

Item #12
1-10-17



MEDIA RELEASE

Fresno County Assessor-Recorder's Office

Contact: Paul Dictos, C.P.A.

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FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE
September 16, 2016

FRESNO COUNTY AT THE FOREFRONT OF SOLAR IN THE VALLEY

Fresno, California- Recognizing the many benefits of solar power, Fresno County Assessor Paul Dictos announced today a record number of acres producing solar energy in Fresno County. More than 3,800 acres of land are currently producing electricity and adding over 52 million dollars of assessed valuation to the tax roll, which translates to \$520,000 in additional property taxes annually. On April 4, 2016 Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) announced 2,005 Megawatts of power under development, which approximates 20,000 acres of future solar facilities in Fresno County. *"All this means more jobs and more property tax dollars for our county"* said Dictos. SEIA further reports that California had 8,620 Megawatts of major solar installed and operating, 1,672 Megawatts under construction, and 32,611 Megawatts under development for a total of 42,903 Megawatts. Solar energy is not only sustainable, it is renewable and this means that we will never run out of it. It is about as natural a source of power as it is possible to generate electricity. The creation of solar energy requires little or no maintenance and solar power creates jobs, provides independence, reliability, slows/stops global warming, provides security and saves society billions or trillions of dollars. *"This is **GOOD NEWS** for our children and our communities"*, said Assessor-Recorder Paul Dictos.



Item #12
1-10-11

County of Fresno

Paul Dictos, CPA
Assessor-Recorder

September 19, 2011

Mr. Christopher P. Johns
President
Pacific Gas and Electric Company
77 Beale Street
San Francisco, CA, 94105

Dear Mr. Johns:

In the past twelve months PG&E purchased 717 acres of farmland in Fresno County to create solar electrical production facilities. This land is designated as Prime by the California Department of Conservation and is classified as Class I soil with an excellent rating by the United States Department of Agriculture. Using this property for solar electricity production removes this land from agricultural use. Taking this land out of production will result in higher commodity prices and reduce the number of farm-related jobs in Fresno County that suffers from very high unemployment. There is an ever increasing world-wide demand for our agricultural products that can only be met if we preserve our Agricultural lands.

As a citizen of this county and an elected official, I would welcome and encourage PG&E to seriously consider property in the county that is not Prime or lacks a reliable water supply for future solar projects. The scope and definition of my office prevents me from assisting PG&E in a search for less productive land, therefore, I would be pleased to talk with you about whatever other options you think might be acceptable alternatives.

Sincerely,

Paul Dictos, CPA
Fresno County Assessor-Recorder

Cc: Cynthia Pollard, Central Valley Government Relations Manager

Hall of Records, Room 201 / 2281 Tulare Street / Fresno, California 93721 / Phone (559) 600-6879 / FAX (559) 488-6774
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OCT 17 2011

**ASSESSOR
FRESNO COUNTY**Christopher P. Johns
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San Francisco, CA 94105*Mailing Address*
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October 11, 2011

Mr. Paul Dictos, CPA
Fresno County Assessor – Recorder
Hall of Records, Room 201
2281 Tulare Street
Fresno, CA 93721

Dear Mr. Dictos

Thank you for your letter of September 21, 2011, expressing concern over PG&E's development of solar electric facilities on prime agricultural lands in Fresno County.

I share your concerns about the land we use for developing our 250 megawatt solar photovoltaic program and want to assure you that PG&E remains committed to conducting our operations in a responsible and environmentally sensitive manner.

In developing our solar projects, we look for sites that are near existing substations and that will allow us to minimize the overall impacts of individual projects and the overall program on the environment and surrounding communities. We also strive to use land outside of the top classifications for farmland and soil whenever possible.

As a result, our recently completed Five Points, Westside and Stroud solar projects were built on non-prime land with a lower designation of Class III soil.

At PG&E, our goal is to work closely with the communities in which we develop our projects considering the issues that are important to each community. During development of the first phase of Fresno projects, our project teams met with the Farm Bureau, county planning and public works departments, County Counsel as well as the County Supervisors to answer any questions and address concerns.

While working with the farmers on the west side of Fresno County, we learned that some were interested in selling or leasing their land and retaining the water rights to irrigate other acreage. When we purchased their land, it helped reduce their need to buy water during future short water years and will enable them to grow higher value crops on their remaining land.

Mr. Paul Dictos, CPA
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It is vitally important to me that PG&E is a good community neighbor and I am pleased to share with you that we have included decommissioning funds for each new solar project, so that once the project has run its useful life, we will dismantle the facilities allowing the land to be returned to beneficial community use. In addition, PG&E pays property taxes to the County on each solar project we build since we are assessed on the unitary tax system rather than enjoying the state created tax exempt status of non-unitary tax based projects.

Again, I want to thank you for taking the time to share your concerns and commit to you that as we develop the next phase of our solar project that we will do so in an environmentally responsible manner. In the meantime, I am directing my local government relations manager, Ms. Cindy Pollard, to reach out to you to address any additional questions or concerns you may have. Ms. Pollard can be reached at 559-263-5304.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christopher P. Johns".

Christopher P. Johns
President, Pacific Gas and Electric Company

cc: Ms. Cindy Pollard