



Proposed Decision Out For Avenal Power Plant

November 13, 2009

Sacramento – A California Energy Commission siting committee recommends that the full five-member Commission approve the 600-megawatt Avenal Energy Project in Kings County.

In its presiding member's proposed decision (PMPD) released recently, the two-member Committee assigned by the Commission to review the project said the facility, as mitigated, will have no significant impacts on the environment and complies with applicable laws, ordinances, regulations and standards (LORS).

The proposed decision was based solely on the record established during the facility's certification proceeding.

The PMPD is NOT a final decision on the project. The Committee led by Commissioner Jeffrey Byron has released the document for 30 days of public comment. The Committee will consider input before bringing the proposed decision to the full Commission. The entire document can be found on the Commission's website at: www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/avenal/documents/

The PMPD agreed with staff's final assessment that with effective implementation of the proposed conditions of certification, the Avenal Energy Project in the City of Avenal can be constructed safely and reliably.

The PMPD said the project has complied with rules and requirements of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution District, and that all biological, soil, water and agricultural impacts of the plant have been fully mitigated to a less than significant level --not only for the project site but also for the construction lay down areas.

The PMPD stressed that the Avenal Energy project was the first power plant to be evaluated in greater detail for greenhouse gas emission (GHG) impacts. The effort was in line with an informational Commission proceeding, which provided guidance for fulfilling its California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) responsibility for power plant siting projects while the California Air Resources Board develops regulations requiring mitigation of power plant GHG emissions.

The project, as a combined-cycle power plant with twin heat recovery steam generators will reduce overall GHG emissions within the electrical system by displacing more carbon intensive generation sources. The project will provide dispatchable generation to support the integration of renewable generation sources, such as wind and solar into the electrical grid.

Project owner Avenal Power Center, LLC of Houston, Texas plans to develop the Avenal Energy project on 34 acres of a 148-acre site zoned for industrial use just south of the Fresno County line and two miles east of Interstate 5. The proposed project is six miles from the City of Avenal's residential and commercial districts.

If licensed by the Energy Commission, the \$530-million power facility will begin construction in April 2010, with initial startup in October 2011 and full commercial operation by June 2012.

More information on the Avenal Energy project is available on the Energy Commission website at: www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/avenal/

SOURCE: California Energy Commission