

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

This environmental document has been prepared for the U. S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as the Lead Agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This environmental document will be incorporated into the San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) East County Substation (ECO Substation) Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS). To comply with both federal and state regulations, this document addresses both NEPA and CEQA regulations. This environmental document is intended to inform the general public of the proposed Tule Wind Project, as proposed by Pacific Wind Development LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Iberdrola Renewables, Inc. (Iberdrola Renewables).

This environmental document presents the environmental impacts resulting from the construction, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning of the proposed project and includes recommended mitigation measures to reduce the identified environmental impacts. In accordance with both NEPA and CEQA requirements, this environmental document also identifies and analyzes alternatives of the proposed project.

The proposed project, consisting of 134 wind turbines, an overhead and underground electrical collection system, a transmission line, and associated facilities will be capable of generating up to 200 megawatts (MW) of electricity in eastern San Diego County, California. A full description of the project components and construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning activities is discussed in Section 2.0, Proposed Action and Alternatives.

The primary components of the proposed project include:

- Up to 134 wind turbines, consisting of turbines ranging in size between 328 and 492 feet in height, capable of generating up to 200 MW of electricity;
- A 34.5 kilovolt (kV) overhead and underground collector cable system linking each turbine to the next and to the project collector substation;
- A 138 kV overhead transmission line that will run south to interconnect with the proposed SDG&E Rebuilt Boulevard Substation;
- A 5-acre collector substation site and 5-acre operation and maintenance (O&M) building;
- Access roads between turbines, as well as improvements to existing roadways and new roadways to accommodate construction and delivery of equipment;
- A temporary batch plant for construction located on a 5-acre area;
- A temporary 10-acre parking area;
- Nineteen 2-acre temporary laydown areas; and
- Two permanent meteorological towers and one Sonic Detection and Ranging (SODAR) Unit.

The project is located on a combination of lands administered by the BLM, the Ewiiapaayp Indian Reservation, Manzanita and Campo Reservations (access only), the California State Lands Commission (CSLC), as well as privately-owned land under the jurisdiction of the County of San Diego. A list of the project parcels by jurisdiction is provided in Appendix A. The proposed project is presented in

Figure 2.0-2 and the alternatives are presented in **Figure 2.0-12 through Figure 2.0-14** of this environmental document.

1.1 PURPOSE AND USE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT

The purpose of this environmental document is to inform the general public of the proposed project while meeting the intent and requirements of both NEPA and CEQA. The Tule Wind Project environmental document will be incorporated into the SDG&E ECO Substation EIR/EIS to be analyzed as one combined action. The Tule Wind Project environmental document is used to analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project under NEPA and CEQA to assist the project proponent in meeting the requirements of local, state, and federal agencies for the issuance of permits and discretionary approvals. The information presented is informational in content and does not make recommendations regarding the approval or denial of the project. After the Tule Wind Project environmental document has been incorporated into the ECO Substation EIR/EIS, all parties involved will arrive at a decision whether to proceed with the combined proposed projects or choose an appropriate alternative based on the potential environmental impacts discussed in the final ECO Substation EIS/EIR.

NEPA (Section 1502.1) states that “the primary purpose of an environmental impact statement is to serve as an action-forcing device to insure that the policies and goals defined in the Act are infused into the ongoing programs and actions of the Federal Government. It shall provide full and fair discussion of significant environmental impacts and shall inform decision makers and the public of the reasonable alternatives which would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment. Agencies shall focus on significant environmental issues and alternatives and shall reduce paperwork and the accumulation of extraneous background data. Statements shall be concise, clear, and to the point, and shall be supported by evidence that the agency has made the necessary environmental analyses. An environmental impact statement is more than a disclosure document. It shall be used by Federal officials in conjunction with other relevant material to plan actions and make decisions.” The BLM, as the Lead Agency for NEPA, will review the environmental document for consistency with NEPA requirements and regulations.

CEQA (Section 15002) states that the purpose of an EIR is to: (1) inform the public and decision-makers of the potential environmental impacts of a project; (2) identify methods that could reduce the magnitude of a potentially significant impact of a project, and (3) identify alternatives that could reduce the magnitude of environmental impacts or propose more effective uses of the project site. The CPUC, as the Lead Agency for CEQA, will review the environmental document for consistency with CEQA requirements and regulations.

In preparing an environmental document, individual requirements of both NEPA and CEQA must be met during the environmental review process. The basic contents of an environmental document include:

- A description of the proposed project (Proposed Action);
- Purpose and Need for the Action (NEPA);
- Statement of Objectives (CEQA);
- A description of existing conditions in the project area;
- A discussion of the potential significant and less-than-significant environmental impacts of the proposed project;

- Recommendations of measures that would reduce impacts of the proposed project; and
- An evaluation of a reasonable range of feasible alternatives to the proposed project.

1.2 CONTENT AND FORMAT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT

In accordance with NEPA and CEQA requirements as presented previously, this environmental document includes the following sections:

- *Executive Summary*: Provides a summary description of the proposed project, the alternatives, and their respective environmental impacts, including a summary table with impacts and associated mitigation measures for the proposed project and alternatives.
- *Section 1: Introduction and Summary*. Provides an introduction to the environmental document and the environmental review process, and a description of the necessary discretionary approvals that may be required for the project and the consultation and coordination that has occurred.
- *Section 2: Proposed Action and Alternatives*. Provides the purpose and need of the project, project objectives, a detailed project description including project components and activities, project design features and Best Management Practices, a summary of the analysis of the environmental impacts and mitigation measures included in the environmental document, County of San Diego cumulative projects, and alternatives to the proposed project.
- *Section 3: Affected Environment/Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, Environmental Consequences/Impact Analysis, and Mitigation Measures*. Project effects are analyzed on each of the following sections:
 - 3.1 Air Quality
 - 3.2 Aesthetics and Visual Resources
 - 3.3 Agricultural Resources
 - 3.4 Biological Resources
 - 3.5 Cultural Paleontological Resources
 - 3.6 Energy
 - 3.7 Fire and Fuels Management
 - 3.8 Geology, Soils, and Minerals
 - 3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials
 - 3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality
 - 3.11 Land Use and Planning
 - 3.12 Noise
 - 3.13 Population and Housing
 - 3.14 Public Health and Safety
 - 3.15 Public Services and Utilities
 - 3.16 Recreation and Wilderness
 - 3.17 Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice
 - 3.18 Traffic
- *Section 4: Other Environmental Considerations*. Addresses topics including; Growth Inducing Impacts, Adverse/Significant Impacts which cannot be Avoided or Mitigated, Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources, and Short-Term and Long-Term Productivity of the Environment.

- *Section 5: List of Preparers.* A list of names and qualification of those primarily responsible for preparing the environmental document.
- *Section 6: References.* A comprehensive list of all technical documents prepared specifically for the project, and other documents that were consulted in the preparation of the environmental document.
- *Appendices.* Technical background information used in preparation of the environmental document.

1.3 PROJECT ENTITLEMENTS AND DISCRETIONARY APPROVALS

Bureau of Land Management

Iberdrola Renewables is required to obtain a right-of-way (ROW) for the development of an energy project on federal lands. Iberdrola Renewables submitted a ROW Grant (Serial Number CA-45248) on September 15, 2004 for wind testing and monitoring at the project location. Iberdrola Renewables submitted an application for an amended ROW and a Plan of Development on December 21, 2007. The project will also include linear right-of-way to allow for the extension of the 138 kV overhead transmission line to the SDG&E proposed Rebuilt Boulevard Substation located to the south of the project area. Iberdrola Renewables is requesting a minimum 30-year ROW term for the proposed project. BLM is responsible for issuing a decision to approve or deny the ROW permit authorization to construct, operate and maintain the proposed project on BLM lands.

As the Lead Agency for NEPA, the BLM is also responsible for preparing a Record of Decision (ROD) in accordance with NEPA requirements (40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1505.2), which describes the particular course of action the BLM has chosen and an explanation of why a particular course of action was chosen.

California Public Utilities Commission

As the Lead Agency for CEQA, the CPUC is responsible for making a decision to approve or deny the application after reviewing the Final ECO Substation EIR/EIS for consistency with CEQA requirements and certify the document's adequacy prior to taking any approval action of the proposed project or an alternative to the project. The CPUC is required to file a Notice of Determination (NOD) with the California State Clearinghouse within five working days after approval of a project for which an EIR was prepared (*CEQA Guidelines* §15094).

California State Lands Commission

Iberdrola Renewables is required to obtain a Surface Land Lease for the development of the portion of the project on State lands. An application was submitted to the CSLC on August 28, 2007 for a Surface Land Lease. A letter of non-objection was sent to the applicant December 23, 2009, for permission to perform cultural surveys, wetland/drainage surveys, and biological surveys on the State lands.

County of San Diego

Iberdrola Renewables is required to obtain a Major Use Permit (MUP) for the development of the portion of the project that is located on privately-owned lands under County jurisdiction. The proposed project is considered to be a Civic Use Type-Major Impact Services and Utility per Section 1350 of the County of

San Diego Zoning Ordinance. In addition to the MUP required to construct wind turbines and ancillary facilities on privately-owned land, a secondary MUP is required for the project to extract water during construction from the Rough Acres Ranch property. The project will require more than 5,000 gallons per day (gpd) for construction, and is considered to be a Groundwater Extraction Operation per Section 6550 of the County of San Diego Zoning Ordinance.

1.3.1 Other Authorizations, Permits, Reviews, and Approvals

Government agencies other than the lead agencies, and agencies with jurisdiction over the project, may require permits or approvals for one or more aspects of the proposed project. County and State permits will be required for transportation and road use during the construction process. Permits from the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) are potentially required. CPUC or Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) approval will be required for the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) put in place between Iberdrola Renewables and a buyer of the energy output from the facility.

Table 1.0-1 provides a list of the anticipated federal, state and local permits and approvals that would be required for the proposed project and alternatives.

1.3.2 Pending Authorizations, Agreements, and Permits

The following authorizations, agreements, and permits have been approved or are pending:

- A temporary ROW has been granted by the BLM for the three existing temporary metrological towers on-site. ROW for turbines is pending the approval of this environmental review.
- A Land Lease Agreement is being negotiated with the Ewiiapaayp Tribe for placement of turbines on Tribal property.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Manzanita Tribe is pending for roadway access only in the southwest portion of the project area in order to transport the turbines to the portion of the project area located on Ewiiapaayp lands.
- A MOU with the Campo Tribe is pending for roadway access only in the southwest portion of the project in order to transport the turbines through the Manzanita Tribe access roads.
- An application has been submitted to the CSLC for a Surface Land Lease on State land. The application is pending.
- A MUP has been filed with the County of San Diego in October 2009 for the portion of the project that will be located on private property. Iberdrola Renewables will submit an updated entitlement package in August 2010.
- A MUP will be filed for the extraction of groundwater from wells located on Rough Acres Ranch (Hamann Properties) in August 2010.
- An agreement has been made with the owners of Rough Acres Ranch to construct turbines, access roads and associated facilities, in addition to extracting water from wells located on Rough Acres Ranch.

Table 1.0-1. Anticipated Authorizations, Permits, Reviews, and Approvals

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
<i>Federal</i>		
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	Section 106 Consultation (National Historic Preservation Act)	To be completed, as necessary.
Federal Aviation Administration	Notice of Proposed Construction (Form 7460-1) Hazard Determination	Filed on December 15, 2006, with determination of no hazard on February 18, 2007. Studies have been extended to be valid through November 25, 2010.
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Section 404 Permit (Clean Water Act)	To be obtained.
U.S. Department of the Interior - Bureau of Indian Affairs	Land Lease Agreement approval with the Ewiiapaayp Tribe	To be obtained.
U.S. Department of the Interior - Bureau of Land Management	Right-of-Way Application for Transportation and Utility Systems and Facilities on Federal Lands, Standard Form 299.	To be obtained.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Section 7 Consultation (Endangered Species Act)	To be completed, as necessary.
	Consultation (Migratory Bird Treaty Act)	To be completed as necessary.
	Consultation (Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act)	To be completed, as necessary.
<i>State of California</i>		
California Department of Fish and Game	California Endangered Species Act Incidental Take Permit (Section 2081)	To be obtained.
	California Native Plant Protection Act	To be completed, as necessary.
	Streambed Alteration Agreement Permit (Section 1602)	To be obtained.
California State Historic Preservation Office	Section 106 Consultation (National Historic Preservation Act)	To be completed, as necessary.
California State Lands Commission	Surface Land Lease Agreement	To be obtained
Colorado River Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 7	Section 401 Water Quality Certification (Clean Water Act)	To be obtained.
	Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Storm Water Construction Permit (Clean Water Act)	To be obtained.
California Department of Transportation	Transportation Permits	To be obtained.
	Encroachment Permit	To be obtained, if applicable.
Air Pollution Control District (APCD)	Air Quality Permit to Construct and Operate Batch Plant and Collector Substation.	To be completed.
State Water Regional Control Board (SWRCB)	General Construction Stormwater Permit	To be obtained.
SWRCB	Waste Discharge Requirements Permit	To be obtained.

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
<i>Local</i>		
County of San Diego	Major Use Permit – Operation of Wind Turbines	Submitted October 2009. Revised entitlement package to be submitted August 2010.
	Major Use Permit – Groundwater Extraction on Rough Acres Ranch	To be submitted August 2010.
	Building Permit	To be obtained.
	Encroachment Permit	To be obtained, if applicable.
	Well and Septic Permit	To be obtained.

1.4 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Notice of Intent and Notice of Preparation

Under NEPA, a Notice of Intent (NOI) is published in the *Federal Register* to initiate the NEPA process. Under CEQA, the EIR process is initiated by filing a Notice of Preparation (NOP) with the California State Clearinghouse in the Office of Planning and Research to establish that a Draft EIR is being prepared. A 30-day period is initiated, during which public and agency input is solicited on the scope of issues and concerns that should be addressed in the EIS/EIR.

The BLM published a NOI on December 29, 2009, to prepare an EIS/EIR as a joint document with the San Diego East County Substation Project. The NOI can be viewed in Appendix B.

The CPUC filed a NOP on December 28, 2009, to prepare an EIS/EIR as a joint document with the San Diego ECO Substation Project with the State Clearinghouse. The NOP can be viewed in Appendix C.

Public Scoping

This environmental document has been prepared in the same manner as an EIS/EIR. The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine relevant issues that may influence the scope of the environmental analysis, including alternatives, and guide the process for developing this environmental document to be included into the ECO Substation EIR/EIS.

The scoping process identifies and determines the scope of environmental issues to be addressed in an EIS and is a specific regulatory requirement associated with implementation of NEPA. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1501.7 and 1503.1) and Executive Order (EO) 12372, *Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs*, direct federal agencies to foster an intergovernmental partnership by soliciting and considering state and local input on the scope of issues to be addressed in an EIS. Public and agency scoping is an integral part of determining the range of issues to be addressed and identifying the significant issues various parties may have about a proposed project.

According to the Section 15083 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, prior to completing the Draft EIR, the lead agency may also consult directly with any person or organization it believes will be concerned with the environmental effects of the project. Scoping is necessary when preparing an EIS/EIR jointly with a federal agency.

- a. Scoping has been helpful to agencies in identifying the range of actions, alternatives, mitigation measures, and significant effects to be analyzed in depth in an EIR and in eliminating from detailed study issues found not to be important.
- b. Scoping has been found to be an effective way to bring together and resolve the concerns of affected federal, state, and local agencies, the proponent of the action, and other interested persons including those who might not be in accord with the action on environmental grounds.
- c. Where scoping is used, it should be combined to the extent possible with consultation under Section 15082 regarding the NOP.

Public Scoping Meetings

Public scoping meetings are held to solicit public and agency input on the scope of analysis and range of alternatives for the environmental document. The meetings are used to gather comments during the scoping period and identify the substantive issues to be included in the analyses of the Draft SDG&E ECO Substation EIS/EIR.

Joint BLM and CPUC public scoping meetings were held for the proposed project at the Jacumba Highland Center, 44681 Old Highway 80, Jacumba, CA 91934 on January 27, 2010, at 7:00 p.m.; and at the Boulevard Volunteer Fire Department, 39223 Highway 94, Boulevard, CA 91905 on January 28, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. The meetings consisted of an informal open house from 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. and provided an opportunity for the public to obtain information about the proposed project to provide written and verbal comments. During the scoping period, the BLM and the CPUC solicited public comment on issues, concerns, potential impacts, alternatives, and mitigation measures to be considered in the analysis.

Materials available at the scoping meetings included fact sheets and poster board displays. The Scoping Meeting Agenda is included in Appendix D of this environmental document. Each meeting attendee was asked to sign an attendance sheet to indicate if they would like to be added to the interested parties list or if they would like to receive a copy of the ECO Substation Draft EIS/EIR when it is available. Blank forms to provide written comments were also available during the open house. Written comments were accepted at the meeting or could be mailed to Greg Thomsen (BLM) or Iain Fisher (CPUC), and postmarked no later than February 10, 2010. Additionally, written comment submittals were permitted by electronic mail.

The BLM and CPUC used the public scoping comments to prepare draft environmental documents to be available for public review later in 2010. Scoping was conducted for more than 45 days during the period from December 29, 2009, until February 15, 2010.

Notices in Local Newspapers

On December 28, 2009, a display advertisement was published in the San Diego Union Tribune, as shown in Appendix D. A display advertisement was also published in the monthly (January 2010) publication of the Back County Messenger, on page 15, included in Appendix D.

Project Notification and Document Distribution List

A scoping notification letter was mailed to approximately 1500 persons and organizations identified as potentially interested parties. The mailing list for the Draft ECO Substation EIR/EIS will be maintained

in a database and updated throughout the development of the environmental review process to ensure that all interested parties receive applicable project correspondence.

1.4.1 Other Public Involvement Activities

A variety of public involvement strategies were implemented to keep the public informed and involved with the progress of the Tule Wind Project. Efforts included holding stakeholder meetings, public officials meetings, organizing special purpose meetings, distributing a project newsletter, releasing press notices, and maintaining a website. **Table 1.0-2** includes a list of meetings and coordination activities held throughout the project development process.

Meetings with Key Stakeholders

Key stakeholders and local organizations were offered the opportunity to meet with project team members to discuss Iberdrola Renewables proposed plans. The following is an outreach summary of meetings held with key leaders and organizations:

- San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce – Energy Committee
- San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce – Energy and Water Committee
- San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce – Public Policy Committee
- San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce – Board of Directors
- California Center for Sustainable Energy
- Boulevard Planning Group
- Office of Senator Denise Ducheny
- Energy Policy Initiatives Center (EPIC)
- Ruben Barrales, President/CEO, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Save Our Rural Economy (SORE)
- San Diego Off-Road Coalition
- Hamann Company
- Office of Assemblyman Joel Anderson
- San Diego Association of Governments
- Mountain Empire Business Association

Community Events

Project team members set up an information table outside of the local farmers market to distribute information to stakeholders interested in learning about the project. Project information, including boards was displayed and stakeholders were asked to fill out support cards when they were identified as potential supporters. Project team members set up information tables or had project information displayed at the Golden Acorn Farmers Market.

Public Information Materials

Public information materials were developed to provide key information regarding the purpose of the project, to promote the benefits of the project and minimize misinformation:

- Press Release – Major Use Permit
- Project Newsletter
- Project E-Blast

Table 1.0-2. Public Outreach Summary

Organization	Date/Location	Purpose
San Diego Association of Governments	August 5, 2008 San Diego Association of Governments 401 B Street, Suite 800 San Diego, CA 92101	Project Presentation
San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce	August 5, 2008 San Diego Chamber of Commerce 402 West Broadway San Diego, CA 92101	Project Presentation
Office of Assemblyman Joel Anderson	August 5, 2008 Office of Assemblyman Joel Anderson 500 Fesler Street, Suite 201 El Cajon, CA 92020	Project Presentation
Hamann Company	August 5, 2008 Hamann Company 1000 Pioneer Way El Cajon, CA 92020	Project Presentation
San Diego Off-Road Coalition	August 5, 2008 Ranch House Restaurant 11510 Woodside Ave Santee, Ca 92071	Project Presentation
Office of Senator Denise Ducheny	August 6, 2008 Office of Senator Denise Ducheny 1224 State St., Suite D El Centro, CA 92243	Project Presentation
San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce	December 2, 2008 San Diego Chamber of Commerce 402 West Broadway San Diego, CA 92101	Project Presentation
San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce - Energy Committee (CEC)	December 3, 2008 California Center for Sustainable Energy 8690 Balboa Ave, Suite 100 San Diego, CA 92123	Project Presentation
California Center for Sustainable Energy	December 3, 2008 California Center for Sustainable Energy 8690 Balboa Ave, Suite 100 San Diego, CA 92123	Project Briefing
Ruben Barrales, President/CEO San Diego Chamber of Commerce	December 3, 2008 California Center for Sustainable Energy 402 West Broadway, Suite 1000 San Diego, CA 92101	Project Briefing
Energy Policy Initiatives Center (EPIC)	December 3, 2008 University of San Diego Campus 5998 Alcalá Park San Diego, CA 92110	Project Briefing

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Organization	Date/Location	Purpose
Boulevard Planning Group	December 4, 2008 Boulevard Fire Station 1684 Tierra Del Sol Road Boulevard, CA 91905	Project Presentation
San Diego Chamber of Commerce	February 17, 2009 San Diego Chamber of Commerce 402 West Broadway San Diego, CA 92101	Project Briefing
San Diego EarthWorks Earth Fair	April 19, 2009 Balboa Park 1549 El Prado San Diego CA 92101	Outreach Activity
San Diego Chamber of Commerce	April 23, 2009 San Diego Chamber of Commerce 402 West Broadway San Diego, CA 92101	Project Briefing
Golden Acorn Farmers Market	June 14, 2009 Golden Acorn Casino 1800 Golden Acorn Way Campo, CA 91906	Outreach Activity
Application Filed for Major Use Permit	October 9, 2009	Press Release
San Diego Chamber of Commerce – Energy Committee Special Working Group	October 21, 2009 Tule Wind Project Site	Project Briefing
Boulevard Planning Group	November 5, 2009 Boulevard Fire Station 1684 Tierra Del Sol Road Boulevard, CA 91905	Project Presentation
Save Our Rural Economy (SORE)	December 8, 2009 San Diego, CA	Project Briefing
Mountain Empire Business Association	February 24, 2010 Campo Community Center 976 Sheridan Road Campo, CA 91906	Project Briefing

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