

Monthly Progress Report

Riverside County Renewable Energy Planning Program



Aerial view of wind energy turbines in San Geronimo Pass, Riverside County, California.

Commission Agreement #: REN-13-002

Monthly Progress Report #: 10

Period Covered: September 1 – October 31, 2015

Attached to Invoice #: N/A

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Executive Summary

In this period, the work focus shifted from GIS analysis to GPA preparation and culminated in completion of a draft General Plan amendment—proposed renewable energy policies, discussions, data and maps. The project subconsultant, Michael Baker International (RBF), performed data/mapping analysis and prepared new energy and conservation maps for incorporation into the General Plan. Work on creating a geodatabase of assembled GIS utility data from local providers in the Salton Sea and DRECP area also continued. RBF also analyzed the land use proposals and plans issued by BLM (e.g., DRECP Final EIS) for County analysis/use. Internal and external meetings and coordination on the work effort of both the General Plan Amendment and GIS/utility data mapping were also ongoing in September and October.

Work Statement

This section briefly addresses the status of the project's approved tasks in the Work Statement. Discussion is split into three sections focusing on completed activities, ongoing activities and, lastly, activities with no new progress to report. Each subtask item includes a report on its status, including discussion of any products due and whether or not the project is progressing according to schedule. Where applicable the discussion also covers any problems encountered, proposed changes contemplated and anticipated results for the upcoming quarter. Unless noted otherwise, each subtask remains on track in terms of budgeted funds and hours at this time and will continue to be produced monthly as per Work Statement and schedule.

Agreement Activities Completed This Month

No new tasks were completed during September–October 2015. One subtask (8.1) was added to the completion list, however, because it has been determined to not be necessary for the project. (See full discussion, below.) Hence, at this time, six of the project's 18 subtasks have been completed. All other activities and work products produced in the past month were part of ongoing efforts and are described in subsequent sections.

Status of Ongoing Agreement Activities

The tasks listed below are ongoing and have had activity performed as indicated. Unless noted otherwise, each of these tasks will be reported on further in subsequent progress reports. Ongoing items will remain in this section unless concluded or there has been no activity during the reporting period. In such cases, the item will be discussed in the applicable other section instead.

A. Task 1.4 – Monthly Progress Report

The ninth progress report was prepared for July-August 2015. Details of the report were submitted to the CEC electronically and by U.S. Postal Service. All progress reports are also posted online at the County's Renewable Energy Project website: <http://planning.rctlma.org/Home/RiversideCountyREDProgram.aspx>). No invoice accompanied the ninth report. A new invoice covering work through the end of December 2015 will be submitted in January 2016.

B. Task 2.2 – Team Meetings

Several team meetings were held in this period to review and make policy decisions on the proposed draft General Plan Amendment (GPA) text addressing renewable energy, DRECP and related issues. The team (Cindy Thielman-Braun, Juan Perez, Steve Weiss, Tiffany North and Larry Ross) met on October 8, 2015, and October 27, 2015. See **Attachment A** and **Attachment B** for the respective team meeting agendas.

C. Task 3.1 – Assemble Existing eRED Data

This task was ongoing with research and map analysis by the eRED Project Manager. Work also included assembling and mapping solar facilities within Riverside County.

D. Task 3.2 – Develop eRED Opportunities and Constraints Criteria

Mapping and additional analysis of land use, renewable energy designations and conservation plans on public lands (e.g., per DRECP proposals, existing BLM plans, BLM DRECP FEIR, California Desert Conservation Area [CDCA] plan, etc.) continued with much of the focus on BLM lands. This research was used by the County in developing GPA policies and maps for addressing land use and conservation consistency between public (BLM, State) and private lands (under County land use authority) within Riverside County. This task remains ongoing as the GPA is being developed and refined.

E. Task 3.3 – Identify Areas Suitable for Additional eRED Study

Similar to Task 3.2, this task also continues with the focus on County land use and conservation plans relative to BLM proposals (for both DRECP and CDCA). Mapping work with the subconsultant (RBF) to analyze these areas continues. In addition, GIS analysis was performed to aid the County in evaluating BLM's issued FEIR. In all, this work effort remains ongoing.

F. Task 4.1 – Assemble Information/Data for Salton Sea eRED Study Region

Work on this subtask is ongoing. RBF has prepared obtained GIS data from land use agencies (BLM, CVAG, USFWS, etc.) and utility agencies for use in spatial analysis for this project. They created a geodatabase for the newly acquired utility data. Analysis of County land use, environmental and infrastructure data versus GIS data from these agencies remains ongoing for use in GPA development as well as County comments to DRECP proposals and plans (for example, BLM FEIS).

G. Task 4.2 – Analyze Salton Sea eRED Opportunities and Constraints

Work on this subtask is ongoing on conjunction with the Task 4.1 effort described above.

H. Task 4.3 – Develop Salton Sea eRED Study Region Policies and Plans

Work on this task was ongoing with the Project Manager developing policy proposals for the GPA. The information gathered through the Task 4.1 process is being used to identify areas where policies may be needed to streamline or facilitate renewable energy development.

I. Task 4.4 – Outreach and Coordination with Salton Sea Authority

No new meetings were held with the Salton Sea Authority in September – October 2015, although the Project Manager remained in email contact with the agency on coordination issues. This task remains ongoing.

J. Task 4.5 – Technical Coordination with Utilities and Other Agencies in Salton Sea Region

No specific meetings not already mentioned related to this task were held in September – October 2015. The County continued its correspondence with BLM during this time in order to obtain GIS data related to BLM LUPA proposals. This task remains ongoing.

K. Task 5.1 – Revise General Plan: Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan

Work on this subtask continued in September – October 2015. Analysis of the existing policy areas and plans for the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP) continues as GPA proposals are refined. The focus of this effort is to identify areas where new or revised policies may be needed to streamline or facilitate renewable energy development in the eastern part of the valley.

L. Task 5.2 – Revise General Plan: Multipurpose Open Space Element

Work on this subtask also continues. The Multipurpose Open Space Element (MOSE) of the General Plan contains most of the renewable energy related policies in the Renewable Resources section. Analysis of existing renewable energy policies yielded specific text amendments and new policy proposals. Draft text is being prepared. This task is now ongoing.

M. Task 5.3 – Revise General Plan: Rest of Document

Likewise, work on this subtask is ongoing. A variety of policy additions and revisions to the Land Use Element of the Riverside County General Plan have been developed. Draft text is being prepared for internal (County team) review.

N. Task 5.4 – Prepare General Plan Documents for Processing

This subtask was begun in October with preparation of the staff report and draft resolution to accompany the proposed GPA to the Riverside County Planning Commission for public hearing. In addition, all of the components of the proposed GPA prepared as outlined under subtasks 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 (see above) were incorporated into a single GPA document and distributed out among the County team for internal review on October 30, 2015. Copies of these drafts are not included here as they are internal drafts not yet ready for public review.

O. Task 6.3 – CEQA Consultations

In September-October 2015, Tribal consultations continued pursuant to Senate Bill 18 (SB 18) and Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52). An AB 52 response was received September 3, 2015, from the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians requesting to initiate formal consultation. No other tribes responded within 30 days of the sending of the County notification letter. Individual tribal AB 52 consultations will be occurring over the next few months. The results of these consultations will be incorporated into the project and/or CEQA analysis as warranted, however the meetings themselves are confidential. In addition, in response to information received from the California Native American Heritage Commission, the County sent out a number of letters to tribes on September 22, 2015, for SB 18 consultations. To date only one SB 18 letter has been received, but the 90-day comment period does not expire till December 22, 2015. The consultations themselves are not subject to a time limit. This task remains ongoing.

P. Task 7.1 – Develop and Publish Project Webpage

The eRED Project website continues to be updated with new content as it becomes available, e.g., copies of CEC progress reports, new maps ready for public viewing, public meeting information, etc. Information and data will continue to be added to the site as it is developed. In late September the CEC published renewable energy-related webpages for the counties in which the DRECP is located. The County project manager submitted comments to the CEC in finalizing Riverside County's pages. Links to the CEC pages were also added to the County's renewable energy website. This task remains ongoing.

Q. Task 7.2 – Public Agency and Stakeholder Coordination and Other Outreach Meetings

A number of meetings and conferences occurred in September-October 2015, including conference calls and WebEx meetings: CEC briefing for counties re BLM/CSLC proposed land exchange (9/25/15); CEC all-counties conference call (10/27/15); and, BLM webinar on Riverside East Solar Energy Zone (10/28/15). No agendas were provided for these meetings.

The Project Manager also gave an hour-long presentation on the current status of the County's renewable energy project and its associated technical issues at the Coachella Valley Energy Partnership (10/15/15) and that same day had a lengthy meeting with staff at the BLM Palm Springs region office to review BLM land use proposals and plans for DRECP, FEIS and other related issues. No agendas accompanied either meeting.

Tasks Not Yet Begun or With No Notable Changes

For this reporting period, no new work has been undertaken on the tasks listed below. In every case, unless noted otherwise, these tasks are those for which requisite prior actions are not yet complete. None of these tasks have any specific work product anticipated in the next three months (unless noted otherwise). Agendas and notes will continue to be forwarded for any meetings that do occur.

- A. Task 1.2 – Critical Project Review (CPR) Meeting
- B. Task 1.3 – Final Meeting
- C. Task 1.5 – Final Report
- D. Task 6.1 – CEQA Initial Study
- E. Task 6.2 – Prepare Environmental Review Document
- F. Task 6.4 – Prepare Final CEQA Documents for Processing
- G. Task 8.1 – General Plan Amendment Initiation Process (GPIP) Processing
- H. Task 8.2 – Planning Commission Processing
- I. Task 8.3 – Board of Supervisors Processing
- J. Task 8.4 – Final Documents (Post-Adoption Actions, if Applicable)

Completed Tasks -- No Further Changes

The tasks below have been completed and were addressed under prior progress reports, as indicated. No further actions are planned or anticipated for these tasks.

- A. Task 1.1 – CEC Kickoff Meeting (Completed July 22, 2014; see Progress Report #01.)
- B. Task 1.6 – Required Permit Information (Completed July 31, 2014; see Progress Report #01.)
- C. Task 1.7 – Obtain and Execute Subcontracts (Completed May 19, 2015; see Progress Report #8.)
- D. Task 2.1 – Internal Kickoff Meeting (Completed June 29, 2015; see Progress Report #08.)
- E. Task 2.3 – Issue RFP for Consultant Services (Completed May 19, 2015; see Progress Report #08.)

Work Product / Deliverables

Products are “any tangible item specified in the Work Statement.” As per the conditions of REN-13-002 Exhibit C, item 5 (“Products”), “Unless otherwise directed, draft copies of all products identified in the Work Statement shall be submitted to the Commission Agreement Manager for review and comment. The Recipient will submit an original and two copies of the final version of all products to the Commission Agreement Manager.” Thus, in accordance with this directive, the following work products are submitted for this reporting period.

- A. **Attachment A:** Agenda, County team meeting, dated October 8, 2015. (Task 2.2)
- B. **Attachment B:** Agenda, County team meeting, dated October 21, 2015. (Task 2.2)

Financial Status

This section presents a table showing the billing status and a brief narrative addressing costs incurred to-date in relation to the approved Budget. It also includes a discussion as to whether or not the project is progressing within the approved Budget, as well as identification of any proposed changes or adjustments being that may be considered.

Grant Agreement Invoice History To-Date

Invoice Number	Period Covered	Date Submitted	Amount Invoiced	Amount Retained*	Amount Paid*	Status
Invoice #01	7/21/14 – 12/31/14	4/6/15	\$57,100.21	(\$5,710.02)	\$51,390.19	PAID
Invoice #02	1/1/15 – 3/31/15	5/1/15	\$18,441.48	(\$1,844.15)	\$16,597.33	PAID
Invoice #03	4/1/15 – 6/30/15	10/28/15	\$36,122.62	(\$3,612.26)	---	PENDING
Totals			\$111,664.31	(\$11,166.43)	\$67,987.52	

*Per grant agreement, 10% retained from each invoice to be applied towards final payment.

Fiscal year 2014 was completely invoiced with the submission of Invoice #3. The next invoice (currently under preparation) will cover the first six months of fiscal 2015 (July through December). It will be submitted with the next Progress Report. In terms of budget, first quarter FY2015 has seen an increase in billing activity (hours worked) as the County works to complete the proposed draft GPA and the subconsultant (RBF) continues its mapping and GIS analysis work. However, overall County billing against the grant remains lower than anticipated. Again, the main reason for this is the County is billing at an actual rate that is much lower than the originally budgeted standard billable rate (because of contract specifications). At present the County is still on target to release a public draft of the renewable energy GPA by early 2016.

The subcontractor, RBF (though technically now under the company name of Michael Baker International) has submitted its first four invoices to the County. The County is paying them directly (see table, below) and will be submitting to the CEC for reimbursement pursuant to the grant agreement.

Subcontractor Invoice History To-Date

Invoice Number	Period Covered	Date Submitted	Amount Invoiced	Amount Paid*	CEC Payment Status
Invoice #01	5/19/15 – 6/28/15	7/30/15	\$5,351.59	\$5,351.59	CEC invoice pending
Invoice #02	6/29/15 – 8/2/15	9/25/15	\$6,311.20	\$6,311.20	CEC invoice pending
Invoice #03	8/3/15 – 8/30/15	9/25/15	\$4,049.73	Pending	CEC invoice pending
Totals			\$15,712.52	\$11,662.79	

* Amount County of Riverside paid to subconsultant.

At present there are no issues outstanding (in either the Work Statement or the Budget) that might necessitate amendment of the Agreement. No budget changes or alterations are requested at this time.

Additional Information

These items address any information in the Work Statement or Special Conditions not already covered in one of the above sections. Ministerial types of project information are also addressed, as well as the outlook for any significant future changes (i.e., amendments) and any issues not addressed elsewhere.

Amendments

Item 8 (“Amendments”) of Exhibit C, Terms and Conditions of Non-Federally Funded Grants, of the Agreement notes that, “Changes to the Work Statement, changes to specific line items in the budget, or both, may be made under certain conditions.” At present, there are no issues outstanding (neither in the Work Statement nor Budget) that would necessitate the proposal of an amendment to the Agreement other than, potentially, whatever changes may be necessary to clarify invoicing procedures, as noted above. Should any other issue arise with the potential to lead to an amendment request, the County will contact the CEC immediately.

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Attachment A:

Agenda, County team meeting, dated October 8, 2015. (Task 2.2)

CEC Renewable Energy Grant

v. 2 – Oct. 8, 2015

1. Proposed General Plan Revisions (See draft texts attached)**A. MULTI-PURPOSE OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**

- a. **Renewable Energy Resources:** *Expand existing descriptions; add policies where appropriate.*
- b. **Environmentally Sensitive Lands:** *Expand to address Lower Colorado River HCP and state/BLM conservation policies, as applicable, to facilitate coordination amongst agencies' plans.*

B. LAND USE ELEMENT

- a. **Solar Energy Resources:** *Expand existing discussion and policies for solar energy land uses.*
- b. **[NEW] Public Lands in Far Eastern Riverside County:** *Add discussion and policies re extensive BLM and other public conservation lands to improve land use coordination between agencies.*
- c. **[NEW] BLM Riverside East Solar Energy Zone:** *Discuss BLM's existing Solar Energy Zone in Riverside County.*
- d. **[NEW] Figures:** *Add new map showing desert land ownership (BLM, private, cities, etc.) and new map of BLM's adopted Riverside East Solar Energy Zone and related (BLM) land uses.*

C. EASTERN COACHELLA VALLEY AREA PLAN

- a. **Salton Sea Renewable Energy Policy Area:** *Add discussion of issues and general policies.*

2. Utility Data

- a. Plans to use utility data:
Where in GP? Made public (via website)? Added to GIS / Map My County?
Transportation Dept.'s usage? Other plans?

3. Grant Budget and Project Schedule

- a. Budget burn rate and staffing – see attached spreadsheets.
- b. Proposed processing schedule for GPA (PC and BOS) – see attached calendar.

Attachment B:

Agenda, County team meeting, dated October 21, 2015. (Task 2.2)

CEC Renewable Energy Grant

v. 1 – Oct. 27, 2015

1. General Plan Amendment - Maps & Data

A. PUBLIC LANDS

- a. **Figure LU-7: Wilderness Policy Areas in Far Eastern Riverside County.** Finalize.
- b. **DATA from same:** See Proposed Table LU-7.
- c. **Figure LU-8: BLM Riverside East Solar Energy Zone.** Create; finalize.
- d. **Format figures to General Plan (960).** (Contact Vinnie at RCIT/GIS? 951-955-8158.)

B. MAP OF SOLAR PROJECTS IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY

- a. Needs to show projects on BOTH County and public lands (CEC, BLM, etc.). **DATA SET = ?**
- b. Label each facility with:
 - i. Project Name (Desert Sunlight, Blythe Mesa, etc.)
 - ii. Type and Size (i.e., "PV, 500 MW")
 - iii. Total Area (in acres)

2. Utility Data

A. AGENCY RESPONSES

- a. Follow up?

B. DATA PROCESSING

- a. Coord. with TRANS (Richard Fairhurst)
- b. Coord. with Angel Perez (RCIT/GIS)

C. GIS USE

- a. Development of layer(s) to be made public (via Map My County? Or ???)
- b. Technical considerations; time and money constraints; other?

3. Schedule

- a. Draft GPA review (Nov. 2 – 16). [*Cindy out Nov. 1 – 18th*].
- b. Draft GPA to Planning Commission for hearing: **Jan. 20, 2016.**
- c. **BILLING DEADLINE: MARCH 30, 2016? (TBD)**