

COUNTY OF SAN BENITO
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY

2301 Technology Parkway, Hollister, Ca. 95023



November 22, 2016

Steven E. White, Director
Department of Public Works and Planning
County of Fresno
2220 Tulare Street, Sixth Floor
Fresno, CA 93721

Re: CEQA Addendum for Panoche Valley Solar Project

Dear Director White:

As you know, Panoche Valley Solar, LLC has proposed to install a temporary "jumper" bridge at the location of the existing bridge crossing Little Panoche Creek along Little Panoche Road in Fresno County. To document that the temporary jumper bridge project does not create any new significant environmental impacts or cause a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified environmental impacts, and in our capacity as the CEQA lead agency for the Panoche Valley Solar (PVS) project, we prepared an Addendum to the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (FSEIR; State Clearinghouse # 2010031008) certified by San Benito County for the Panoche Valley Solar project in May 2015, which I am transmitting to Fresno County for its use and consideration.

Mitigation Measure TR-1.2 of the FSEIR required the applicant to monitor and, if necessary, implement load distribution management over bridges and culverts along Little Panoche Road. Through implementation of this measure, the applicant determined that load distribution management was necessary, and proposed to utilize a temporary jumper bridge for this purpose. Because the temporary jumper bridge was not specifically described as an implementation mechanism in the FSEIR, we had this Addendum prepared in accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15164 to document that while some minor changes or additions are necessary, "none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred."

The Addendum was prepared by Burns & McDonnell Engineering Co., Inc., and has been peer reviewed by County Resource Management Agency staff and Aspen Environmental Group, the CEQA consultant responsible for the FSEIR. Based on the analysis in the Addendum, the County finds that the proposed temporary jumper bridge is not a substantial change in the PVS project that would require major revisions of the FSEIR due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects. (See CEQA Guidelines section 15162(a)(1). Accordingly, it is the determination of San Benito County as the CEQA lead agency that no subsequent or supplemental EIR is warranted for the temporary jumper bridge. San Benito County also understands and anticipates that Fresno County may utilize this Addendum as a CEQA responsible agency with respect to issuance of encroachment permits for this work.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Brent Barnes, AICP
Director, Resource Management Agency
County of San Benito

cc: Arthur Willie, Bernard Jimenez, Eric Cherniss, Susan Lee, Barbara Thompson