawsuit is filed resulting from the County's action on your project. You may be required to enter into an agreement to indemnify and defend the County if it appears likely that litigation could result from the County's action. The agreement would require that you deposit an appropriate security upon notice that a lawsuit has been filed. In the event that you fail to comply with the provisions of the agreement, the County may rescind its approval of the project.*

### STATE FISH AND WILDLIFE FEE

*State law requires that specified fees (effective January 1, 2020: \$3,445.25 for an EIR; \$2,480.25 for a Mitigated/Negative Declaration) be paid to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for projects which must be reviewed for potential adverse effect on wildlife resources. The County is required to collect the fees on behalf of CDFW. A \$50.00 handling fee will also be charged, as provided for in the legislation, to defray a portion of the County's costs for collecting the fees.*

*The following projects are exempt from the fees:*

- 1. All projects statutorily exempt from the provisions of CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act).*
- 2. All projects categorically exempt by regulations of the Secretary of Resources (State of California) from the requirement to prepare environmental documents.*

*A fee exemption may be issued by CDFW for eligible projects determined by that agency to have "no effect on wildlife." That determination must be provided in advance from CDFW to the County at the request of the applicant. You may wish to call the local office of CDFW at (559) 222-3761 if you need more information.*

*Upon completion of the Initial Study you will be notified of the applicable fee. Payment of the fee will be required before your project will be forwarded to the project analyst for scheduling of any required hearings and final processing. The fee will be refunded if the project should be denied by the County.*



\_\_\_\_\_  
*Applicant's Signature*

02/22/2022

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*



# **Pest Management Plan**

**Apache Battery**

**Energy Storage**

**Project**

**APN 314-080-36 and 314-080-37**

New Leaf Energy

February 23, 2023

**Table of Contents**

1.0 Project and Objectives ..... 3

2.0 Existing Site Conditions ..... 3

    2.1 Vegetation ..... 3

    2.2 Wildlife ..... 4

3.0 Control Options and Removal Methods ..... 6

    3.1 Preventive Controls ..... 6

    3.2 Removal Methods ..... 6

4.0 Conclusion ..... 7

5.0 References ..... 8

**List of Tables**

Table 1. Vascular Plants Detected during Site Visit ..... 4

Table 2. Vertebrates Detected during Site Visit ..... 4

**List of Figures**

Figure 1. Site Plan ..... 9

## 1.0 Project and Objectives

New Leaf Energy proposes to construct a battery energy storage facility near Sanger, Fresno County, California. The project will involve constructing the facility on a total of about 11.3 acres (APN 314-080) in a fallow agricultural field northeast of the intersection of East Jensen Avenue and McCall Avenue (Figures 1 and 2). The proposed project site plan is depicted in Figure 3.

General site investigations of the study area were conducted on January 21, 2021, during which the site and the surrounding area were evaluated for the presence of various plant and animal species, including rodents. The results of the site visit and a literature review are contained in AEI Consultants Biological Review (2021).

The purpose of this Pest Management Plan is to discuss potential pest problems that may occur within the boundaries of the project site during the life of the battery storage project. In addition, the Plan outlines the various methods for preventing and/or controlling potential pest problems that may arise during operation of the battery storage facility.

This Plan provides information on the various pests known to occur in the region that could potentially cause an infestation on the property. Available resources and various control measures are discussed below which will help to control any future pest problems, if they occur. As necessary, various measures will be implemented to control any rodent populations present on the site in such a manner as to ensure minimal impact to the environment.

## 2.0 Existing Site Conditions

### 2.1 Vegetation

The Project site has been intensively cultivated since at least 1998 and supported a vineyard as recently as 2016 (Google 2021). At the time of the survey, it consisted of routinely disked fallow agricultural land with ruderal plant species. It was bordered to the north by an irrigation canal and orchards, to the south and east by fallow agricultural land, and to the west by McCall Avenue and an electric substation.

**Table 1. Vascular Plants and Wildlife Detected during Site Visit**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
<b>Plants</b>		
<b>Family Asteraceae</b>		
Smooth cat's ear	<i>Hypochaeris glabra</i>	Nonnative
Prickly lettuce	<i>Lactuca serriola</i>	Nonnative
Rough cocklebur	<i>Xanthium strumarium</i>	Native
<b>Family Brassicaceae</b>		
Common mustard	<i>Brassica rapa</i>	Nonnative
<b>Family Chenopodiaceae</b>		
Russian thistle	<i>Salsola tragus</i>	Nonnative

<b>Family Geraniaceae</b>		
Big heron bill	<i>Erodium botrys</i>	Nonnative
<b>Family Onagraceae</b>		
Annual fireweed	<i>Epilobium brachycarpum</i>	Native
<b>Family Poaceae</b>		
Ripgut brome	<i>Bromus diandrus</i>	Nonnative
Foxtail chess	<i>Bromus madritensis</i>	Nonnative
<b>Family Polygonaceae</b>		
Sorrel	<i>Rumex sp.</i>	Nonnative
<b>Family Solanaceae</b>		
Sacred datura	<i>Datura wrightii</i>	Native
<b>Birds</b>		
<b>Family Accipitridae</b>		
Red-tailed hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	MBTA, CFGC
<b>Family Cathartidae</b>		
Turkey vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	MBTA, CFGC
<b>Family Charadriidae</b>		
Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	MBTA, CFGC
<b>Family Columbidae</b>		
Mourning dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	MBTA, CFGC
<b>Family Corvidae</b>		
American crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	MBTA, CFGC
Common raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	MBTA, CFGC
<b>Family Emberizidae</b>		
Song sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	MBTA, CFGC

Although not seen during the site visit, various small rodents are also known to inhabit the general region. These include:

**Voles, Moles, and Pocket Gophers:** There are six vole species that occur throughout California; the California vole (*Microtus californicus*) is the most common. California voles are typically found in grassland communities and wet meadows (CDFW, 1990). Voles frequently cause damage to a wide range of ornamental plants and may also damage other landscape plantings (University of California, 2010).

Moles (*Scapanus* sp.) are small mammals that are widely distributed throughout the dry regions of the Central Valley. The species lives entirely underground and normally has an extensive system of interconnecting tunnels. The greatest damage from mole activities is primarily from their burrowing activities that can create mounds and ridges throughout an area and undermines support structures.

Pocket gophers (*Thomomys* sp.) are one of the more common mammals throughout California and population density can sometimes reach very high levels (60+ gophers per acre) (CDFW, 1990). Botta's gophers are the most common gopher species in the area and are most likely to occur on the project site. Gophers are prolific diggers and can do considerable damage within a relatively short time (University of California, 2009). The first sign of the species is usually numerous mounds of dirt scattered throughout the area.

**Rats:** Norway rats (*Rattus norvegicus*) and roof rats (*Rattus rattus*), which are species which were introduced to North America, have been observed throughout California, and create a significant amount of damage wherever they are present. They typically consume large amounts of food (i.e., grain, etc.) and are responsible for contaminating food that has been stored (University of California, 2003). In addition to the damage they can cause, they are the carriers of various diseases.

**Mice:** The common house mouse (*Mus musculus*) also occurs throughout California and is most commonly seen in association with structures (i.e., houses, sheds, barns, etc.). The house mouse is one of the more damaging rodents in the country and typically consumes and contaminates food wherever it is found (University of California, 2010). They thrive under a variety of conditions such as in and around houses and commercial structures as well as in open fields and on agricultural land. House mice consume and contaminate food meant for humans, pets, livestock, and other animals. In addition, they cause considerable damage to structures and property, and they can transmit pathogens and cause disease such as salmonellosis, a form of food poisoning.

**California Ground Squirrels:** This species of ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*) is one of the more common ground squirrels and is associated with grassland habitats, particularly in disturbed areas and along roadsides (CDFW, 1990). Damage done by the species consists primarily due to excavation of burrows that could potentially undermine structures such as support poles and pilings.

### **3.0 Control Options and Removal Methods**

#### **3.1 Preventive Controls**

Preventive controls are used to minimize rodent infestations in areas of concern and involve numerous approaches. As noted in Section 2.0, the main rodents likely to occur on the site include voles, rats, mice, gophers, and California ground squirrels. Preventive measures for each of these species are somewhat different; however, there are several measures common to all that can be implemented for the project as needed. These measures are summarized below:

**Managing Vegetation:** Rodents typically occur in areas where vegetation is allowed to grow; therefore, the vegetative cover around the exterior of site should be controlled. This can be achieved through periodic mowing.

The objective is to prevent the growth of undesirable vegetation in and around the solar panel installation with the least environmental impact and at a reasonable cost. Many weed control options are available. The following describes control options and identifies resources available for identifying the most suitable options for this situation. The UC Davis IPM program provides extensive guidance for controlling weeds. Its website for weed control in landscaping is <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7441.html> (UC Davis 2007). Although the IPM program applies to weed control methods for agricultural crops or for landscaping, the battery energy storage system can use many of its techniques.

The UC Davis IPM guide for landscaped areas offers ideas that may be considered during construction to minimize later weed growth.

An integrated approach utilizing several methods is the most economical and effective means of controlling weeds. The IPM guide recommends following these five basic steps:

- **Site assessment:** Before soil preparation and when the weeds are visible, evaluate the soil, mulch, and slope of the site so problems can be corrected, or future problems anticipated before planting. Site characteristics to look for include drainage, soil compaction, shading, and water infiltration rate. Identify the weed species in the area, with particular focus on perennial weeds. The best time to look for winter annual weeds is mid- to late winter: perennials and summer annuals are easiest to identify in mid- to late summer.
- **Site preparation:** Control existing weeds, especially perennials, before any grading and development is started. Glyphosate (Roundup®, etc.) can be used to kill existing annual and perennial weeds. Pre-plant treatment with fumigants (available to licensed pesticide applicators only) or soil solarization can be used if time allows; however, 6 weeks are required for solarization, and it is most effective when done during the time of highest sun radiation— from June to August in California.
- **Watering large areas where there are no plants will only encourage weeds to grow.**
- **Do not introduce weeds.** Weeds are sometimes introduced either in soil that has been transported to the landscape site, when amending the soil or in the potting mix of transplants.

- Hand weeding and keeping weeds from producing seeds in the landscape will greatly reduce overall weed populations.

**Chemical:** Herbicides can also be utilized, where possible, to control weeds, shrubs, and dense vegetative cover. However, frequent application of herbicides is required for long-term control of vegetation.

**Other Options:** Various other measures are available for control of rodents such as commercial repellents, electromagnetic, and burrow fumigants; however, these measures have a very low success rate and may also be cost prohibitive for large sites such as this project.

**Natural Control:** Natural predators such as hawks and falcons do occur in the area and prey on voles, rats, and ground squirrels on a regular basis. Raptors are expected to utilize the site during hunting activities; however, it would be difficult to ensure frequent or constant “patrol” of the site by hawks and falcon.

### **3.2 Removal Methods**

In the event a rodent infestation occurs on the site or in certain portions of the property, various removal methods may need to be used to remove or at least lower the number of pests present on the site. Construction of the proposed battery storage project will have the benefit of reducing the number of rodents which may presently occur on the site due to modification and removal of the present vegetation on the site. As part of the construction process, the site will be graded, and all vegetation will be removed. Additional control methods are as follows:

**Trapping:** Removal of various rodent species through trapping measures is an effective way to control populations of pests; however, trapping is labor intensive and can be relatively expensive. Trapping is most effective when dealing with small projects and on those projects where the rodents are confined to a relatively small portion of the site.

Trapping may be an effective measure for the project if the rodent infestation problem is confined to a small area but if the rodents are evenly dispersed throughout the site, baiting (see below) may be a more effective measure. In the event an infestation problem does arise, the site operations manager should consult with a pest control expert to determine if trapping is suitable.

**Baiting:** The use of toxic bait is an effective means of controlling rodents when the infestation occurs over a large area of a project site. Baits are the quickest and most cost-effective means in controlling pest infestation; however, toxic substances can create a safety problem for children, pets, and other animals (livestock). Anticoagulants are the most common baits used to control rats and mice and are available as over-the-counter substances (see below).

**Rodenticides:** First generation anticoagulants kill by preventing blood from clotting and it does take multiple feedings to gain success. The problem with this class of product is that when it was on the market for the public (consumer), children and animals could pick up the poison and ingest it, resulting in injury or death.

Whereas the first-generation anticoagulants take multiple feedings, the second generation of anticoagulants was created so that rodents who had become resistant to the first gen products would have an alternative permanent solution. Second generation anticoagulants are much faster acting; in some cases, a single night feeding can result in death. However, this is dangerous when it comes to children and pets under the Risk Mitigation Decision. EPA took this class of rodenticide off the consumer market and these products can only be purchased for commercial pest control and structural pest control markets. Products containing second generation anticoagulants must be sold in containers holding at least 16 pounds of bait if they are labeled for use by professional applicators and at least 8 pounds of bait if labeled for use in or near agricultural structures.

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

Pests are not expected to be an issue of significant concern for the battery storage project, as the project will not produce any crops or other plant materials that might attract the various rodents known to occur in the area. Vegetation management will be required to avoid interference of grasses with fencing and electrical equipment; this will reduce the amount of useful habitat for pests on the site.

Managing the vegetation is the first line of defense against rodent infestation. However, if an infestation does occur during the operational phase of the project, a professional exterminator should be consulted to determine the rodents which are causing the problem, and to determine the best approach for dealing with the specific rodents present. The consultant will also be able to determine which baits can be used in accordance with local, State, and federal laws.

#### **5.0 References**

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Figure 1.

