

# **Appendix A**

Initial Study and Notice of Preparation and  
Responses

# **Notice of Preparation**

**To:** Office of Planning & Research  
(Agency)

P.O. Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212  
(Address)

Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report**

<b>Lead Agency:</b>		<b>Consulting Firm (If applicable):</b>	
Agency Name	<u>Imperial County, Planning &amp; Dev Svcs.</u>	Firm Name	<u>HDR</u>
Street Address	<u>801 Main Street</u>	Street Address	<u>591 Camino de la Reina, Suite 300</u>
City/State/Zip	<u>El Centro, CA 92243</u>	City/State/Zip	<u>San Diego, CA 92108</u>
Contact	<u>Luis Valenzuela</u>	Contact	<u>Tim Gnibus</u>

The County of Imperial will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the Environmental Information, which is germane to your agency’s statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials. A copy of the Initial Study is attached.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but ***not later than 35 days*** after receipt of this notice.

Please send your response to Imperial County Planning & Development Services, Attn: Luis Valenzuela at the address shown above. We will need the name for a contact person in your agency.

**Project Title:** Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project

**Project Location:** The project site is located on approximately 125 acres of privately-owned land in the southern portion of Imperial County, California, approximately one mile south of the City of Heber jurisdictional limit and approximately 0.5 miles west from the City of Calexico jurisdictional limit. The project site is within portions of on three parcels: Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN) 054-250-031, 059-020-001, and 054-250-017. APN 054-250-31 is within the existing Heber 2 Geothermal Energy Complex (HGEC) located at 855 Dogwood Road, Heber, CA, and APN 059-020-001 and APN 054-250-017 are immediately southeast and east, respectively, of the HGEC. As shown in Figure 1, the project site is located within the Geothermal Overlay Zone, which is considered as part of the County’s Renewable Energy Overlay Zone.

**Project Description (brief):** The project applicant, OrHeber 3, LLC, Heber Field Company, LLC, and the Second Imperial Geothermal Company (collectively, the “Applicants”, and all wholly owned subsidiaries of Ormat Technologies, Inc. [Ormat]) has filed three separate Conditional Use Permits (CUP) applications with the County of Imperial for the construction and operation of various facilities. The three CUP applications are described below. Collectively, these three CUP applications are herein referred to as the “project.”

**1. Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project– CUP No. 23-0020**

The Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project includes a geothermal plant and associated ancillary and auxiliary facilities, new substation, 7 megawatt (MW) solar facility, and medium voltage distribution cable from the proposed solar facility to the geothermal plant. These project components are summarized below.

- a. **ORMAT Energy Converter (Geothermal Energy Production Unit):** The proposed ORMAT Energy Converter (OEC) unit would be a two-turbine combined cycle binary unit, operating on a subcritical Rankine cycle, with isopentane as the motive fluid. The OEC system consists of a generator, turbines, a vaporizer, Air Cooled condensers, preheaters and recuperators, and an evacuation skid/vapor recovery maintenance unit (VRMU) for purging and maintenance events. The design capacity for the unit is 25 MW (net).
- b. **Isopentane Storage Tanks:** Two double-walled 20,000-gallon above-ground storage tanks would be installed for motive fluid (isopentane) storage. Numerous safety and fire prevention measures would be installed on/near the ABST, including the following:
  - Concrete foundations with blast walls separating the tank from the OEC.
  - An automated water suppression system.
  - Concrete containment areas.
  - Two flame detectors, which will immediately detect any fire and immediately trigger the automatic fire suppression system.
  - A gas detector, which will immediately detect any isopentane leak and notify the control room (manned 24/7).
- c. **Cooling Tower:** A cooling tower array will perform air-cooling operations of the geothermal fluid. The cooling tower will include a series of heat-absorbing evaporators and condensers to capture and transfer heat stored in the geothermal fluid. No water is necessary.
- d. **Dogwood Substation:** The proposed Dogwood geothermal plant will require a new substation to step up the low voltage electrical energy generated at the Dogwood geothermal unit to the higher voltage required for commercial transmission. No upgrades to off-site transmission facilities are necessary and the new Dogwood substation will connect directly to the existing point of interconnection with the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) controlled grid. The substation will include a 13.8 kV circuit breaker to protect the electric generator, a minimum of 80 megavolt ampere 13.8 kV/115 kV transformer, and 115 kV potential and current transformers for metering and system protection. A main control building would contain instrumentation and telecommunications equipment located within the within the greater HGEC.

The substation footprint would measure up to 145 feet by 66 feet and would be surrounded by an eight-foot-tall chain link fence with vehicle and personnel access gates. The surface of the substation would be covered by gravel and the substation equipment would be placed onto concrete foundations.
- e. **Parasitic Solar Energy Facility:** A 7 MW solar facility would provide supplemental/auxiliary energy to the proposed Dogwood geothermal plant. The solar facility is classified as behind-the-meter and would provide supplemental energy directly to the Dogwood geothermal unit (OEC). This energy would not enter the transmission grid.
- f. **Medium Voltage Distribution Line:** The energy generated by the proposed Dogwood solar facility would be collected at an on-site XMD and switch on the western edge of the Heber 2 Project site, adjacent to South (S) Dogwood Road. A medium voltage distribution cable would cross S Dogwood Road and be attached via trays to the existing pipeline that runs west before turning north to cross the Beech Drain and Main Canal at the existing above-ground pipeline span. The cable would continue to follow the existing pipeline alignment and connect into the new Dogwood OEC. No new footings or foundations are required for the cable trays.

## 2. Heber 2 Solar Energy Project – CUP No. 23-0021

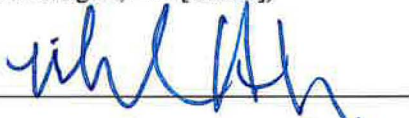
- a. **Parasitic Solar Energy Facility:** A 15 MW solar facility would provide supplemental/auxiliary energy to the existing Heber 2 geothermal plant. The solar facility is classified as behind-the-meter and would provide supplemental energy directly to the Heber 2 geothermal unit (OEC). This energy would not enter the transmission grid. The energy generated by the solar facility would be collected by an on-site XMD and switch and transmitted via a medium voltage distribution cable (as described above).

3. Heber Field Company (HFC) Geothermal Wells and Pipeline Project – CUP No. 23-0022

- a. **Geothermal Production and Injection Wells:** Production wells flow geothermal fluid to the surface, and injection wells are used to inject geothermal fluid from the energy plant back into the geothermal reservoir. Injection ensures the longevity and renewability of the geothermal resource. The Applicant proposes to develop three geothermal production wells, all within the Imperial County Geothermal Overlay Zone. The wells will be sited at three of six potential locations within APNs 059-020-001 and 054-250-017. The injection well would be installed within the HGEC, immediately next to the proposed Dogwood OEC.
- b. **Geothermal Fluid Pipeline:** Approximately 4,500 feet (0.85 miles) of geothermal fluid production pipeline are proposed for installation on APN 059-020-001. This new segment of pipeline will connect to an existing pipeline collection point that will deliver the geothermal brine to the proposed Dogwood OEC. The well on APN 054-250-017 would connect to the existing pipeline segment adjacent to the proposed well pad site. The pipeline would be used to transport geothermal fluid from the production wells to the power plants.

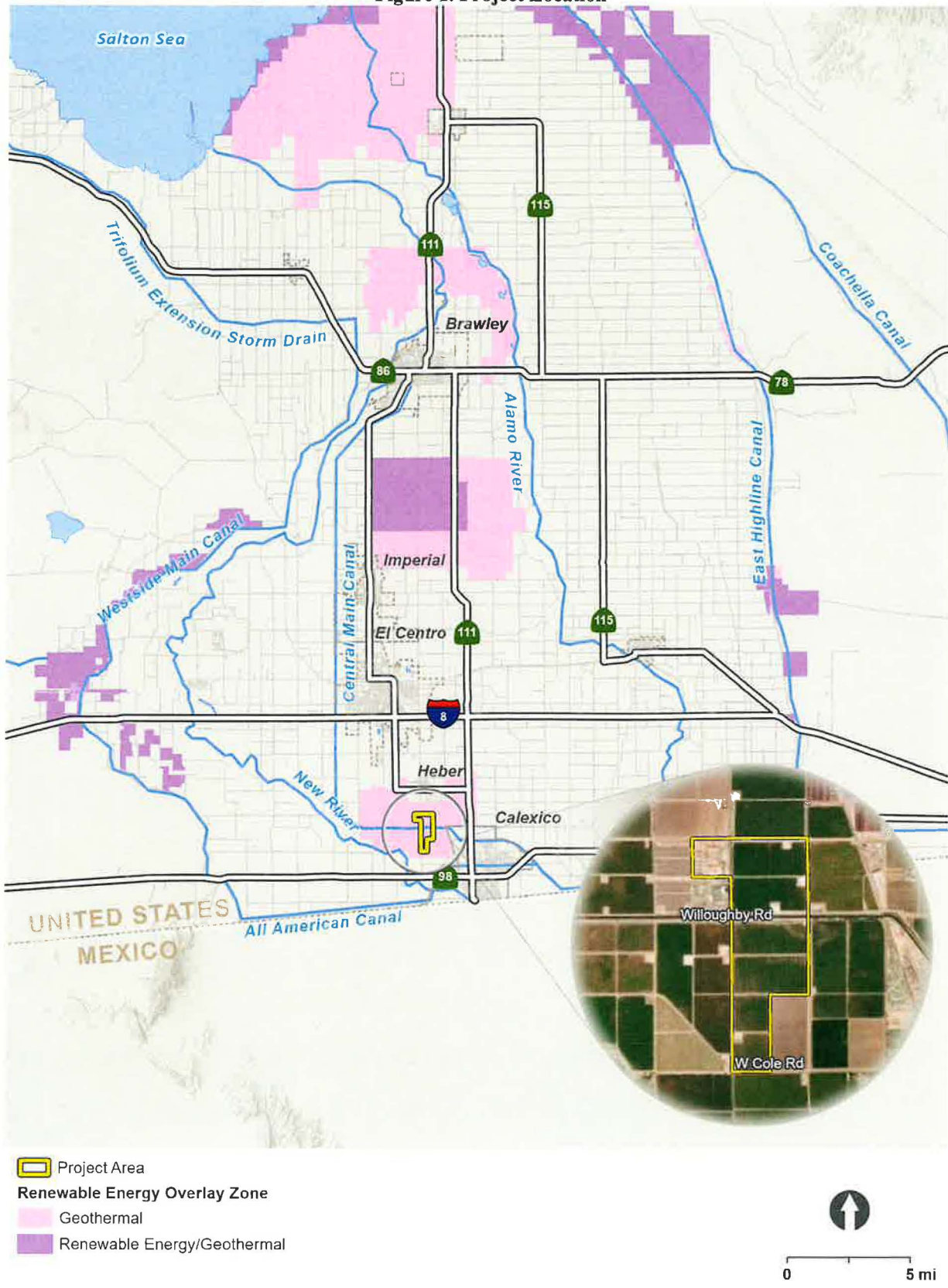
The County Land Use Ordinance, Division 17, includes the Renewable Energy Overlay Zone, which authorizes the development and operation of renewable energy projects, with an approved CUP. As shown in Figure 1, the project site is located within the Geothermal Overlay Zone, which is considered as part of the County’s Renewable Energy Overlay Zone. Implementation of the project would require the approval of CUPs by the County to allow for the construction and operation of the proposed facilities.

**Project Applicant:** OrHeber 3, LLC, Heber Field Company, LLC, and the Second Imperial Geothermal Company (collectively, the “Applicants”, and all wholly owned subsidiaries of Ormat Technologies, Inc. [Ormat])

Date 01/16/24 Signature   
 Title Assistant Director Planning & Dev.  
 Telephone (442)265-1736

Reference: California Administrative Code, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Section 15082(a), 15103, 15375.

Figure 1. Project Location



# Initial Study



## Initial Study and NOP

Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project

Initial Study #: 23-0026

CUP #s: 23-0020, -0021, and -0022

*Imperial County, CA*

January 2024

**Reviewed by:**

County of Imperial

Planning & Development  
Services Department

801 Main Street

El Centro, CA 92243

**Prepared by:**

HDR Engineering, Inc.

591 Camino de la Reina,  
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## Contents

Introduction.....	1
A. Purpose .....	1
B. CEQA Requirements and the Imperial County’s Rules and Regulations for Implementing CEQA.....	1
C. Intended Uses of Initial Study and Notice of Preparation .....	2
D. Contents of Initial Study and Notice of Preparation .....	2
E. Scope of Environmental Analysis.....	3
F. Policy-Level or Project-Level Environmental Analysis .....	3
G. Tiered Documents and Incorporation by Reference .....	3
Environmental Checklist Form .....	6
Environmental Factors Potentially Affected .....	8
Environmental Evaluation Committee Determination .....	8
Project Summary.....	10
Project Location.....	10
Project Summary.....	10
Environmental Setting .....	13
General Plan Consistency.....	13
Evaluation of Environmental Impacts.....	20
I. Aesthetics .....	22
II. Agriculture and Forestry Resources.....	24
III. Air Quality .....	26
IV. Biological Resources.....	27
V. Cultural Resources.....	29
VI. Energy .....	30
VII. Geology and Soils .....	31
VIII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions .....	33
IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials.....	34
X. Hydrology and Water Quality .....	36
XI. Land Use and Planning.....	38
XII. Mineral Resources .....	39
XIII. Noise .....	40
XIV. Population and Housing .....	41
XV. Public Services.....	42
XVI. Recreation .....	43
XVII. Transportation .....	44
XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources.....	45
XIX. Utilities and Service Systems.....	46
XX. Wildfire .....	48
XXI. Mandatory Findings of Significance .....	50
References.....	51
List of Preparers.....	52

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# Introduction

## A. Purpose

This document is a  policy-level;  project-level Initial Study for evaluation of potential environmental impacts resulting with the proposed Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project.

## B. CEQA Requirements and the Imperial County's Rules and Regulations for Implementing CEQA

As defined by Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines and Section 7 of the County's Rules and Regulations for Implementing CEQA, an **Initial Study** is prepared primarily to provide the Lead Agency with information to use as the basis for determining whether an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), Negative Declaration, or Mitigated Negative Declaration would be appropriate for providing the necessary environmental documentation and clearance for any proposed project.

- According to Section 15065, an **EIR** is deemed appropriate for a particular proposal if the following conditions occur:
  - The proposal has the potential to substantially degrade quality of the environment.
  - The proposal has the potential to achieve short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals.
  - The proposal has possible environmental effects that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable.
  - The proposal could cause direct or indirect adverse effects on human beings.
- According to Section 15070(a), a **Negative Declaration** is deemed appropriate if the proposal would not result in any significant effect on the environment.
- According to Section 15070(b), a **Mitigated Negative Declaration** is deemed appropriate if it is determined that though a proposal could result in a significant effect, mitigation measures are available to reduce these significant effects to insignificant levels.

This Initial Study has determined that the proposed applications will result in potentially significant environmental impacts and therefore, an Environmental Impact Report is deemed as the appropriate document to provide necessary environmental evaluations and clearance for the proposed project.

This Initial Study and Notice of Preparation are prepared in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et. seq.); the State CEQA Guidelines & County of Imperial's CEQA Regulations, Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA; applicable requirements of the County of Imperial; and the regulations, requirements, and procedures of any other responsible public agency or an agency with jurisdiction by law.

Pursuant to the County of Imperial's CEQA Regulations, Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA, depending on the project scope, the County of Imperial Board of Supervisors, Planning

Commission and/or Planning Director is designated the Lead Agency, in accordance with Section 15050 of the CEQA Guidelines. The Lead Agency is the public agency which has the principal responsibility for approving the necessary environmental clearances and analyses for any project in the County.

## C. Intended Uses of Initial Study and Notice of Preparation

This Initial Study and Notice of Preparation are informational documents which are intended to inform County of Imperial decision makers, other responsible or interested agencies, and the general public of potential environmental effects of the proposed applications. The environmental review process has been established to enable public agencies to evaluate environmental consequences and to examine and implement methods of eliminating or reducing any potentially adverse impacts. While CEQA requires that consideration be given to avoiding environmental damage, the Lead Agency and other responsible public agencies must balance adverse environmental effects against other public objectives, including economic and social goals.

The Initial Study and Notice of Preparation, prepared for the project will be circulated for a period of no less than 35 days for public and agency review and comments.

## D. Contents of Initial Study and Notice of Preparation

This Initial Study is organized to facilitate a basic understanding of the existing setting and environmental implications of the proposed applications.

### SECTION 1

**I. INTRODUCTION** presents an introduction to the entire report. This section discusses the environmental process, scope of environmental review, and incorporation by reference documents.

### SECTION 2

**II. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM** contains the County's Environmental Checklist Form. The checklist form presents results of the environmental evaluation for the proposed applications and those issue areas that would have either a significant impact, potentially significant impact, or no impact.

**PROJECT SUMMARY, LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTINGS** describes the proposed project entitlements and required applications. A description of discretionary approvals and permits required for project implementation is also included. It also identifies the location of the project and a general description of the surrounding environmental settings.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS** evaluates each response provided in the environmental checklist form. Each response checked in the checklist form is discussed and supported with sufficient data and analysis as necessary. As appropriate, each response discussion describes and identifies specific impacts anticipated with project implementation.

### SECTION 3

**III. MANDATORY FINDINGS** presents Mandatory Findings of Significance in accordance with Section 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines.

## E. Scope of Environmental Analysis

For evaluation of environmental impacts, each question from the Environmental Checklist Form is summarized and responses are provided according to the analysis undertaken as part of the Initial Study. Impacts and effects will be evaluated and quantified, when appropriate. To each question, there are four possible responses, including:

1. No Impact: A “No Impact” response is adequately supported if the impact simply does not apply to the proposed applications.
2. Less Than Significant Impact: The proposed applications will have the potential to impact the environment. These impacts, however, will be less than significant; no additional analysis is required.
3. Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated: This applies where incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact.”
4. Potentially Significant Impact: The proposed applications could have impacts that are considered significant. Additional analyses and possibly an EIR could be required to identify mitigation measures that could reduce these impacts to less than significant levels.

## F. Policy-Level or Project-Level Environmental Analysis

This Initial Study will be conducted under a  policy-level,  project-level analysis.

Regarding mitigation measures, it is not the intent of this document to “overlap” or restate conditions of approval that are commonly established for future known projects or the proposed applications. Additionally, those other standard requirements and regulations that any development must comply with, that are outside the County’s jurisdiction, are also not considered mitigation measures, and therefore, will not be identified in this document.

## G. Tiered Documents and Incorporation by Reference

Information, findings, and conclusions contained in this document are based on incorporation by reference of tiered documentation, which are discussed in the following section.

### 1. Tiered Documents

As permitted in Section 15152(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, information and discussions from other documents can be included into this document. Tiering is defined as follows:

“Tiering refers to using the analysis of general matters contained in a broader EIR (such as the one prepared for a general plan or policy statement) with later EIRs and negative declarations on narrower projects; incorporating by reference the general discussions from the broader EIR; and concentrating the later EIR or negative declaration solely on the issues specific to the later project.”

Tiering also allows this document to comply with Section 15152(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, which discourages redundant analyses, as follows:

“Agencies are encouraged to tier the environmental analyses which they prepare for separate but related projects including the general plans, zoning changes, and development

projects. This approach can eliminate repetitive discussion of the same issues and focus the later EIR or negative declaration on the actual issues ripe for decision at each level of environmental review. Tiering is appropriate when the sequence of analysis is from an EIR prepared for a general plan, policy or program to an EIR or negative declaration for another plan, policy, or program of lesser scope, or to a site-specific EIR or negative declaration.”

Further, Section 15152(d) of the CEQA Guidelines states:

“Where an EIR has been prepared and certified for a program, plan, policy, or ordinance consistent with the requirements of this section, any lead agency for a later project pursuant to or consistent with the program, plan, policy, or ordinance should limit the EIR or negative declaration on the later project to effects which:

- (1) Were not examined as significant effects on the environment in the prior EIR; or
- (2) Are susceptible to substantial reduction or avoidance by the choice of specific revisions in the project, by the imposition of conditions, or other means.”

## 2. Incorporation by Reference

Incorporation by reference is a procedure for reducing the size of EIRs/MND and is most appropriate for including long, descriptive, or technical materials that provide general background information, but do not contribute directly to the specific analysis of the project itself. This procedure is particularly useful when an EIR or Negative Declaration relies on a broadly drafted EIR for its evaluation of cumulative impacts of related projects (*Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation v. County of Los Angeles* [1986, 177 Ca.3d 300]). If an EIR or Negative Declaration relies on information from a supporting study that is available to the public, the EIR or Negative Declaration cannot be deemed unsupported by evidence or analysis (*San Francisco Ecology Center v. City and County of San Francisco* [1975, 48 Ca.3d 584, 595]).

When an EIR or Negative Declaration incorporates a document by reference, the incorporation must comply with Section 15150 of the CEQA Guidelines as follows:

- The incorporated document must be available to the public or be a matter of public record (CEQA Guidelines Section 15150[a]). The General Plan EIR is available, along with this document, at the County of Imperial Planning & Development Services Department, 801 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243 Ph. (442) 265-1736.
- This document must be available for inspection by the public at an office of the lead agency (CEQA Guidelines Section 15150[b]). These documents are available at the County of Imperial Planning & Development Services Department, 801 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243, Ph. (442) 265-1736.
- These documents must summarize the portion of the document being incorporated by reference or briefly describe information that cannot be summarized. Furthermore, these documents must describe the relationship between the incorporated information and the analysis in the tiered documents (CEQA Guidelines Section 15150[c]). As discussed above, the tiered EIRs address the entire project site and provide background and inventory information and data which apply to the project site. Incorporated information and/or data will be cited in the appropriate sections.

- These documents must include the State identification number of the incorporated documents (CEQA Guidelines Section 15150[d]). The State Clearinghouse Number for the 'County of Imperial General Plan EIR is SCH #93011023.

The material to be incorporated in this document will include general background information (CEQA Guidelines Section 15150[f])



# Environmental Checklist Form

1. **Project Title:** Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project
2. **Lead Agency name and address:** Imperial County Planning & Development Services  
Department, 801 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243
3. **Contact person and phone number:** Luis Valenzuela, Planner I, 442-265-1736
4. **Project location:** The project site is located on approximately 125 acres of privately-owned land in the southern portion of Imperial County, California, approximately one mile south of the City of Heber jurisdictional limit and approximately 0.5 miles west from the City of Calexico jurisdictional limit. The project site is within portions of three parcels: Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN) 054-250-031, 059-020-001, and 054-250-017. APN 054-250-31 is within the existing Heber 2 Geothermal Energy Complex (HGEC) located at 855 Dogwood Road, Heber, CA, and APN 059-020-001 and APN 054-250-017 are immediately southeast and east, respectively, of the HGEC.
5. **Project sponsor's name and address:**  
OrHeber 3, LLC, Heber Field Company, LLC, and the Second Imperial Geothermal Company (collectively, the "Applicants", and all wholly owned subsidiaries of Ormat Technologies, Inc. [Ormat])  
6140 Plumas Street  
Reno, NV 89519-6075
6. **General Plan Designation:** Agriculture, Heber Specific Plan Area
7. **Zoning:** A-2-G-SPA (General Agriculture with a Geothermal Energy Zone Overlay in a Specific Plan Area) and A-2-G-U (General Agriculture with a Geothermal Energy Zone Overlay in an Urban Area)
8. **Description of project:** Ormat has filed three separate Conditional Use Permits (CUP) with the County for the construction and operation of various facilities. The three CUP applications consist of the following:

Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project – CUP No. 23-0020

- One (1) 25 net megawatt (MW) Integrated Two Level Unit (ITLU) Air Cooled ORMAT Energy Converter (OEC) generating unit
- Two (2) 20,000-Gallon Isopentane Tanks for Motive Fluid Storage
- One (1) Project substation for transmission to the grid
- Ancillary and auxiliary facilities (including, compressed air system and fire prevention system)
- A seven (7) MW solar photovoltaic (PV) facility dedicated to the Dogwood geothermal plant
- Medium voltage distribution cable from the Dogwood solar facility to Dogwood geothermal plant (OEC). The cable would be co-located along an existing above ground pipeline.

Heber 2 Solar Energy Project – CUP No. 23-0021

- A fifteen (15) MW solar PV facility dedicated to the Heber 2 geothermal plant

Heber Field Company (HFC) Geothermal Wells and Pipeline Project – CUP No. 23-0022

- Three (3) geothermal production wells
- One (1) new geothermal injection well
- Brine pipelines (approximately 4,500 linear feet)

Collectively, these three CUP applications are herein referred to as the “project.”

**9. Surrounding land uses and setting: Briefly describe the project's surroundings:** The project site is surrounded by a mix of agricultural fields, geothermal facilities (Heber 2, Heber South, and Goulds 2), Imperial Solar 1 LLC solar facility, and industrial uses.

**10. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.):**

- Department of Public Works – Ministerial permits (building, grading, encroachment)
- Imperial County Air Pollution Control District – Fugitive dust control plan, Authority to construct
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board – Notice of Intent for General Construction Permit
- Imperial Irrigation District – Water supply agreement/permit for water use lease agreement

**11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?**

Yes, the Campo Band of Mission Indians and Fort Yuma-Quechan Indian Tribe. These tribes were sent an AB 52 consultation request letter on January 19, 2024.

## Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality                        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire                                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

## Environmental Evaluation Committee Determination

After Review of the Initial Study, the Environmental Evaluation Committee (EEC) has:

- Found that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- Found that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- Found that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- Found that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- Found that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME DE MINIMIS IMPACT FINDING:



Yes  No

<b>EEC VOTES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
PUBLIC WORKS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OFFICE EMERGENCY SERVICES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
APCD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SHERIFF DEPARTMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ICPDS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

---

Jim Minnick, Director of Planning/EEC Chairman  
Signature

---

Date:

# Project Summary

## Project Location

The project site is located on approximately 125 acres of privately-owned land in the southern portion of Imperial County, California, approximately one mile south of the City of Heber jurisdictional limit and approximately 0.5 miles west from the City of Calexico jurisdictional limit (Figure 1). The project site is on three parcels: Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN) 054-250-031, 059-020-001, and 054-250-017 (Figure 2). APN 054-250-31 is within the existing Heber 2 Geothermal Energy Complex (HGEC) located at 855 Dogwood Road, Heber, CA, and APN 059-020-001 and APN 054-250-017 are immediately southeast and east, respectively, of the HGEC.

### 1. Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project – CUP No. 23-0020

The proposed Dogwood geothermal power plant would be located within the existing fenceline of the HGEC, operated by the Second Imperial Geothermal Company, a subsidiary of ORMAT which includes the Heber 2, Heber South, and Goulds 2 geothermal energy facilities located at 855 Dogwood Road, Heber, CA (APN 054-250-31). The proposed geothermal power plant is generally located north of Jasper Road and west of South (S) Dogwood Road.

The proposed 7 MW parasitic solar photovoltaic (PV) would be located southeast of the HGEC in the central portion of APN 059-020-001. APN 059-020-001 is located south of East (E) Willoughby Road and east of S Dogwood Road.

### 2. Heber 2 Solar Energy Project – CUP No. 23-0021

The proposed Heber 2 15 MW parasitic solar PV facility would be located southeast of the HGEC in the northern portion of APN 059-020-001.

### 3. HFC Geothermal Wells and Pipeline Project – CUP No. 23-0022

The new geothermal production wells and associated pipeline(s) (approximately 4,500 linear feet) will be split between two parcels. Two of these wells would be located within APN 059-020-001 with a small segment of pipeline (approximately 1,000 feet) developed within APN 059-020-001 connecting to the existing pipeline network. A third well would be installed adjacent to an existing geothermal well approximately 1,500 feet due east of the HGEC (APN 054-250-017).

## Project Summary

Ormat has filed three separate CUPs with the County for the construction and operation of various facilities. An overview of the project facilities are shown in Figure 3. The three CUP applications consist of the following:

### 1. Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project – CUP No. 23-0020

The Dogwood Geothermal Plant and Solar Energy Facility includes a 25 net MW geothermal plant and associated ancillary and auxiliary facilities, new substation, 7 MW solar facility, and medium voltage distribution cable from the proposed solar facility to the geothermal plant. These project components are described in detail below and shown in Figure 4.

- a. **ORMAT Energy Converter (Geothermal Energy Production Unit):** The proposed ORMAT Energy Converter (OEC) unit would be a two-turbine combined cycle binary unit, operating on a subcritical Rankine cycle, with isopentane as the motive fluid. The OEC system consists

of a generator, turbines, a vaporizer, Air Cooled condensers, preheaters and recuperators, and an evacuation skid/vapor recovery maintenance unit (VRMU) for purging and maintenance events. The design capacity for the unit is 25 MW (net).

- b. Isopentane Storage Tanks:** Two double-walled 20,000-gallon above-ground storage tanks would be installed for motive fluid (isopentane) storage. Numerous safety and fire prevention measures would be installed on/near the ABST, including the following:
- Concrete foundations with blast walls separating the tank from the OEC.
  - An automated water suppression system.
  - Concrete containment areas.
  - Two flame detectors, which will immediately detect any fire and immediately trigger the automatic fire suppression system.
  - A gas detector, which will immediately detect any isopentane leak and notify the control room (manned 24/7).
- c. Cooling Tower:** A cooling tower array will perform air-cooling operations of the geothermal fluid. The cooling tower will include a series of heat-absorbing evaporators and condensers to capture and transfer heat stored in the geothermal fluid. No water is necessary.
- d. Dogwood Substation:** The proposed Dogwood geothermal plant will require a new substation to step up the low voltage electrical energy generated at the Dogwood geothermal unit to the higher voltage required for commercial transmission. No upgrades to off-site transmission facilities are necessary and the new Dogwood substation will connect directly to the existing point of interconnection with the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) controlled grid. The substation will include a 13.8 kV circuit breaker to protect the electric generator, a minimum of 80 megavolt ampere 13.8 kV/115 kV transformer, and 115 kV potential and current transformers for metering and system protection. A main control building would contain instrumentation and telecommunications equipment located within the within the greater HGEC.
- The substation footprint would measure up to 145 feet by 66 feet and would be surrounded by an eight-foot-tall chain link fence with vehicle and personnel access gates. The surface of the substation would be covered by gravel and the substation equipment would be placed onto concrete foundations.
- e. Parasitic Solar Energy Facility:** A 7 MW solar facility would provide supplemental/auxiliary energy to the proposed Dogwood geothermal plant. The solar facility is classified as behind-the-meter and would provide supplemental energy directly to the Dogwood geothermal unit (OEC). This energy would not enter the transmission grid. The solar facility will effectively reduce the margin between gross and net geothermal energy generation, allowing for the more efficient generation of geothermal energy and to allow more geothermal energy to enter the grid.
- f. Medium Voltage Distribution Line:** The energy generated by the proposed Dogwood solar facility would be collected at an on-site XMD and switch on the western edge of the Heber 2 Project site, adjacent to South (S) Dogwood Road. A medium voltage distribution cable would cross S Dogwood Road and be attached via trays to the existing pipeline that runs west before turning north to cross the Beech Drain and Main Canal at the existing above-ground pipeline span. The cable would continue to follow the existing pipeline alignment and

connect into the new Dogwood OEC. No new footings or foundations are required for the cable trays.

## 2. Heber 2 Solar Energy Project – CUP No. 23-0021

- a. **Parasitic Solar Energy Facility:** A 15 MW solar facility would provide supplemental/auxiliary energy to the existing Heber 2 geothermal plant (Figure 5). The solar facility is classified as *behind-the-meter* and would provide supplemental energy directly to the Heber 2 geothermal unit (OEC). This energy would not enter the transmission grid. The solar facility will effectively reduce the margin between gross and net geothermal energy generation, allowing for the more efficient generation of geothermal energy and to allow more geothermal energy to enter the grid.

The energy generated by the solar facility would be collected by an on-site XMD and switch and transmitted along via a medium voltage distribution cable (as described above and shown in Figure 4).

## 3. HFC Geothermal Wells and Pipeline Project – CUP No. 23-0022

- a. **Geothermal Production and Injection Wells:** Production wells flow geothermal fluid to the surface, and injection wells are used to inject geothermal fluid from the energy plant back into the geothermal reservoir. Injection ensures the longevity and renewability of the geothermal resource. The Applicant proposes to develop three geothermal production wells, all within the Imperial County Geothermal Overlay Zone. The wells will be sited at three of six potential locations within APNs 059-020-001 and 054-250-017 (Figure 6). The injection well would be installed within the HGEC, immediately next to the proposed Dogwood OEC (Figure 6).

During well installation, each well pad would accommodate a drilling rig, support equipment, portable bathroom, baker tanks, and project vehicles. Each well pad would be prepared to create a level pad for the drill rig and a graded surface for the support equipment. Stormwater runoff from undisturbed areas around the constructed drill pads would be directed into ditches surrounding the drill pad and back onto undisturbed ground, consistent with BMPs for storm water identified in “Drilling and Operating Geothermal Wells in California” (CalGem PR7S). The site would be graded to prevent fugitive stormwater runoff off the well pad and has been designed to withstand a 100-year storm event.

Each well would be drilled with a rotary drill rig similar to those used to drill oil and gas wells. The production wells would each be drilled and cased to a design depth of approximately 5,000 feet. Following the cementing of the surface casing, blowout prevention equipment (BOPE) would be installed. During drilling operations, a minimum of 10,000 gallons of cool water and 12,000 pounds of inert, non-toxic barite (barium sulfate) would be stored at each well pad (as appropriate for the type of material) for use in preventing uncontrolled well flow, as necessary.

Once the well is completed, a well head will be installed and connected to the pipeline network to convey geothermal fluids. A motor control building would be installed next to the well head to provide system controls, sensors, and treatment systems. During normal well field operations, total geothermal fluid production rates are expected to be approximately 15,150 gallons per minute (gpm) at 280°F. Injection would occur at the same approximate levels (i.e., 15,150 gpm) but at lower temperatures of near 170°F.

- b. Geothermal Fluid Pipeline:** As shown in Figure 6, approximately 4,500 feet (0.85 miles) of geothermal fluid production pipeline are proposed for installation on APN 059-020-001. This new segment of pipeline will connect to an existing pipeline collection point that will deliver the geothermal brine to the proposed Dogwood OEC. The well on APN 054-250-017 would connect to the existing pipeline segment adjacent to the proposed well pad site. The pipeline would be used to transport geothermal fluid from the production wells to the power plants.

Construction of the pipeline network would begin by vertically auguring nominal 24-inch diameter holes into the ground about three to five feet deep at approximately 30-foot intervals along the pipeline route. Two holes for pipeline supports would be drilled at each anchor point. Dirt removed from the holes would be cast on the ground adjacent to each hole. The steel pipe “sleeper” would be placed in the hole and concrete poured to fill the hole slightly above the ground surface.

After the anchor points are installed, approximately 30-foot-long steel pipe sections would be delivered and placed along the pipeline construction corridor. A small crane would lift the pipe sections onto the pipe supports and temporary pipe jacks so that they could be welded together into a solid pipeline. Once welded and the welds tested, the pipe would be jacketed with insulation and an aluminum sheath (appropriately colored, likely covert green, to blend with the area).

When completed, the top of the new geothermal pipelines would average three to four feet above the ground surface to accommodate terrain undulations and to facilitate movement of wildlife. Electrical power and instrumentation cables for the wells would then either be installed in steel conduit constructed along the pipe or hung by cable from pipe along the pipeline route.

## Environmental Setting

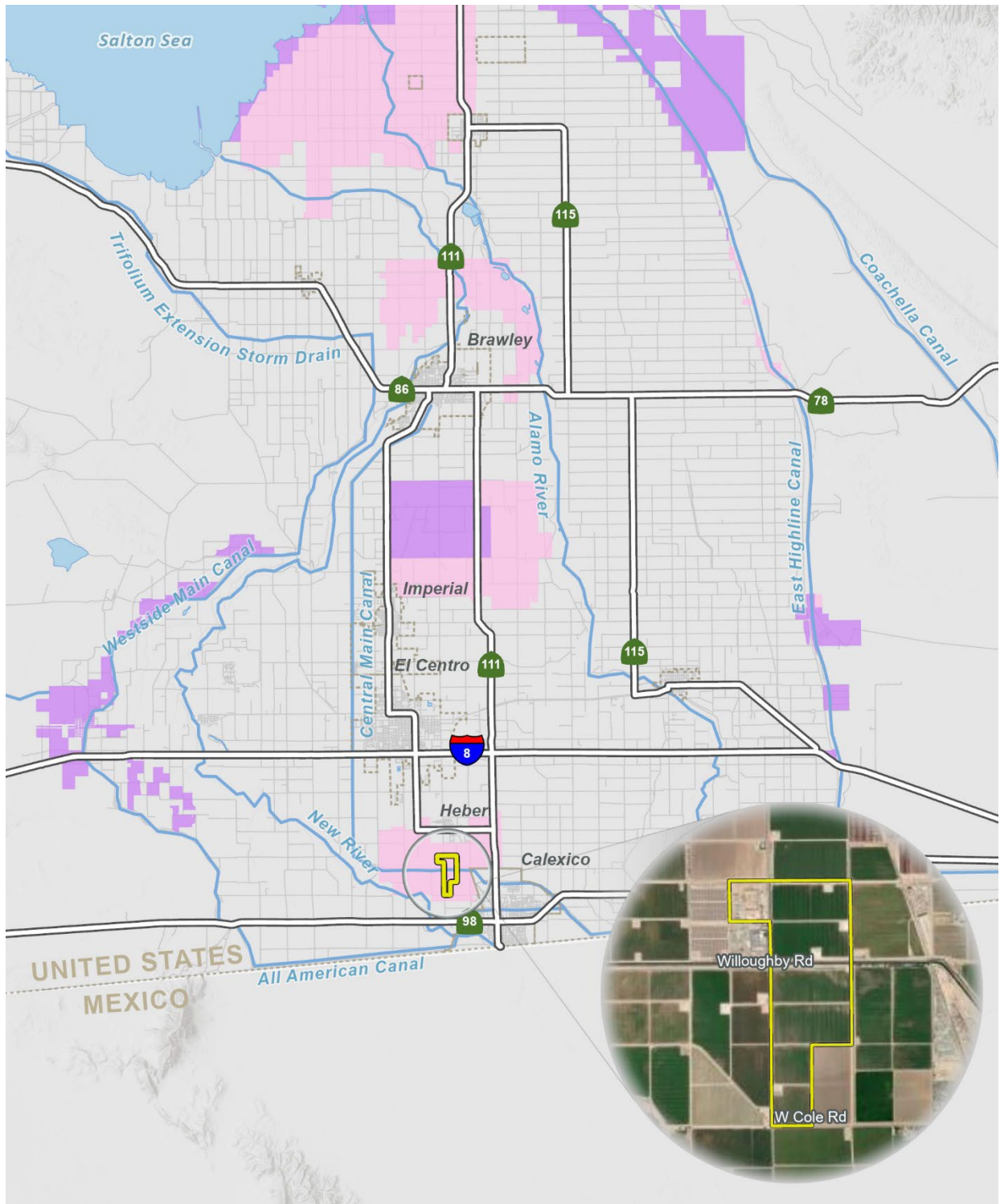
The project site is surrounded by a mix of agricultural fields, geothermal facilities (Heber 2, Heber South, and Goulds 2), Imperial Solar 1 LLC solar facility, and industrial uses.

## General Plan Consistency

The proposed project is located within an unincorporated area of the County. The existing General Plan land use designations are “Agriculture” and “Heber Specific Plan Area.” The project site is currently zoned A-2-G-SPA (General Agriculture with a Geothermal Energy Zone Overlay in a Specific Plan Area) and A-2-G-U (General Agriculture with a Geothermal Energy Zone Overlay in an Urban Area). The Geothermal Energy Zone allows for “Major Geothermal Projects” to be permitted through a CUP process.



Figure 1. Regional Location






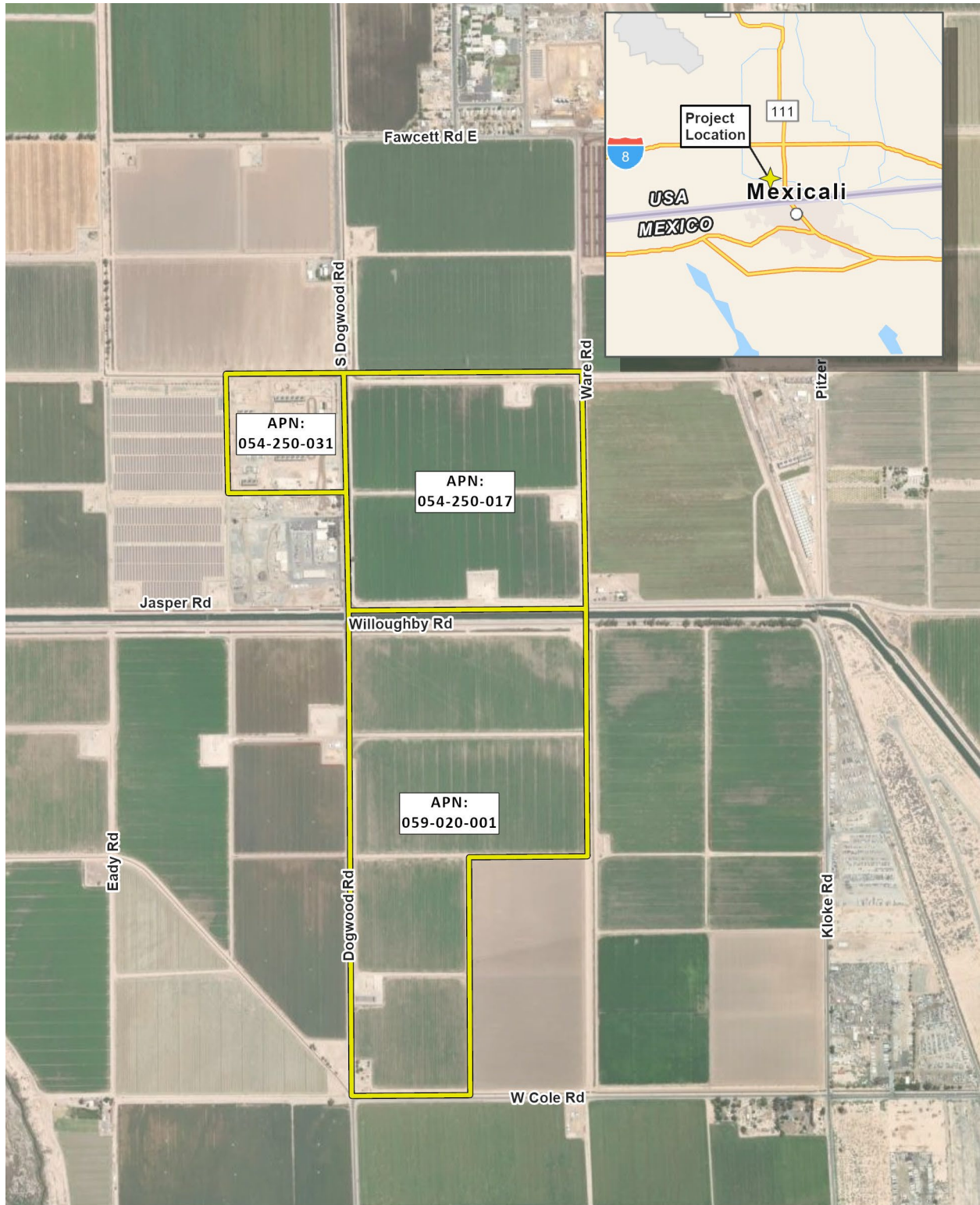
-  Project Area
- Renewable Energy Overlay Zone**
-  Geothermal
-  Renewable Energy/Geothermal



Figure 2. Project Site



 Project Parcels

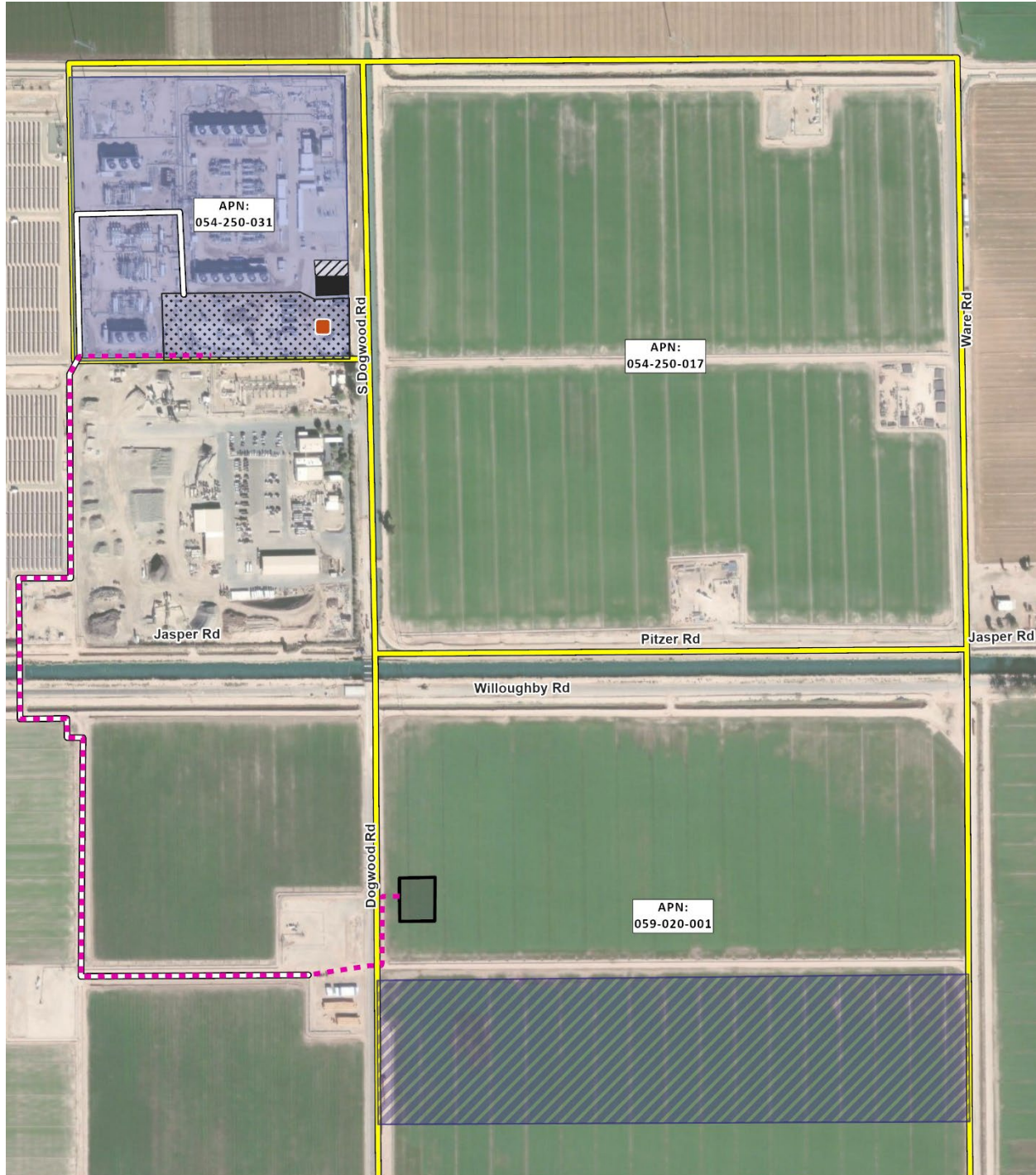


0 0.3 mi

Figure 3. Project Overview



Figure 4. Dogwood Geothermal Plant and Solar Energy Facility Components



- |                                 |   |                                   |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Project Parcels                 | <b>Dogwood Geothermal Plant and Solar Energy Facility</b> | Medium Voltage Distribution Cable |
| Existing Heber Substation       | Dogwood Geothermal Plant Site                             |                                   |
| Heber Geothermal Energy Complex | Dogwood Parasitic Solar Facility                          |                                   |
| Existing Pipeline               | New Dogwood Substation                                    |                                   |
|                                 | XMR and Switch  |                                   |
|                                 | Isopentane Storage Tanks                                  |                                   |

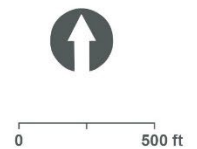


Figure 5. Heber 2 Solar Energy Facility Components

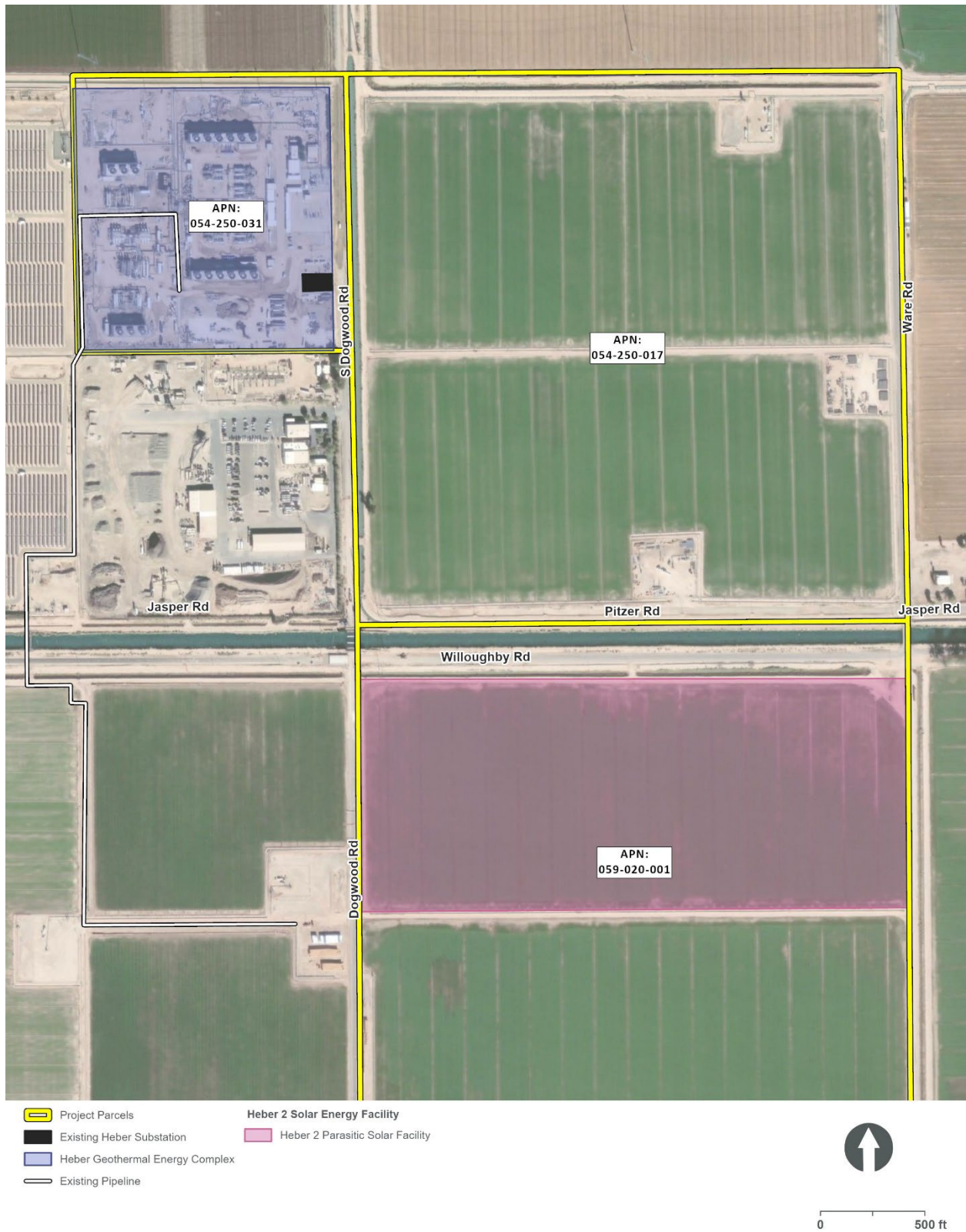
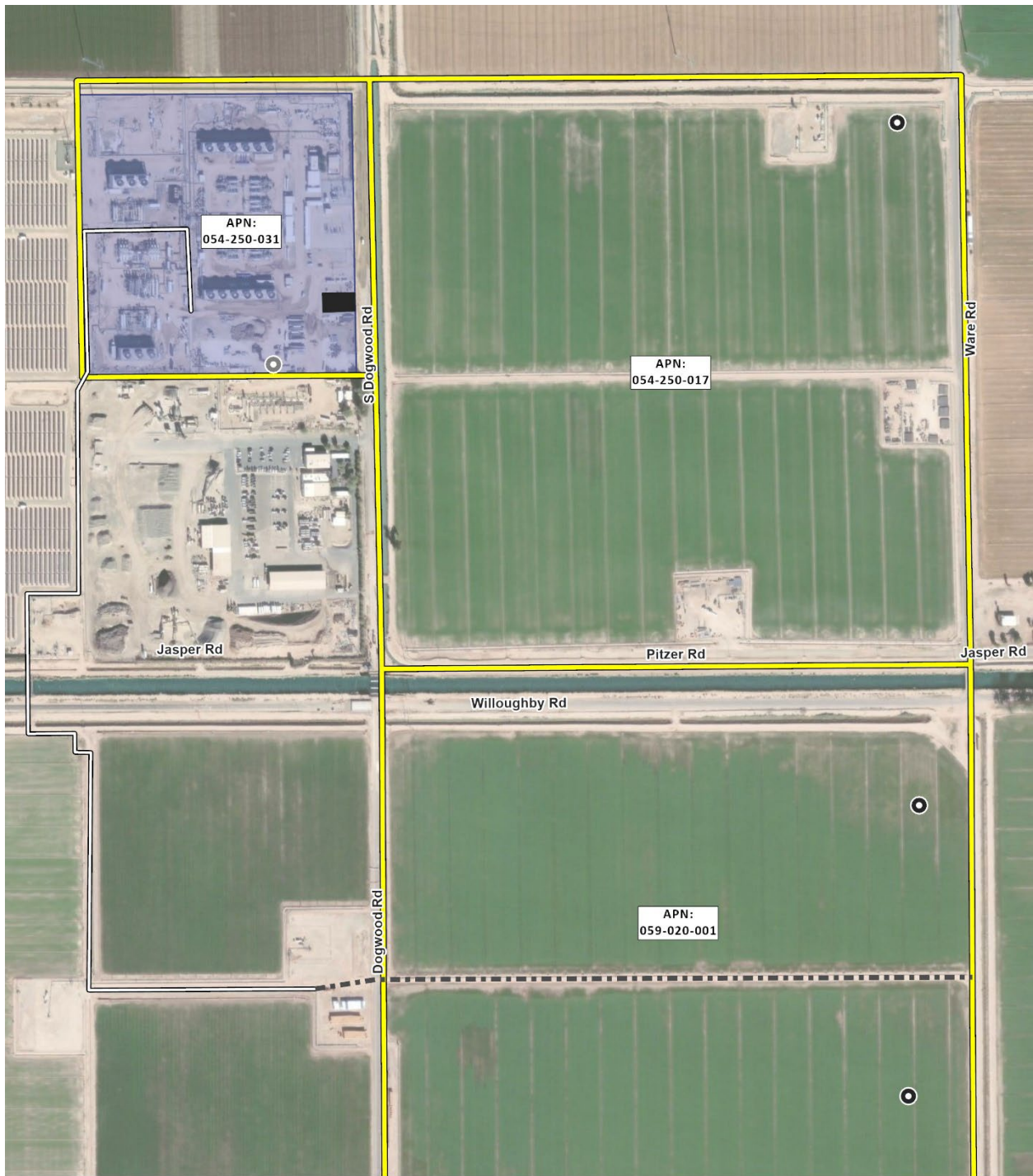


Figure 6. HFC Geothermal Wells and Pipeline Components



- Project Parcels
- Existing Heber Substation
- Heber Geothermal Energy Complex
- Existing Pipeline

- Geothermal Wells and Pipeline**
- Injection Well
  - Production Well
  - New Pipeline

## Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors, as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4. "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from "Earlier Analyses," as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).
5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
  - a. Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
  - b. Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
  - c. Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used, or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
9. The explanation of each issue should identify:
  - a. The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
  - b. The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.



## I. Aesthetics

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:</b>				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic building within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Impact Analysis

- a) **No Impact.** The project site is not located within an area that has been formally identified as a federal, state, or county scenic vista. No scenic vistas or areas with high visual quality would be disrupted. Thus, no impact is identified for this issue area and no further analysis is warranted.
- b) **No Impact.** According to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) California Scenic Highway Mapping System (Caltrans 2018), the project site is not located within a state scenic highway corridor, nor are there any state scenic highways located in proximity to the project site. The nearest eligible State scenic highway is the segment of the Sunset Cliffs Boulevard/State Route 98 west of Ocotillo. The project is located approximately 29 miles east of Ocotillo and therefore would not be visible from the project site. The proposed project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic building within a state scenic highway. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area and no further analysis is warranted.
- c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Although the project site is not located near a scenic highway or designated scenic vista, the proposed project may result in a change to the look and rural character of the area. Therefore, a potentially significant impact is identified for this issue area. A visual assessment will be prepared for the project and this issue will be addressed in the EIR.
- d) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed project is located in a rural undeveloped area of Imperial County. There are no established residential neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the project site. Minimal lighting is required for project operation and is limited to safety and security functions. All lighting will be directed away from any public right-of-way; however, there is no heavily traveled public roadway in immediate proximity to the project site. The solar panels will be constructed of low reflective materials; therefore, it is not anticipated that they would result in creating glare. Although the proposed project is not expected to create a new source of substantial light or glare affecting day or nighttime views, a glint and



glare assessment will be prepared for the project and this issue will be addressed in the EIR. Therefore, a potentially significant impact is identified for this issue area.

## II. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p><i>In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.</i></p> <p><b>Would the project:</b></p>				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Impact Analysis

- a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** According to the California Department of Conservation's California Important Farmland Finder, portions of the project site are designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland (California Department of Conservation 2020). Therefore, implementation of the proposed project has a potential to result in the conversion of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland to non-agricultural use. This is considered a potentially significant impact, and this issue will be analyzed in further detail in the EIR.

- b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The project site is currently zoned A-2-G-SPA (General Agriculture with a Geothermal Energy Zone Overlay in Specific Plan Areas) and A-2-G-U (General Agriculture with a Geothermal Energy Zone Overlay in an Urban Area). Pursuant to Title 9, Division 5, Chapter 8, the following uses are permitted in the A-2 zone subject to approval of a CUP from Imperial County:
- y) *Electrical generation plants (less than 50 MW) excluding nuclear or coal fired and meeting requirements in Division 17*
  - z) *Electrical substations in an electrical transmission system (500 kv/230 kv/161 kv)*
  - bb) *Facilities for the transmission of electrical energy (100-200 kv)*
  - ii) *Geothermal test facilities, Intermediate projects, and major exploratory wells, meeting requirements in Division 17*
  - rr) *Major Geothermal projects per Division 17*
  - ww) *Resource extraction and energy development as per Division 17*
  - aaa) *Solar energy electrical generator*
- Because the project site is located on lands designated for agricultural uses, this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR.
- As of December 31, 2018, all Williamson Act contracts in Imperial County have been terminated. The project site is not located on Williamson Act contracted land. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with a Williamson Act contract and no impact is identified.
- c) **No Impact.** There are no existing forest lands, timberlands, or timberland zoned “Timberland Production” within or immediately adjacent to the project site that would conflict with existing zoning or cause rezoning. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.
- d) **No Impact.** There are no existing forest lands within or immediately adjacent to the project site. The proposed project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.
- e) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Refer to response II. a) above.

### III. Air Quality

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.</i>				
<i>Would the project:</i>				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Impact Analysis

- a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The project site is located within the jurisdiction of Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (ICAPCD) in the Imperial County portion of the Salton Sea Air Basin. Construction of the proposed project would create temporary emissions of dust, fumes, equipment exhaust, and other air contaminants that may conflict with the ICAPCD's rules and regulations. These temporary construction emissions have the potential to result in a significant air quality impact.
- b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The criteria pollutants for which the project area is in state nonattainment under applicable air quality standards are O<sub>3</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>. Air pollutants transported into the Salton Sea Air Basin from the adjacent South Coast Air Basin (Los Angeles County, San Bernardino County, Orange County, and Riverside County) and Mexicali (Mexico) substantially contribute to the non-attainment conditions in the Salton Sea Air Basin. A potentially significant impact is identified for this issue area. The CalEEMod air quality model will be utilized to estimate the project's air quality emissions and the results will be included in the EIR analysis.
- c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The project site is located in a rural agricultural area of Imperial County. The nearest sensitive land use to the project site is a single-family residence located approximately 500 feet northeast of the proposed Heber 2 solar energy facility. Other nearby sensitive receptors include residences located approximately 0.50 miles north of the project site along E Fawcett Road and Heber Elementary School located approximately 0.60 miles north of the project site. This issue is potentially significant and will be addressed in the EIR analysis.
- d) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Land uses commonly considered to be potential sources of odorous emissions include wastewater treatment plants, sanitary landfills, food processing facilities, chemical manufacturing plants, rendering plants, paint/coating operations, and concentrated agricultural feeding operations and dairies. The construction and operation of the proposed geothermal, solar, geothermal wells and pipeline are not anticipated to result in odor emissions, and impacts would be less than significant.



#### IV. Biological Resources

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b><i>Would the project:</i></b>				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### ***Impact Analysis***

- a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** According to the Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan (County of Imperial 2016), numerous special-status plants and special status species occur in the County of Imperial, and of particular concern is western burrowing owl. The project site has the potential to support native habitats and/or sensitive species. Burrowing owls and burrows are commonly found along canals and drains. The Central Main Canal, Dogwood Canal, and smaller IID canals and drains traverse the project site. Therefore, the project site has the potential to be used as burrowing owl foraging habitat, as burrowing owls and burrows are commonly found along canals and drains. Thus, a potentially significant

impact is identified for this issue area. A biological resources technical report that will address the proposed project's potential impacts on biological resources will be prepared and this issue will be addressed in the EIR.

- b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Refer to response IV. a) above.
- c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Being situated in an agricultural area, the project site and surrounding areas are traversed by a network of drains, canals, and other irrigation infrastructure administered by the IID, some of which constitute potentially jurisdictional features. An aquatic resources delineation that will address the proposed project's potential impacts on state or federally protected wetlands will be prepared and included in the EIR analysis.
- d) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Refer to response IV. a) above.
- e) **Potentially Significant Impact .** Refer to response IV. a) above.
- f) **No Impact.** The project site is located within the designated boundaries of the Desert Renewable Energy Natural Community Conservation Plan & Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP). However, the project site is not located within or adjacent to an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. No impact is identified for this issue area.



## V. Cultural Resources

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Impact Analysis

- a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The project site has been disturbed by past farming and industrial uses. Thus, the presence of significant or undamaged cultural resources on the project site is unlikely. Although the proposed project is not expected to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical or archaeological resource, this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR. Therefore, a potentially significant impact is identified for this issue area. A cultural resources report that will address the proposed project's potential impacts on historic and prehistoric resources will be prepared and this issue will be addressed in the EIR.
- b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Refer to response V. a) above.
- c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Although unlikely, there is a potential for unknown human remains to be unearthed during earthwork activities. This issue is potentially significant and will be addressed in the EIR analysis.



## VI. Energy

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Impact Analysis

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** The use of energy associated with the proposed project includes both construction and operational activities. Construction activities consume energy through the use of heavy construction equipment and truck and worker traffic. The proposed project will use several energy- and fuel-efficient design features that would help minimize inefficient or wasteful use of energy and increase conservation during construction. The project grading plan and on-site construction equipment would also minimize impacts to the surrounding transportation network that would result from truck traffic associated with soil import/export and mobilization/demobilization. Additionally, implementation and operation of the geothermal and solar facilities would promote the use of renewable energy and contribute incrementally to the reduction in demand for fossil fuel use for electricity-generating purposes. Therefore, the proposed project would generate renewable energy resources and is considered a beneficial effect.

Based on these considerations, the proposed project would not result in significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during construction or operation. A less than significant impact has been identified for this issue area.

- b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Construction equipment would comply with federal, state, and regional requirements where applicable. With respect to truck fleet operations the USEPA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) have adopted fuel efficiency standards for medium- and heavy-duty trucks. Construction equipment and trucks are required to comply with CARB's regulations regarding heavy duty truck idling limits of five minutes at a location and the phase in of off-road emission standards that result in an increase in energy savings in the form of reduced fuel consumption for more fuel-efficient engines. Because the main objectives of the project are to assist the state in meeting its obligations under California's RPS Program and assist California in meeting the GHG emissions reduction goal 85 percent below 1990 levels in 2045, the project would be consistent with the applicable recommended actions of CARB's 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan, as well as applicable federal, state, and local policies. The project would assist the State and regulated utility providers to generate a greater portion of energy from renewable sources consistent with the RPS. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency during construction and operations. Short-term and long-term impacts would be less than significant.



**VII. Geology and Soils**

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury or death involving:				
i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv. Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risk to life or property?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Impact Analysis

- ai) **No Impact.** The project site is not located within or near an Alquist-Priolo Special Fault Study Zone. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.
- a ii) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The project site is located in the seismically-active Imperial Valley in Southern California and considered likely to be subjected to moderate to strong ground motion from earthquakes in the region. The Imperial Fault Zone is the nearest active fault zone to the project site and is situated approximately 6.7 miles to the east. Due to the project's proximity to the Imperial Fault Zone, seismic hazards related to ground shaking could occur on the project site. Although the project is not designed for human occupancy, the project could pose a threat to emergency personnel. A potentially significant impact has been identified for this issue area. A geotechnical report that will address the proposed project's potential impacts on geology and soils will be prepared and this issue will be addressed in the EIR.
- a iii) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Liquefaction occurs when granular soil below the water table is subjected to vibratory motions, such as vibratory motion produced by earthquakes. With strong ground shaking, an increase in pore water pressure develops as the soil tends to reduce in volume. If the increase in pore water pressure is sufficient to reduce the vertical effective stress (suspending the soil particles in water), the soil strength decreases, and the soil behaves as a liquid (similar to quicksand). Liquefaction can produce excessive settlement, ground rupture, lateral spreading, or failure of shallow bearing foundations.

Four conditions are generally required for liquefaction to occur:

- 1) The soil must be saturated (relatively shallow groundwater).
- 2) The soil must be loosely packed (low to medium relative density).
- 3) The soil must be relatively cohesionless (not clayey).
- 4) Groundshaking of sufficient intensity must occur to function as a trigger mechanism.

All of these conditions may exist to some degree at the project site. Therefore, there is a potentially significant impact associated with liquefaction. A geotechnical report that will address the proposed project's potential impacts on geology and soils will be prepared and this issue will be addressed in the EIR.

- a iv) **No Impact.** According to Figure 2: Landslide Activity in the Seismic and Public Safety Element of the General Plan (County of Imperial 1997), the project site is not located in an area that is prone to landslide hazards. Furthermore, the site topography is flat, and no ancient landslides have been mapped in the area. Development of the project would not directly or indirectly cause potential substantive adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.
- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** Soil erosion can result during construction as grading and construction can loosen surface soils and make soils susceptible to wind and water movement across the surface. Impacts are not considered significant because erosion would be controlled on-site in accordance with Imperial County standards, including preparation, review, and approval of a grading plan by the Imperial County engineer. Implementation of Imperial County standards would reduce the potential impacts to a less than significant level.
- c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Near surface soils within the project site will need to be identified to determine if these soils are unstable. Therefore, this issue is potentially significant and will be analyzed in the EIR.
- d) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Near surface soils within the project site will need to be identified to determine if these soils are unstable. Therefore, this issue is potentially significant and will be analyzed in the EIR.
- e) **No Impact.** The project does not include any septic tanks or wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, the project would have no impact on the project site soil and its capacity to adequately support the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. No Mitigation Measures are recommended.
- f) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Many paleontological fossil sites are recorded in Imperial County and have been discovered during construction activities. Paleontological resources are typically impacted when earthwork activities, such as excavation cut into geological deposits (formations) with buried fossils. It is not known if any paleontological resources are located on the project site. The proposed project's potential to impact paleontological resources will be addressed in the EIR.



### VIII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Impact Analysis**

- a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The production of greenhouse gas emissions associated with the proposed project includes both construction and operational activities. In the long-term, the project is expected to provide a benefit with respect to reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. However, construction of the project would generate GHG emissions over a two-year construction period. Exhaust emissions would result from construction equipment and machinery as well as from vehicular traffic generated by construction activities. Thus, a potentially significant impact is identified for this issue area. The CalEEMod air quality model will be utilized to estimate the project’s GHG emissions and the results will be included in the EIR analysis.
- b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Refer to response VIII. a) above.

## IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the likely release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Impact Analysis

- a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Construction of the proposed project would require the use of construction vehicles, associated grease, oil, and fuels, and the installation of two 20,000-gallon isopentane tanks. Vehicle fuels, oils, grease, and isopentane motive fluids have the potential to be released into the environment through natural events or human error. This is considered a potentially significant impact and will be addressed in the EIR analysis.
- b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Refer to response IX. a) above.

- c) **No Impact.** The project is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing school. The closest school is Heber Elementary School, located approximately 0.60 miles to the north of the project site. Therefore, the project would have no impact on emitting or handling hazardous or acutely hazardous materials substances or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.
- d) **No Impact.** Based on a review of the Cortese List conducted in December 2023, the project site is not listed as a hazardous materials site (Department of Toxic Substances Control 2023, State Water Resources Control Board 2023). Therefore, implementation of the project would result in no impact related to the project site being located on a listed hazardous materials site pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.
- e) **No Impact.** The project is not located within 2 miles of a public airport or a public use airport. The closest airport is Imperial County Airport located approximately 8 miles north of the project site. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area. No impact is identified for this issue area.
- f) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Imperial County Office of Emergency Services (OES) has provided three plans addressing evacuation and evacuation responsibilities for County Fire, Police, and the OES among other topics related to emergency preparedness that do not identify specific evacuation routes. The project applicant would coordinate any construction activities and use of oversized loads or movement of construction/decommissioning equipment with the Imperial County Department of Public Works (ICDPW) and/or California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the El Centro Highway Patrol office. Further, the project will coordinate with the ICDPW for any requested dedication of rights-of-way needed for Dogwood Road for the consideration of existing and any future road needs. Lastly, the project shall file for an encroachment permit for any work or proposed work in the affected County or Caltrans road rights-of-way and for any and all new, altered or unauthorized existing driveway(s) to access the lot or lots and for any proposed road crossings. Thus, the project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan and would result in a less than significant impact.
- g) **No Impact.** The project site is located in the unincorporated area of Imperial County. According to the Seismic and Public Safety Element of the General Plan, the potential for a major fire in the unincorporated areas of the County is generally low (County of Imperial 1997). The project site is not located in areas considered wildlands, as the vast majority of the surrounding area is cultivated farmlands. According to the Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer provided by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the project area is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high hazard severity zones (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2023). Therefore, there would be no impact associated with risk involving wildland fires.

## X. Hydrology and Water Quality

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i. result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii. create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv. impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Impact Analysis

- a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed project has the potential to create urban non-point source discharge (e.g., synthetic/organic chemicals). Potentially significant water quality impacts have been identified and will be addressed in the EIR.
- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project would require the drilling of three new geothermal production wells and a new injection well. The production wells would be completed to depths between 1,000 and 4,000 feet.

Casing depths will comply with California Department of Conservation – Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) Regulations (Chapter 4, Article 3, §§ 1723, 2018). The geothermal production wells will bypass any groundwater reservoirs in favor of geothermal aquifers. Any water needed for fugitive dust control, or other BMPs that require water will be obtained through the project applicant's existing IID contract. No groundwater wells will be drilled, nor will the project require the use of ground water. No impact on groundwater supply or recharge would occur.

- ci) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would result in the creation of impervious surfaces. Soil erosion could result during construction and earthmoving as well as during site reclamation. However, the project applicant is required to comply with the Construction General Permit and the Industrial General Permit, as well as Imperial County Land Use Ordinance, Title 9, Chapter 10 – Grading Regulations. County standards and compliance with the NPDES require the creation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), and the use of best management practices (BMPs) to reduce impacts to surface and ground water quality attributed to erosion or siltation to a level less than significant. Applicant compliance with Imperial County and State standards would ensure the project does not significantly alter the site's drainage resulting in erosion or siltation on-or off-site, and impacts would be less than significant.
- cii) **Less than Significant Impact.** Refer to response X. ci) above.
- ciii) **Less than Significant Impact.** Refer to response X. ci) above.
- civ) **Less Than Significant Impact.** According to the Federal Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (Panel 06025C2075C), the project site is within Zone X, which is an area determined to be outside the 0.2 percent annual chance floodplain (FEMA 2008). Therefore, the proposed project would not impede or redirect flood flows and this is considered a less than significant impact.
- d) **No Impact.** According to the Federal Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (Panel 06025C2075C), the project site is within Zone X, which is an area determined to be outside the 0.2 percent annual chance floodplain (FEMA 2008). In addition, there are no large bodies of water near the project site. The Salton Sea is the closest body of water near the project site and is 28 miles away, and the Pacific Ocean is over 90 miles away. Therefore, the project would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation by flood, tsunami or seiche. No impact would occur.
- e) **Less Than Significant Impact.** No groundwater wells will be drilled, nor will the project require the use of ground water. Any water needed for fugitive dust control, or other BMPs that require water will be obtained through the project applicant's existing IID contract. Furthermore, the project is required to comply with County, State, and Federal water quality standards. The proposed project will not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. This is considered a less than significant impact.



## XI. Land Use and Planning

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Impact Analysis

- a) **No Impact.** The project site is located in a sparsely populated, agriculturally zoned portion of Imperial County. There are no established residential communities located within or in the vicinity of the project site. The nearest established residential community is located approximately 0.50 miles north of the project site along E Fawcett Road. Therefore, implementation of the project would not divide an established community and no impact would occur.
- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project site is currently designated by the General Plan as “Agriculture” and is zoned A-2-G-SPA (General Agriculture with Geothermal Overlay Zone in a Special Plan Area) and A-2-G-U (General Agriculture with a Geothermal Zone Overlay in an Urban Area).

Pursuant to Title 9, Division 5, Chapter 8, the following uses are permitted in the A-2 zone:

- n) *Oil, gas and geothermal exploration meeting requirements specified in Division 17*
- s) *Solar energy extraction generation provided that is for on-site consumption only*

Pursuant to Title 9, Division 5, Chapter 8, the following uses are permitted in the A-2 zone subject to approval of a CUP from Imperial County:

- y) *Electrical generation plans (less than 50 MW) excluding nuclear or coal fired and meeting requirements in Division 17*
- z) *Electrical substations in an electrical transmission system (500 kv/230 kv/161 kv)*
- bb) *Facilities for the transmission of electrical energy (100-200 kv)*
- ii) *Geothermal test facilities, Intermediate projects, and major exploratory wells, meeting requirements in Division 17*
- rr) *Major Geothermal projects per Division 17*
- ww) *Resource extraction and energy development as per Division 17*
- aaa) *Solar energy electrical generator*

The County Land Use Ordinance, Division 17, includes the Geothermal Overlay Zone, which authorizes the development and operation of renewable energy projects, with an approved CUP. With an approved CUP the project would conform with the standards presented in the Implementation Ordinance of the Renewable Energy and Transmission Element update. Therefore, implementation of the project would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect and impacts would be less than significant.



## XII. Mineral Resources

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Impact Analysis

- a) **No Impact.** The project site is not used for mineral resource production. According to Figure 8: Imperial County Existing Mineral Resources of the Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan (County of Imperial 2016), no known mineral resources occur within the project site nor does the project site contain mapped mineral resources. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of any known mineral resources that would be of value to the region and the residents of California nor would the proposed project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource. Thus, no impact is identified for this issue area and no further analysis is warranted.
- b) **No Impact.** Refer to response XIII. a) above.

### XIII. Noise

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project result in:</b>				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### Impact Analysis

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** The Imperial County Title 9 Land Use Ordinance, Division 7, Chapter 2, Section 90702.00 - Sound level limits, establishes one-hour average sound level limits for the County's land use zones. Agricultural/industrial operations are required to comply with the noise levels prescribed under the general industrial zones. Therefore, the proposed project will be required to maintain noise levels below 75 decibels (dB) (averaged over one hour) during any time of day.

The proposed project will also be expected to comply with the Noise Element of the General Plan which states that construction noise, from a single piece of equipment or a combination of equipment, shall not exceed 75 dB, when averaged over an eight-hour period, and measured at the nearest sensitive receptor. Construction equipment operation is also limited to the hours of 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m on Saturday. Nevertheless, the proposed project will result in the increase in ambient noise levels during construction. A noise report that will address the proposed project's potential noise impacts will be prepared and this issue will be addressed in the EIR.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** Groundborne vibration and noise could originate from earth movement during the construction phase of the proposed project. However, significant vibration is typically associated with activities such as blasting or the use of pile drivers, neither of which would be required during project construction. Construction activities most likely to cause vibration include heavy construction equipment and site grading operations. Although all heavy, mobile construction equipment has the potential to cause at least some perceptible vibration when operating close to buildings, the vibration is usually short term and is not of sufficient magnitude to cause building damage. Heavy equipment such as dozers, loaders, and drill rig equipment would not be operated close enough to any residences or structures to cause vibration impact. Operation of the project would not result in vibrations perceptible to nearby receptors. As such, impacts would be less than significant.
- c) **No Impact.** The project site is not located within an airport land use plan nor is it within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. The closest airport is Imperial County Airport located approximately 8 miles north of the project site. As such, no impact would occur to people residing or working in the project area related to excessive noise levels.

#### XIV. Population and Housing

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b><i>Would the project:</i></b>				
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### ***Impact Analysis***

- a) **No Impact.** Project construction would likely require a maximum of 35 workers, with an average of 10 to 20 workers after grading excavation. After construction is complete, the facilities would be staffed and maintained by 1-2 onsite employees. It is assumed that the workforce would be from southern California and would likely not require accommodations. The project is sited within the Renewable Energy Geothermal Overlay Zone and the project does not involve the construction of any new housing or commercial areas that would attract new residents to the area, nor does it require the extension of roads or creation of other infrastructure. The project would not appear to induce population growth; therefore, the project would have no impact.
- b) **No Impact.** No housing exists within the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not displace any existing people or housing, which would require the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No impact is identified for this issue area.

## XV. Public Services

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
i. Fire Protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii. Police Protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii. Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv. Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
v. Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Impact Analysis

- ai) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project is located in an unincorporated area of Imperial County outside of Heber and Calexico, California. The project would not likely impact or displace the location of existing fire protection facilities. The project applicant will have a certified fire engineer review the proposed facilities and existing fire response infrastructure to determine if the existing fire response facilities are adequate or if additional facilities (i.e., hydrants, access points) are necessary. The project will contain a thorough Emergency Response Plan (ERP) created with consultation from the Imperial County Fire Department. The project ERP will address all emergencies likely to occur at the site and requires an Emergency Coordinator who can work with County Fire Protection. The plan contains information vital to emergency responder and engineering methods for protecting flammable isopentane tanks at the project site. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.
- aii) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The project would not likely impact or displace the location of existing police protection facilities. The project would also include public safety mechanisms such as fences and gates to protect the facilities and reduce unauthorized visitations. In addition, there will be a security service that monitors the property. Furthermore, the project applicant would be required to pay their share of local infrastructure improvement costs. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.
- aiii) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project does not include the development of residential land uses that would result in an increase in population or student generation. Also, the number of construction and operational workers coming to the region is low and is not expected to increase demand for schools or require the construction of new schools. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.
- aiv) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The number of construction and operational workers coming to the region is low and is not expected to increase demand on existing or future parks. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.
- av) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The number of construction and operational workers coming to the region is low and is not expected to increase demand for any public services (such as post offices). Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**XVI. Recreation**

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Impact Analysis**

- a) **No Impact.** The project would not directly or indirectly increase the number of residents keeping the county compliant with the Quimby Act which requires 5 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. Project construction would likely require a maximum of 35 workers, with an average of 10 to 20 workers after grading excavation. After construction is complete, the facilities would be staffed and maintained by 1-2 onsite employees. These workers and employees are anticipated to come from existing populations that live in or commute from the surrounding local community. As there is no increase of residencies or residents, it is reasonably foreseeable that the project would not lead to an increase of use or deterioration of existing neighborhood, regional, or other recreational facilities. Therefore, the project would have no impact on the use or deterioration of existing recreational resources.
- b) **No Impact.** The project does not include nor require the construction of a recreational facility as the project does not alter the current ratio of parkland acres to residents. Therefore, the project will have no impact on the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse effect on the environment.

## XVII. Transportation

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Impact Analysis

- a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Construction of the proposed project would result in a small increase of traffic to the area, which may result in a potentially significant impact. Therefore, a traffic impact study that will address the proposed project's potential impacts on traffic will be prepared, and this issue will be addressed in the EIR.
- b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Section 15064.3(b) of the CEQA Guidelines provides guidance on determining the significance of transportation impacts and focuses on the use of vehicle miles traveled (VMT), which is defined as the amount and distance of automobile travel associated with a project. Given the nature of the project, after construction, there would be a nominal amount of vehicle trips generated by the project. Once the proposed project is implemented, the proposed project would require intermittent maintenance requiring a negligible amount of traffic trips on an annual basis. However minimal, the proposed project would increase the number of vehicular trips related to construction and the need for intermittent maintenance on an annual basis. Therefore, this issue is potentially significant and will be addressed in the traffic impact study and EIR analysis.
- c) **No Impact.** The project would not result in any changes to any roads, intersections, streets, highways, nor would it provide any incompatible uses to the street and highway system. All vehicles that would be used for travel to and from the project site would be licensed and comply with all appropriate transportation laws and regulations including obtaining and adhering to provisions of any required permits for oversized loads. As such, no impact related to transportation design hazards would occur.
- d) **No Impact.** All proposed facilities would be constructed within the property boundaries of the project site and would not affect emergency vehicle access to the facility or any roadway. Emergency vehicle access is identified and designated at the Dogwood site, and these areas would not be changed as result of the proposed developments. Therefore, no impacts to emergency access to the plant site or surrounding area would occur under the project.

**XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources**

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b><i>Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:</i></b>				
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Impact Analysis**

a-b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Assembly Bill 52 was passed in 2014 and took effect July 1, 2015. It established a new category of environmental resources that must be considered under CEQA called tribal cultural resources (Public Resources Code 21074) and established a process for consulting with Native American tribes and groups regarding those resources. Assembly Bill 52 requires a lead agency to begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project.

In accordance with AB 52, Imperial County, as the CEQA lead agency, sent an AB 52 consultation request letter to the Campo Band of Mission Indians and Fort Yuma-Quechan Indian Tribe on January 19, 2024. This issue will be further analyzed in the EIR.



## XIX. Utilities and Service Systems

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Impact Analysis

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Operational use of water resources for the project would be limited to domestic use within operations and maintenance buildings, solar panel washing, and fire protection services. Impacts associated with water facilities would be less than significant. Construction of the proposed facilities would not generate/discharge any wastewater. Chemical additives are not required for the cooling tower operation and therefore there is no waste disposal. Impacts associated with water facilities would be less than significant.

The energy generated by the solar facilities will be collected by an on-site substation and then transferred to the plants via a short transmission cable. The solar facilities will effectively reduce the margin between gross and net geothermal energy generation, allowing for the more efficient generation of geothermal energy and allow more geothermal energy to enter the grid. Before entering the grid, a new substation will be built near the Dogwood plant to step up the low voltage electrical energy generated at the Dogwood geothermal unit to the higher voltage required for commercial transmission. No upgrades to off-site transmission facilities are necessary and the new Dogwood substation will connect directly to the existing point of interconnection with the IID controlled grid. Impacts associated with electric power facilities would be less than significant.

No natural gas facilities are located near the project and no natural gas hookup is required for the project. No impacts associated with natural gas facilities would occur. The project will not have an impact on any telecommunications.

The project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, impacts would be less than significant.

- b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Although water for operations and maintenance buildings, solar panel washing, and fire protection services during project operation is not anticipated to result in a significant increase in water demand/use, IID would provide the water required for operations and maintenance and potable water will be trucked onto the site. Thus, a potentially significant impact is identified for the availability of sufficient water supplies to serve the proposed project for the reasonably foreseeable future. The proposed project's potential impacts on water supplies will be analyzed in the EIR.
- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project would generate a minimal volume of wastewater during construction. During construction, portable chemical sanitary facilities will be used by all construction personnel. These facilities will be serviced by a local contractor. In addition, all construction liquids would be disposed of in compliance with all appropriate local, state and federal disposal regulations. The OECs operate on a closed loop, do not consume any water and therefore there is no waste disposal. Therefore, no impacts to the wastewater treatment utility's service capacity would occur.
- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** Solid waste generation would be minor for the construction and operation of the proposed project. Solid waste during construction will be disposed of in an approved solid waste disposal site in accordance with Imperial County Environmental Health Department requirements. Waste will be routinely collected and disposed of at an authorized landfill by a licensed disposal contractor. Trash would likely be hauled to the Calexico Solid Waste Site (13-AA-0004) located approximately 1.25 miles southwest of the project site in Calexico, CA. The Calexico Solid Waste Site has approximately 1,561,235 cubic yards of remaining capacity and is estimated to remain in operation through 2079 (CalRecycle 2019). The project would not generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.

Additionally, because the proposed project would generate solid waste during construction and operation, they will be required to comply with state and local requirements for waste reduction and recycling; including the 1989 California Integrated Waste Management Act and the 1991 California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991. Also, conditions of the conditional use permit will contain provisions for recycling and diversion of Imperial County construction waste policies. Therefore, a less than significant impact is identified for this issue area.

- e) **Less than Significant Impact.** Refer to response XIX. d) above.

## XX. Wildfire

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b><i>If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:</i></b>				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### **Impact Analysis**

- a) **No Impact.** According to the Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer provided by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the project area is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high hazard severity zones (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2023). Therefore, the project would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. No impact is identified for this issue area.
- b) **No Impact.** The project area is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high hazard severity zones (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2023). The Seismic and Public Safety Element of the County General Plan also states that the potential for a major fire in the unincorporated areas of the County are generally low (County of Imperial 1997). The project site is located on flat land, which does not pose a risk due to slope. The County's Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (2021) recognizes and manages events of high winds and other extreme weather in Imperial County. The project would not exacerbate wildfire risks associated with slope or prevailing winds; no impact would occur.
- c) **No Impact.** The project area is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high hazard severity zones (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2023). The project will have two double-walled 20,000-gallon isopentane tanks on site which would be equipped with a fire suppression system supported by additional onsite water. This is required by the California Fire Code as adopted by the Imperial County Code. Additionally, the underground interconnection line would be situated along the existing utility lines along Dogwood Road. All infrastructure would comply with existing regulations and would not exacerbate fire risk; no impacts would occur.
- d) **No Impact.** According to Figure 2: Landslide Activity in the Seismic and Public Safety Element of the General Plan (County of Imperial 1997), the project site is not located in an area that is prone to landslide

hazards. Furthermore, the site topography is flat, and no ancient landslides have been mapped in the area. The project would not alter the existing drainage pattern surrounding the project site and it would comply with regulations that reduce the potential for excess runoff waters from the project site. The project would not expose people or structures to significant risks as a result of runoff, post-fire instability, or drainage changes, therefore no impact would occur.

## XXI. Mandatory Findings of Significance

Environmental Issue Area:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Impact Analysis

- a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed project has the potential to result in significant environmental effects on biological resources and cultural resources, which could directly or indirectly cause adverse effects on the environment. These issues will be further evaluated in the EIR.
- b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Implementation of the proposed project has the potential to result in impacts related to: aesthetics, agricultural resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology/soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, transportation, tribal cultural resources, and utilities/service systems. The proposed project has the potential to result in cumulative impacts with regards to the identified issue areas. Cumulative impacts will be discussed and further analyzed in the EIR.
- c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Implementation of the proposed project has the potential to result in impacts related to: air quality, geology/soils, and hazards and hazardous materials. These potential environmental effects could cause substantial adverse effects on human beings. These issues will be further evaluated in the EIR.

## References

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- 2016. County of Imperial General Plan. Conservation and Open Space Element. Available on-line at: <https://www.icpds.com/planning/land-use-documents/general-plan/conservation-and-open-space-element>.
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- Department of Toxic Substances Control. 2023. EnviroStor. Available on-line at: <https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/>. Accessed December 8, 2023.
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- State Water Resources Control Board. GeoTracker. Available on-line at: <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>. Accessed on December 8, 2023.

## List of Preparers

This Initial Study was prepared for the Imperial County Planning and Development Services Department by HDR at 591 Camino de la Reina, Suite 300, San Diego, CA 92108. The following professionals participated in its preparation:

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# **Comment Letters Received on Notice of Preparation**





## NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

RECEIVED

January 26, 2024

FEB 01 2024

Luis Valenzuela  
Imperial County  
801 Main Street  
El Centro, CA 92243

IMPERIAL COUNTY  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

CHAIRPERSON  
**Reginald Pagaling**  
Chumash

**Re: 2024010510, Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project, Imperial County**

VICE-CHAIRPERSON  
**Buffy McQuillen**  
Yokayo Pomo, Yuki,  
Nomlaki

Dear Mr. Valenzuela:

SECRETARY  
**Sara Dutschke**  
Miwok

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) has received the Notice of Preparation (NOP), Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) or Early Consultation for the project referenced above. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code §21000 et seq.), specifically Public Resources Code §21084.1, states that a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. (Pub. Resources Code § 21084.1; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15064.5 (b) (CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5 (b)). If there is substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before a lead agency, that a project may have a significant effect on the environment, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) shall be prepared. (Pub. Resources Code §21080 (d); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 5064 subd.(a)(1) (CEQA Guidelines § 15064 (a)(1)). In order to determine whether a project will cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, a lead agency will need to determine whether there are historical resources within the area of potential effect (APE).

PARLIAMENTARIAN  
**Wayne Nelson**  
Luiseño

COMMISSIONER  
**Isaac Bojorquez**  
Ohlone-Costanoan

CEQA was amended significantly in 2014. Assembly Bill 52 (Gatto, Chapter 532, Statutes of 2014) (AB 52) amended CEQA to create a separate category of cultural resources, "tribal cultural resources" (Pub. Resources Code §21074) and provides that a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. (Pub. Resources Code §21084.2). Public agencies shall, when feasible, avoid damaging effects to any tribal cultural resource. (Pub. Resources Code §21084.3 (a)). **AB 52 applies to any project for which a notice of preparation, a notice of negative declaration, or a mitigated negative declaration is filed on or after July 1, 2015.** If your project involves the adoption of or amendment to a general plan or a specific plan, or the designation or proposed designation of open space, on or after March 1, 2005, it may also be subject to Senate Bill 18 (Burton, Chapter 905, Statutes of 2004) (SB 18). **Both SB 18 and AB 52 have tribal consultation requirements.** If your project is also subject to the federal National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.) (NEPA), the tribal consultation requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (154 U.S.C. 300101, 36 C.F.R. §800 et seq.) may also apply.

COMMISSIONER  
**Stanley Rodriguez**  
Kumeyaay

COMMISSIONER  
**Laurena Bolden**  
Serrano

COMMISSIONER  
**Reid Milanovich**  
Cahuilla

COMMISSIONER  
**Vacant**

The NAHC recommends consultation with California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of your proposed project as early as possible in order to avoid inadvertent discoveries of Native American human remains and best protect tribal cultural resources. Below is a brief summary of portions of AB 52 and SB 18 as well as the NAHC's recommendations for conducting cultural resources assessments.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
**Raymond C. Hitchcock**  
Miwok, Nisenan

**Consult your legal counsel about compliance with AB 52 and SB 18 as well as compliance with any other applicable laws.**

**NAHC HEADQUARTERS**  
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AB 52

AB 52 has added to CEQA the additional requirements listed below, along with many other requirements:

- 1. Fourteen Day Period to Provide Notice of Completion of an Application/Decision to Undertake a Project:** Within fourteen (14) days of determining that an application for a project is complete or of a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, a lead agency shall provide formal notification to a designated contact of, or tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice, to be accomplished by at least one written notice that includes:

  - a. A brief description of the project.
  - b. The lead agency contact information.
  - c. Notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1 (d)).
  - d. A "California Native American tribe" is defined as a Native American tribe located in California that is on the contact list maintained by the NAHC for the purposes of Chapter 905 of Statutes of 2004 (SB 18). (Pub. Resources Code §21073).
- 2. Begin Consultation Within 30 Days of Receiving a Tribe's Request for Consultation and Before Releasing a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Environmental Impact Report:** A lead agency shall begin the consultation process within 30 days of receiving a request for consultation from a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1, subds. (d) and (e)) and prior to the release of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration or Environmental Impact Report. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1(b)).

  - a. For purposes of AB 52, "consultation shall have the same meaning as provided in Gov. Code §65352.4 (SB 18). (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1 (b)).
- 3. Mandatory Topics of Consultation If Requested by a Tribe:** The following topics of consultation, if a tribe requests to discuss them, are mandatory topics of consultation:

  - a. Alternatives to the project.
  - b. Recommended mitigation measures.
  - c. Significant effects. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.2 (a)).
- 4. Discretionary Topics of Consultation:** The following topics are discretionary topics of consultation:

  - a. Type of environmental review necessary.
  - b. Significance of the tribal cultural resources.
  - c. Significance of the project's impacts on tribal cultural resources.
  - d. If necessary, project alternatives or appropriate measures for preservation or mitigation that the tribe may recommend to the lead agency. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.2 (a)).
- 5. Confidentiality of Information Submitted by a Tribe During the Environmental Review Process:** With some exceptions, any information, including but not limited to, the location, description, and use of tribal cultural resources submitted by a California Native American tribe during the environmental review process shall not be included in the environmental document or otherwise disclosed by the lead agency or any other public agency to the public, consistent with Government Code §6254 (r) and §6254.10. Any information submitted by a California Native American tribe during the consultation or environmental review process shall be published in a confidential appendix to the environmental document unless the tribe that provided the information consents, in writing, to the disclosure of some or all of the information to the public. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (c)(1)).
- 6. Discussion of Impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources in the Environmental Document:** If a project may have a significant impact on a tribal cultural resource, the lead agency's environmental document shall discuss both of the following:

  - a. Whether the proposed project has a significant impact on an identified tribal cultural resource.
  - b. Whether feasible alternatives or mitigation measures, including those measures that may be agreed to pursuant to Public Resources Code §21082.3, subdivision (a), avoid or substantially lessen the impact on the identified tribal cultural resource. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (b)).

- 7. Conclusion of Consultation:** Consultation with a tribe shall be considered concluded when either of the following occurs:
- a. The parties agree to measures to mitigate or avoid a significant effect, if a significant effect exists, on a tribal cultural resource; or
  - b. A party, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.2 (b)).

**8. Recommending Mitigation Measures Agreed Upon in Consultation in the Environmental Document:** Any mitigation measures agreed upon in the consultation conducted pursuant to Public Resources Code §21080.3.2 shall be recommended for inclusion in the environmental document and in an adopted mitigation monitoring and reporting program, if determined to avoid or lessen the impact pursuant to Public Resources Code §21082.3, subdivision (b), paragraph 2, and shall be fully enforceable. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (a)).

**9. Required Consideration of Feasible Mitigation:** If mitigation measures recommended by the staff of the lead agency as a result of the consultation process are not included in the environmental document or if there are no agreed upon mitigation measures at the conclusion of consultation, or if consultation does not occur, and if substantial evidence demonstrates that a project will cause a significant effect to a tribal cultural resource, the lead agency shall consider feasible mitigation pursuant to Public Resources Code §21084.3 (b). (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (e)).

**10. Examples of Mitigation Measures That, If Feasible, May Be Considered to Avoid or Minimize Significant Adverse Impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources:**

- a. Avoidance and preservation of the resources in place, including, but not limited to:
  - i. Planning and construction to avoid the resources and protect the cultural and natural context.
  - ii. Planning greenspace, parks, or other open space, to incorporate the resources with culturally appropriate protection and management criteria.
- b. Treating the resource with culturally appropriate dignity, taking into account the tribal cultural values and meaning of the resource, including, but not limited to, the following:
  - i. Protecting the cultural character and integrity of the resource.
  - ii. Protecting the traditional use of the resource.
  - iii. Protecting the confidentiality of the resource.
- c. Permanent conservation easements or other interests in real property, with culturally appropriate management criteria for the purposes of preserving or utilizing the resources or places.
- d. Protecting the resource. (Pub. Resource Code §21084.3 (b)).
- e. Please note that a federally recognized California Native American tribe or a non-federally recognized California Native American tribe that is on the contact list maintained by the NAHC to protect a California prehistoric, archaeological, cultural, spiritual, or ceremonial place may acquire and hold conservation easements if the conservation easement is voluntarily conveyed. (Civ. Code §815.3 (c)).
- f. Please note that it is the policy of the state that Native American remains and associated grave artifacts shall be repatriated. (Pub. Resources Code §5097.991).

**11. Prerequisites for Certifying an Environmental Impact Report or Adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration or Negative Declaration with a Significant Impact on an Identified Tribal Cultural Resource:** An Environmental Impact Report may not be certified, nor may a mitigated negative declaration or a negative declaration be adopted unless one of the following occurs:

- a. The consultation process between the tribes and the lead agency has occurred as provided in Public Resources Code §21080.3.1 and §21080.3.2 and concluded pursuant to Public Resources Code §21080.3.2.
- b. The tribe that requested consultation failed to provide comments to the lead agency or otherwise failed to engage in the consultation process.
- c. The lead agency provided notice of the project to the tribe in compliance with Public Resources Code §21080.3.1 (d) and the tribe failed to request consultation within 30 days. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (d)).

The NAHC's PowerPoint presentation titled, "Tribal Consultation Under AB 52: Requirements and Best Practices" may be found online at: [http://nahc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/AB52TribalConsultation\\_CalEPAPDF.pdf](http://nahc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/AB52TribalConsultation_CalEPAPDF.pdf)

## SB 18

SB 18 applies to local governments and requires local governments to contact, provide notice to, refer plans to, and consult with tribes prior to the adoption or amendment of a general plan or a specific plan, or the designation of open space. (Gov. Code §65352.3). Local governments should consult the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's "Tribal Consultation Guidelines," which can be found online at: [https://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/09\\_14\\_05\\_Updated\\_Guidelines\\_922.pdf](https://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/09_14_05_Updated_Guidelines_922.pdf).

Some of SB 18's provisions include:

1. **Tribal Consultation:** If a local government considers a proposal to adopt or amend a general plan or a specific plan, or to designate open space it is required to contact the appropriate tribes identified by the NAHC by requesting a "Tribal Consultation List." If a tribe, once contacted, requests consultation the local government must consult with the tribe on the plan proposal. **A tribe has 90 days from the date of receipt of notification to request consultation unless a shorter timeframe has been agreed to by the tribe.** (Gov. Code §65352.3 (a)(2)).
2. **No Statutory Time Limit on SB 18 Tribal Consultation.** There is no statutory time limit on SB 18 tribal consultation.
3. **Confidentiality:** Consistent with the guidelines developed and adopted by the Office of Planning and Research pursuant to Gov. Code §65040.2, the city or county shall protect the confidentiality of the information concerning the specific identity, location, character, and use of places, features and objects described in Public Resources Code §5097.9 and §5097.993 that are within the city's or county's jurisdiction. (Gov. Code §65352.3 (b)).
4. **Conclusion of SB 18 Tribal Consultation:** Consultation should be concluded at the point in which:
  - a. The parties to the consultation come to a mutual agreement concerning the appropriate measures for preservation or mitigation; or
  - b. Either the local government or the tribe, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached concerning the appropriate measures of preservation or mitigation. (Tribal Consultation Guidelines, Governor's Office of Planning and Research (2005) at p. 18).

Agencies should be aware that neither AB 52 nor SB 18 precludes agencies from initiating tribal consultation with tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with their jurisdictions before the timeframes provided in AB 52 and SB 18. For that reason, we urge you to continue to request Native American Tribal Contact Lists and "Sacred Lands File" searches from the NAHC. The request forms can be found online at: <http://nahc.ca.gov/resources/forms/>.

### NAHC Recommendations for Cultural Resources Assessments

To adequately assess the existence and significance of tribal cultural resources and plan for avoidance, preservation in place, or barring both, mitigation of project-related impacts to tribal cultural resources, the NAHC recommends the following actions:

1. Contact the appropriate regional California Historical Research Information System (CHRIS) Center ([https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=30331](https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=30331)) for an archaeological records search. The records search will determine:
  - a. If part or all of the APE has been previously surveyed for cultural resources.
  - b. If any known cultural resources have already been recorded on or adjacent to the APE.
  - c. If the probability is low, moderate, or high that cultural resources are located in the APE.
  - d. If a survey is required to determine whether previously unrecorded cultural resources are present.
2. If an archaeological inventory survey is required, the final stage is the preparation of a professional report detailing the findings and recommendations of the records search and field survey.
  - a. The final report containing site forms, site significance, and mitigation measures should be submitted immediately to the planning department. All information regarding site locations, Native American human remains, and associated funerary objects should be in a separate confidential addendum and not be made available for public disclosure.
  - b. The final written report should be submitted within 3 months after work has been completed to the appropriate regional CHRIS center.

3. Contact the NAHC for:
  - a. A Sacred Lands File search. Remember that tribes do not always record their sacred sites in the Sacred Lands File, nor are they required to do so. A Sacred Lands File search is not a substitute for consultation with tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the project's APE.
  - b. A Native American Tribal Consultation List of appropriate tribes for consultation concerning the project site and to assist in planning for avoidance, preservation in place, or, failing both, mitigation measures.
  
4. Remember that the lack of surface evidence of archaeological resources (including tribal cultural resources) does not preclude their subsurface existence.
  - a. Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plan provisions for the identification and evaluation of inadvertently discovered archaeological resources per Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15064.5(f) (CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5(f)). In areas of identified archaeological sensitivity, a certified archaeologist and a culturally affiliated Native American with knowledge of cultural resources should monitor all ground-disturbing activities.
  - b. Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plans provisions for the disposition of recovered cultural items that are not burial associated in consultation with culturally affiliated Native Americans.
  - c. Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plans provisions for the treatment and disposition of inadvertently discovered Native American human remains. Health and Safety Code § 7050.5, Public Resources Code § 5097.98, and Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15064.5, subdivisions (d) and (e) (CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5, subds. (d) and (e)) address the processes to be followed in the event of an inadvertent discovery of any Native American human remains and associated grave goods in a location other than a dedicated cemetery.

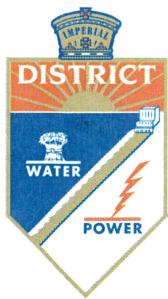
If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at my email address: [Pricilla.Torres-Fuentes@nahc.ca.gov](mailto:Pricilla.Torres-Fuentes@nahc.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

*Pricilla Torres-Fuentes*

Pricilla Torres-Fuentes  
Cultural Resources Analyst

cc: State Clearinghouse



# IID

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*Since 1911*

February 22, 2024

Mr. Luis Valenzuela  
Planner II  
Planning & Development Services Department  
County of Imperial  
801 Main Street  
El Centro, CA 92243

**RECEIVED**

*By Imperial County Planning & Development Services at 3:08 pm, Feb 22, 2024*

**SUBJECT:** NOP of a DEIR for the Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project, CUP 23-0020; Heber 2 Solar Energy Project, CUP 23-0021 and Heber Field Company Geothermal Wells & Pipeline Project, CUP 23-0022

Dear Mr. Valenzuela:

On January 19, 2024, the Imperial Irrigation District received from the Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department, the Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project, Heber 2 Solar Project and Heber Field Company Geothermal Wells & Pipeline Project, Conditional Use Permits 23-0020, 23-0021 and 23-0022, respectively. The Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project consists of a geothermal plant and associated ancillary and auxiliary facilities, a new substation that proposes to connect to the IID grid, a 7 megawatt “behind the meter” PV solar facility for supplemental energy, and a distribution line from the proposed solar facility to the geothermal plant (that will cross the Beech Drain and Central Main Canal at the existing above-ground pipeline span). The Heber 2 Solar Energy Project proposes a 15 MW “behind-the-meter” PV solar facility to provide supplemental energy to the existing Heber 2 geothermal plant. The energy generated by the solar facility would be transmitted via a distribution line like the Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project. The Heber Field Company Geothermal Wells and Pipeline Project intends to develop three geothermal production wells. The projects will be sites on approximately 125 acres of land in the southern portion of Imperial County, approximately one mile south of Heber, California and approximately 0.5 miles west of Calexico, CA. The sites are within portions of three parcels: APNs 054-250-031, 059-020-001, and 054-250-017. APN 054-250-31 is within the existing Heber 2 Geothermal Energy Complex located at 855 Dogwood Road, Heber, CA, and APNs 059-020-001 and 054-250-017 are immediately southeast and east, respectively, of the H2GEC.

The IID has reviewed the NOP of the DEIR and has the following comments:

1. To properly assess for potential impacts as covered in the environmental factor titled “UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS” of the projects’ Environmental Impact

Report's Environmental Checklist, and determine if the projects will require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded electric power facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects, a facility study, system impact study and/or circuit study/distribution impact study, will have to be performed. Any system improvements or mitigation identified in such studies to accommodate a project shall be the responsibility of the projects' proponent and should be included as part of the project for environmental assessment purposes.

2. For projects that will require distribution-rated electrical service for construction and/or operation, proponent should be advised to contact Joel Lopez, Project Development Planner Senior, at (760) 482-3444 or e-mail Mr. Lopez at [JFLopez@IID.com](mailto:JFLopez@IID.com) to initiate the customer service application process. In addition to submitting a formal application (available for download at <http://www.iid.com/home/showdocument?id=12923>), proponent will be required submit, electrical plans, electrical panel size and location, operating voltage, electrical loads, an AutoCAD file of the site plan, construction schedule, and the applicable fees, permits, easements and environmental compliance documentation pertaining to the provision of electrical service to the project. The projects' proponent shall be responsible for all costs and mitigation measures related to providing electrical service to the projects.
3. The impacts to the Salton Sea, due to loss or reduction of agricultural runoff caused by agricultural land conversion to urban and/or solar use must be assessed in the DEIR. Due to the potential loss or reduction of inflow to the Salton Sea and to IID drains with its concurrent environmental impacts, the projects' proponent should address this issue as well as provide analysis that the projects do not impact the IID Water Conservation and Transfer Draft Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), the existing Section 7 Biological Opinion and the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Permit 2081.

Discussion of cumulative impacts considering other non-agricultural facilities whose water use changes (or potential water use changes) would reduce the inflow conveyed to IID drains and the Salton Sea, it is advisable that the projects' proponent present a cumulative impact analysis on inflow to IID drains and the Salton Sea.

The following are access links to the documents mentioned:

- The HCP is part of the IID Water Conservation and Transfer Project, Final EIR/EIS and can be found at the website [Water/Library/QSA-Water-Transfer/Environmenta-Assessment/Permits/Final EIREIS](#); Volume II, Appendix A Species Covered by the HCP. The HCP in the Draft EIR/EIS may contain small changes from the final version of the EIR/EIS. It is in a different

- appendix in the draft that the final EIR/EIS (Appendix C). Until the final HCP/Natural Community Conservation Plan is approved, IID uses the draft HCP in the draft document, which can be accessed at [Water/Library/QSA-Water-Transfer/Environmental-Assessment](#)).
- The Biological Opinion (federal Endangered Species Act permit) is available at <https://www.iid.com/Imperial-Irrigation-District/Salton-Sea-Areas>.
  - The CESA 2081 (the water transfer operates under this state ESA permit until the NCCP is approved) can be found at <https://www.iid.com/water/library/qa-water-transfer/environmental-assessments-permits/cesa-compliance>.
  - The MMRP (Mitigation Monitoring and Report Program) is accessible at <https://www.iid.com/Water/Library/QSA-Water-Transfer/Mitigation>.
4. To insure there are no impacts to IID water facilities, construction plans for the projects, including grading & drainage and fencing plans, should be submitted to IID Water Department Engineering Services Section for review prior to final project design. For additional information IID WDES Section should be contacted at (760) 339-9265.
  5. Projects may impact IID drains with project site runoff flows draining into IID drains. To mitigate impacts, a comprehensive IID hydraulic drainage system analysis may be required. IID's hydraulic drainage system analysis includes an associated drain impact fee.
  6. For construction water, the projects' proponent will need to submit a Temporary Water Account Application to the IID. Furthermore, the use of IID water during a project's construction phase will require an encroachment permit. Once a project moves forward an onsite reservoir will need to be designed and constructed by the proponent to ensure that the project has at least a six-day supply of water available in case of maintenance or construction projects on the supply canal. For additional information regarding construction water, the applicant should contact IID's Water Department North End Division at (760) 482-9900.
  7. The projects' proponent will be required to provide rights of way and easements for any proposed power line extensions and/or any other infrastructure needed to serve the projects as well as the necessary access to allow for continued operation and maintenance of any IID facilities located on adjoining properties. Proponent shall provide a surveyed legal description and associated exhibit certified by a licensed surveyor for all rights of way deemed necessary by IID to accommodate a projects' electrical infrastructure. ROWs and easements shall be in a form acceptable to and at no cost to IID for installation, operation, and maintenance of all electrical facilities.



8. Public utility easements over all private public roads and additional ten (10) feet in width on both side of the private and public roads shall be dedicated to IID for the construction, operation, and maintenance of its electrical infrastructure.
9. Any construction or operation on IID property or within its existing and proposed right of way or easements including but not limited to: surface improvements such as proposed new streets, driveways, parking lots, landscape; and all water, sewer, storm water, or any other above ground or underground utilities; will require an encroachment permit, or encroachment agreement (depending on the circumstances). A copy of the IID encroachment permit application and instructions for its completion are available at the website <https://www.iid.com/about-iid/department-directory/real-estate>. The district Real Estate Section should be contacted at (760) 339-9239 for additional information regarding encroachment permits or agreements. No foundations or buildings will be allowed within IID's right of way.
10. In addition to IID's recorded easements, IID claims, at a minimum, a prescriptive right of way to the toe of slope of all existing canals and drains. Where space is limited and depending upon the specifics of adjacent modifications, the IID may claim additional secondary easements/prescriptive rights of ways to ensure operation and maintenance of IID's facilities can be maintained and are not impacted and if impacted mitigated. Thus, IID should be consulted prior to the installation of any facilities adjacent to IID's facilities. Certain conditions may be placed on adjacent facilities to mitigate or avoid impacts to IID's facilities.
11. IID encroachment permit(s) are required for temporary construction water, construction drainage, and construction access crossing canals and drains. IID canal and drain banks are not to be used or obstructed during construction of the projects.
12. Any new, relocated, modified or reconstructed IID facilities required for and by a project (which can include but is not limited to electrical utility substations, electrical transmission and distribution lines, water deliveries, canals, drains, etc.) need to be included as part of the project's CEQA and/or NEPA documentation, environmental impact analysis and mitigation. Failure to do so will result in postponement of any construction and/or modification of IID facilities until such time as the environmental documentation is amended and environmental impacts are fully analyzed. Any and all mitigation necessary as a result of the construction, relocation and/or upgrade of IID facilities is the responsibility of the projects proponent.
13. Dividing a project into two or more pieces and evaluating each piece in a separate environmental document (Piecemealing or Segmenting), rather than evaluating the whole of the project in one environmental document, is explicitly forbidden by

CEQA, because dividing a project into a number of pieces would allow a Lead Agency to minimize the apparent environmental impacts of a project by evaluating individual pieces separately, each of which may have a less-than-significant impact on the environment, but which together may result in a significant impact. Segmenting a project may also hinder developing comprehensive mitigation strategies. In general, if an activity or facility is necessary for the operation of a project, or necessary to achieve the project objectives, or a reasonably foreseeable consequence of approving the project, then it should be considered an integral project component that should be analyzed within the environmental analysis. The project description should include all project components, including those that will have to be approved by responsible agencies. The State CEQA Guidelines define a project under CEQA as “the whole of the action” that may result either directly or indirectly in physical changes to the environment. This broad definition is intended to provide the maximum protection of the environment. CEQA case law has established general principles on project segmentation for different project types. For a project requiring construction of offsite infrastructure, the offsite infrastructure must be included in the project description. *San Joaquin Raptor/Wildlife Rescue Center v. County of Stanislaus* (1994) 27 Cal.App. 4th 713.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 760-482-3609 or at [dvargas@iid.com](mailto:dvargas@iid.com). Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter.

Respectfully,



Donald Vargas  
Compliance Administrator II



February 22, 2024

Jim Minnick  
Planning & Development Services Director  
801 Main Street  
El Centro, CA 92243

**RECEIVED**

*By Imperial County Planning & Development Services at 5:27 pm, Feb 22, 2024*

**SUBJECT:** Notice of Preparation of Draft Environmental Impact Report for Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project, Heber 2 Parasitic Solar Project, and Heber Field Company Geothermal Wells and Pipeline Project

Dear Mr. Minnick:

The Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (Air District) appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on Notice of Preparation of Draft Environmental Impact Report for Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project, Heber 2 Parasitic Solar Project, and Heber Field Company Geothermal Wells and Pipeline Project (Project). The project proposes the development of an Integrated Two Level Unit (ITLU) Air Cooled Ormat Energy Converter (OEC), two 20,000-gallon isopentane tanks, a 7 MW parasitic solar facility, underground distribution line, and substation under CUP 23-0020. The development of a 15 MW solar energy facility that will provide a parasitic load to the existing Heber 2 plant under CUP 23-0021. Finally, the development of up to six geothermal production wells, one geothermal injection well, and approximately 4,500 linear feet of new pipeline under CUP 23-0022. The project spans across portions of three parcels: Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN) 054-250-031, 059-020-001, and 054-250-017. APN 054-250-31 is within the existing Heber 2 Geothermal Energy Complex (HGEC) located at 855 Dogwood Road, Heber, CA, and APN 059-020-001 and APN 054-250-017 are immediately southeast and east, respectively, of the HGEC.

As you know, the Air District's established programs help to keep the quality of air in Imperial County from declining. The programs, Rules and Regulations of the Air District in conjunction with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the most current CEQA Air Quality Handbook for Imperial County (Handbook), and the Air District's State Implementation Plans (SIPs) for Ozone, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> work together to ensure that air quality improves or does not degrade. Currently, the non-attainment status of marginal for the 2015 ozone standard, moderate for PM<sub>2.5</sub> and the maintenance requirements for PM<sub>10</sub> are the driving criteria in establishing the thresholds for NO<sub>x</sub>, ROG, PM<sub>10</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub> and CO found in the Handbook. These thresholds and their significance are explained under Section 6 of the handbook and The Air District strongly recommends referencing

the Handbook during the generation of the EIR as the Handbook has helpful information regarding the development of an adequate air quality analysis and emission thresholds. The Air District also strongly recommends the applicant and/or their consultant(s) contact the Air District directly to coordinate with our office for the development of the EIR as the Air District will look closely at the potential impacts, both direct and indirect, as a result of the proposed project.

When exploring the impacts of renewable projects, it is a common misconception that these types of projects are not a significant source of air pollution. While it is true that renewable projects that do not employ fuel based combustion units as supplemental power are typically cleaner projects during their operational phases, in most cases construction and cumulative impacts have the potential to cause adverse air quality impacts. Specifically for solar field projects, PM<sub>10</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions are the primary pollutants of concern during the construction and operational phases of these types of renewable projects. Historical experience has demonstrated that shortened construction periods not previously analyzed during the CEQA process create a potential for elevated levels of NO<sub>x</sub> emissions, as well as elevated levels of PM<sub>10</sub> during earthmoving activities.

In order to identify NO<sub>x</sub> emissions created during the construction phase of the renewable project, a Construction Equipment List detailing the equipment type, make, model, year, horsepower, hours of daily operation, date arrived onsite, and date removed from site should be provided to the Air District in Excel format.<sup>1</sup> This is to ensure NO<sub>x</sub> emissions during the construction period remain under the CEQA thresholds of significance.

With regards to cumulative impacts, which occur during the operational phase of renewable projects, PM<sub>10</sub> is of main concern and an Operational Dust Control Plan (ODCP) may be required based on the permitting determination of the project. The ODCP details how dust emissions will be controlled and maintained during the operational phase of the project.<sup>2</sup> An initial site visit is required to confirm the elements of any draft ODCP before it can be finalized and then continual site visits will typically occur on a yearly basis. Please note that an ODCP is intended to provide pertinent information specific to the operation and for the reduction of fugitive dust emissions created by the ongoing operations at the facility.

Upon review of office records the Air district found that the existing facility identified as Heber 2, as currently constructed and operating, operates under Air District Permit to Operate #2217. However, given the proposed developments of the project, the applicant will need to submit an amended application for engineering review of the facility. The Air District must be notified of any proposed changes to operations, procedure, and/or equipment that could affect the emissions of a facility. The Air District requests the applicant submit a permit application for engineering review of the project, pay the applicable review fees, and coordinate with the Air District Engineering and Permitting Division directly to discuss the permitting requirements of the project.

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<sup>1</sup> The Equipment List submittal will require a written commitment by the applicant to a submittal schedule agreed upon between the applicant and the Air District

<sup>2</sup> The ODCP needs to be approved prior to the issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy.

The following is a synopsis of the information pertinent to the development of a Comprehensive Air Quality analysis. A thorough analysis should include a description, impacts and health consequences of all air quality and associated emissions. The analysis must be conducted using the Air Districts approved modeling factors.<sup>3</sup> The analysis should include short- and long-term emissions as well as daily and yearly emission calculations. Project alternatives should be included along with a thorough emissions analysis per alternative. A description of the Air District attainment status, State and Federal, is required as is describing any regulatory restrictions to the project.

A health risk assessment should be conducted for projects locating near already existing facilities with a potential to emit toxics in accordance with Section 4.6 of the Handbook which states "Development projects which locate in close proximity to already existing industrial type operations which have the potential to emit toxic or hazardous air pollutants . . . Such projects may be required to prepare a health risk assessment to determine the potential level of risk associated with the operation. The ICAPCD should be consulted on any project with the potential to emit toxic or hazardous air pollutants." Typically, these health risk assessments are of a quantitative nature but can be a mixed qualitative and quantitative analysis. In any case, the relative human exposure, location of the project, distance to sensitive receptors all should be considered when developing the risk assessment. Projects anticipating heavy volumes of traffic should conduct hot spot modeling.<sup>4</sup> Hot spot modeling will help determine compliance with the state CO standard at intersections and roadway links as determined by traffic impact analysis.

Existing and proposed projects must have a cumulative impact analysis. For each sub-analysis and risk assessment mitigation measures should be identified, quantified for effectiveness, and incorporated into the environmental document (i.e. Environmental Impact Report EIR or Environmental Impact Statement EIS). All mitigation measures must follow District Rules and Regulations including the most current Handbook. Consultation with the most recent Clean Air Plans (SIPs), District Rules and Regulations and other Air District approved programs is strongly recommended to achieve effective applicability of standards. When it becomes apparent that on-site mitigation is insufficient to reduce the impacts to insignificance then off-site mitigation should be discussed and appropriately applied.

Finally, in accordance with Assembly Bill 32 known as the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 and the most recent amendments to the CEQA Guidelines effective December 2018, a discussion of the impacts from Green House Gas (GHG) emissions and its relation to Climate Change is required, however, given the court's Golden Door ruling (*Golden Door Properties, LLC v. County of San Diego*, 2020) coordination with the Air District is recommended to adequately address GHG analysis. Given the Air District has not currently developed its own GHG thresholds, using a threshold from an area similar in size, topography, climate, and population is preferred by the Air District. The Air District also recommends using the Handbook for Analyzing Greenhouse Gas

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<sup>3</sup>The most current modeling tool recently adopted is CalEEMod.

<sup>4</sup> Using APCD approved hot spot modeling such as CALINE4, developed by and available through the California Department of Transportation.

Emission Reductions, Assessing Climate Vulnerabilities, and Advancing Health and Equity (GHG Handbook) which was developed by the California Air Pollution Control Officer's Association (CAPCOA) to assist in creating an adequate GHG analysis.

Finally, the Air District requests a copy of each draft CUP prior to recording for review.

All Air District rules and regulations can be found for review on our website at <https://apcd.imperialcounty.org/rules-and-regulations/>, the Handbook can be accessed at <https://apcd.imperialcounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/CEQAHandbk.pdf>, and the GHG Handbook can be found at <https://www.caleemod.com/handbook/index.html>. Please contact our office at (442) 265-1800 to set up discussions for the project or if you have any further questions or concerns. The Air District looks forward to coordinating to help ensure consistency and enforceability of the project.

Respectfully,



Ismael Garcia  
Environmental Coordinator



Monica N. Soucier  
APC Division Manager

**Environmental Evaluation Committee**

**February 8, 2024**

**Regarding Project Description:**

**Ormat Technologies, Inc.**

**CUP #23-0021 & CUP #23-0022/Initial Study #23-0026**

**Submitted By:**

**Walter and Toni Holtz**

Pipeline

Divider





County of Imperial  
 Planning & Development Services  
 801 Main Street  
 El Centro, CA 92243  
 (442) 265-1736  
 Email: [buildinginfo@co.imperial.ca.us](mailto:buildinginfo@co.imperial.ca.us)  
 Website: [www.icpds.com](http://www.icpds.com)

07-10-2023

## NOTICE TO COMPLY (REPAIR)

PROPERTY OWNER: Walter J & Toni F Holtz

PIPELINE OWNER: Ormat Nevada – Heber

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER: APN 054-250-023-000

SITUS ADDRESS: East Off of Clark Road near Date Canal North of Willoughby Road and Central Main Canal (319 AC Tract 40) - Heber, CA

The Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department received a complaint reporting that the pipeline foundations for Ormat (Heber Facility) at the above location are deteriorating, cracking and crumbling.

On June 15, 2023, our office conducted a site inspection and has confirmed that the majority of the foundations supporting the pipeline for the Heber Geothermal Plant are indeed deteriorating, cracking and crumbling. The pipeline is in danger of buckling. The pipeline and foundation have become unsafe and creates a health and safety hazard requiring your immediate attention.

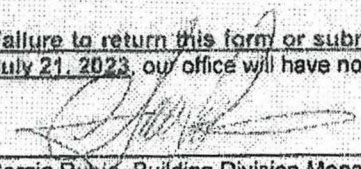
*2022 California Building Code Section 118.1 Unsafe Structures and Equipment states "...unsafe conditions...structures or existing equipment that are or hereafter become unsafe, insanitary, or deficient...constitutes a fire hazard or are otherwise dangerous to human life or the public welfare...or that involve inadequate maintenance, shall be deemed an unsafe condition. Unsafe structures shall be taken down or removed or made safe, as the building official deems necessary..."*

Our office has received response communications by email and telephone with the Heber Project Manager letting us know that they are aware of the issue and are working on resolving the matter.

To date our office has not received the required permit application submittal along with the engineered plans to address this public health and safety hazard.

*2022 California Building Code Section 116.5 Restoration or Abatement states "...where the structure or equipment determined to be unsafe by the building official is restored to a safe condition, the owner, the owner's authorized agent, operator or occupant of the structure, premises or equipment deemed unsafe by the building official shall abate or cause to be abated or corrected such unsafe conditions either by repair, rehabilitation, demolition or other approved corrective action..."*

Failure to return this form or submit the required permit application (with engineering) to our office on or by 5:00p.m. on July 21, 2023, our office will have no choice but to issue an official violation notice against the property

  
 Sergio Rubio, Building Division Manager  
 IC Planning & Development Services Dept

7/10/2023  
 Date

Notice Cleared 1/29/24 per Linda Hunt

**CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN BY LICENSEE:** Please describe what action you have taken to resolve or correct the cited violation(s) above. Use a separate sheet of paper if necessary.

(print name)

(signature)

(date)

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, oriented vertically.

RECORDING REQUESTED BY

AND  
Please return to:

**CHUCK STOREY**  
COUNTY CLERK/RECORDER

PLANNING IMPERIAL COUNTY - PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SER

Imperial County Planning & Dev. Services Dept.  
801 Main Street  
El Centro, California 92243

Doc#: **2021028887**

Titles: 1 Pages: 26



Fees 165.00  
Taxes 0.00  
Other 0.00  
PAID 165.00

**NOT RECORDED**

**AGREEMENT FOR  
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT #19-0017  
ORMAT NEVADA, INC.  
PLANNING COMMISSION: JUNE 9, 2021**

This Agreement is made and entered into on this 9th day of November 2021, by and between Second Imperial Geothermal Company, hereinafter referred to as Permittee, and the COUNTY OF IMPERIAL, a political subdivision of the State of California, (hereinafter referred to as "COUNTY").

**RECITALS**

**WHEREAS**, Permittee is the owner, lessee or successor-in-interest in certain land in Imperial County located south of State Highway 86, west of Dogwood Road, north of Willoughby Road and southeast of the townsite of Heber, California, described as a portion of the East half of Tract 44, APN 054-250-31-01, 39.99 acres, Township 16 South Range 14 East, SBB&M; and,

**WHEREAS**, Permittee has applied to the County of Imperial for a Conditional Use Permit #19-0017 ("Project") for the above project, which supersedes the previously approved CUP #06-0028.

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:**

The "GENERAL CONDITIONS" are shown in the letter "G". These conditions are conditions that are either routinely and commonly included in all Conditional Use Permits as "standardized conditions" and are conditions that the Imperial County Planning Commission has established as a requirement on all CUP's for consistent application and enforcement. The Permittee is hereby advised that the General Conditions are as applicable as the SITE SPECIFIC conditions.

**G-1 GENERAL LAW:**

The Permittee shall comply with all local, state and/or federal laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, and/or standards as they may pertain to the Project whether specified herein or not.

**MINUTES OF THE  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
JUNE 9, 2021**

The Imperial County Planning Commission convened a Meeting on Wednesday, June 9, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. in the Board of Supervisors Chambers, El Centro, California.

**Staff present:** Director, Jim Minnick/Assistant Director, Michael Abraham/Planner IV, Patricia Valenzuela on behalf of David Black/Planner III, Diana Robinson/Planner II, Mariela Moran/Clerks-Kimberly Noriega and Maria Scoville.

Chairman Rudy Schaffner called meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

- I. Roll Call: Commissioners present:** Schaffner, Bergh, Cabanas and Pacheco in attendance.

**Zoom Call:** Kalin, Wright, Medina, Castillo and Roben.

**Absent:** N/A

- II. Pledge of Allegiance:**

- III. Approval of Minutes:** Chairman Schaffner entertained a motion to approve the Planning Commission Minutes for the **May 12, 2021** meeting as submitted by staff. Motion was made by Commissioner Kalin seconded by Commissioner Cabañas and carried on the affirmative vote by the Commissioners present Schaffner (yes), Kalin (yes), Bergh (yes), Cabanas (yes), Wright (yes), Medina (yes) and Pacheco (yes).

Commissioner Castillo and Roben were not present for the approval of the minutes; they joined the meeting after.

Chairman Schaffner made a change of the order of the Agenda; he started with item #6 due to a conflict of interest with Commissioner Cabanas

- 6. Consideration of Conditional Use Permit #19-0017, for a Planning Commission determination as submitted by Second Imperial Geothermal Company, proposing a fifteen (15) year renewal for the operation of the existing Second Imperial Geothermal facilities. The proposed Conditional Use Permit #19-0017 will allow for upgrades including the installation of two new water-cooled ORMAT Energy Converters (OECs) to replace six old units from 1992; 3 10,000-gallon isopenteny storage tanks; and, additional pipes to connect the proposed facilities. All proposed upgrades will be develop within the existing Heber 2 facility and fence line. CUP #19-0017 also proposes to renew the permitted life of the Second Imperial Geothermal facilities including the (Heber 2, Heber South, Goulds 2 plant facilities) for 15 years. Additionally, the Planning Commission will make a determination for a proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and approval of the Findings of Fact that the project is categorically exempt from CEQA under Government Section Code 15301, 15302 & 15061 and no further environmental documentation is necessary. This project is located at 855 Dogwood Road, south the town-site of Heber, California. The parcels are describe as Tract 44, Township 16 South, Range 14 East, SBB&M and identified as APN 054-250-031-000, on an approx. total of 40 acres. (Supervisory District # 2). The Commission took the following action,**

Jim Minnick, Director, gave a brief description of the project, and introduced Patricia Valenzuela, Planner IV, to read the project into the record.

Patricia Valenzuela, Planner IV, on behalf of David Black read the PowerPoint presentation of the project into the record and stated that the applicant ORMAT and our County Counsel were in attendance for questions from the Commission.

**Chairman Schaffner** asked if there was a representative(s) for this project to state their name and address for the record.

**Larry Grogan** introduced himself on stated he was representing Walter and Tony Holtz currently a royalty and landowner within the geothermal district. Mr. Grogan stated that they had three things they wanted to bring up before the Commission. #1. Complete an inventory of the support pillars on the Holtz land. #2. Notify the Holtz of work planned on their property 48-hours in advance of work activities on their land. #3 Replacement of approximately 100' of 12" diameter 1" wall steel irrigation pipe. The problem is when you start to patch a drains if there is any type of materials stuck in the pipeline being repaired you get a buildup of material and it is very possible it could end up creating problems for the actual drainage itself. The only thing they are asking is for the Planning Commission, that you attach a condition that they would report their findings and pipeline reports. Mr. Grogan also stated that he would take any questions the Commission may have.

**Chairman Schaffner** asked Mr. Minnick if that is doable. Mr. Minnick stated yes if both parties agree. The Chairman asked for a geothermal representative to confirm all that the Holtz are request. Troy Owens of ORMAT stated that they agree with those conditions.

**Chairman Schaffner**, opened/closed the public portion of the meeting, there were no public comment he then turned it over to the Commission for any questions and/or comments. He then entertained a motion.

**Commissioner Bergh** asked ORMAT, what you think is causing the damage on the piers. Is it the vibration? Mr. Owens stated that he was correct and it is a seismic area were they are and is something that they always maintain moving forward with inspections and repairs needed. Mr. Bergh stated that some of those look somewhat old. Mr. Owens stated that he does not know which pillars he was looking at or their age, they are currently working on doing their inspection on all of those pillars.

- A. Motion made by Commissioner Kalin with the added conditions discussed by Mr. Grogan and seconded by Commissioner Bergh, on the affirmative vote by the Commissioners present as follow; Schaffner (yes), Kalin (yes), Bergh (yes), Castillo (yes), Wright (yes), Medina (yes), and Pacheco (yes). To approve of the Findings of Fact that project is categorically exempt from CEQA under Government Code Section 15301, 15302, & 15061 and that no further environmental documentation is necessary. Adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration with the "Mitigations, Monitoring and Reporting Program" based on the Initial Study and any comments received showing no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment. Make the De Minimus Findings, as recommended at the November 19, 2020 EEC hearing, that the project will not individually or cumulatively have an adverse effect on Fish and Wildlife Resources, as defined in Section 711.2 of the Fish and Game Codes. In addition, adopt the Findings and Resolution(s), approving Conditional Use Permit #19-0017, subject to all the conditions of approval, and authorize the Planning & Development Services Department Director to execute the CUP Agreement.

**Jim Minnick**, Director stated that this project stands approved and adopted by the Planning Commission. If any interested party or member of the public wishing to appeal this decision to the Board of Supervisors, may do so within 10 days from today's hearing and submit the appropriate fee of \$650.00 to the Planning & Development Services Department.

1. Consideration of Time Extension #21-0014 for TR#00941 as submitted by Kilmainham Holdings, LLC requesting the sixth and final time extension of Tract Map #00941, for one (1) additional year. The Board of Supervisors approved Tract Map #00941, subject to conditions, on January 19, 1999. This time extension request is being made pursuant to the Subdivision Map Act and the property owner's intent of developing the land in the near future. This sixth and final extension would cover from June 15, 2021 to June 15, 2022. On properties legally described as a Portion of Section 11, 12 and Tract 148, Township 17 South, Range 15 East, SBB&M, in an unincorporated area of the County of Imperial, State of California. Assessor's Parcel Number (s) 059-210-035 (et al.) (1851 Carr Road, Calexico, CA), (Supervisory District #2). The Commission took the following actions:

**Jim Minnick**, Director, gave a brief description of the project, and introduced Diana Robinson, Planner III, to read the project into the record.

(See pg 9)











Weeds  
Dividen



Office of the Agricultural Commissioner  
Sealer of Weights and Measures  
852 Broadway, El Centro CA 92243

Jolene Dessert  
Commissioner / Sealer

Rachel Garewal  
Asst. Commissioner / Sealer

January 23, 2024

Luis Valenzuela, Planner II  
Planning & Development Services Department  
County of Imperial  
801 Main Street  
El Centro, CA 92243

Re: orHeber 3 LLC, Second Imperial Geothermal Company LLC, Heber Field Company LLC CUP23-0020/021/022

Dear Mr. Valenzuela:

Our department received and reviewed the documents pertaining to CUP #23-0020/21/22 as submitted by orHeber 3 LLC, Second Imperial Geothermal Company LLC, Heber Field Company LLC. The applicant is proposing a geothermal plant and solar energy facility; 7MW parasitic solar facility, underground distribution line and project substation for CUP23-0020. The applicant also proposes to develop a 15-MW solar energy facility that will provide a parasitic load to the existing Heber 2 geothermal power plant (project) for CUP23-0021. Finally, for CUP 23-0022 the applicant proposes to develop up to six geothermal production wells, one geothermal injection well, and approximately 4,500 linear feet of new pipeline (project) that will support the proposed Dogwood OEC. The project is located at 855 Dogwood Rd. Heber, CA 92249.

Any plans to mitigate farmland taken out of production through the use of easements must ensure that the mitigating farm ground is in farmable condition. If the mitigation plan involves a Parceling Project, any parcels to remain in farming must align with existing infrastructure such as canals, delivery ditches, and surface & subsurface drainage systems. Mitigating farmland must be maintained in farmable condition, including repairs as needed to the infrastructure.

This project will require an ongoing Pest Management Plan to mitigate negative impacts to surrounding farmland from pests such as insects, vertebrates, weeds, and plant pathogens. The plan must be submitted to our office for approval prior to the issuance of a grading or building permit, whichever occurs first. Attached are the requirements that your company will need to meet.

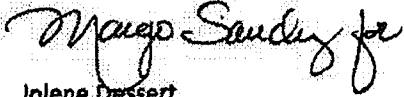
APN 059-020-001 is currently designated as Farmland of Statewide Importance, as per the California Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMPP). Projects constructed on farm ground will also require a reclamation plan that would return the land to its pre-constructed agricultural condition at the conclusion or abandonment of the project. The reclamation plan needs to include a written description of the crop history of each field, water delivery system, drainage system, physical infrastructure, the parties responsible for conducting reclamation, and a detailed description of the recycling, and/or disposal of all solar arrays, inverters, transformers and other structures on each of the sites. The plan must be submitted to our office for approval prior to the issuance of a grading permit.

Office of the Agricultural Commissioner  
Sealer of Weights and Measures  
852 Broadway, El Centro CA 92243

Page 2 of 2

If you or the applicant has any questions, please contact me at 442-265-1500.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margo Sandberg" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jolene Dessert  
Agricultural Commissioner





HEBER FIELD COMPANY  
GEOTHERMAL WELL  
THOMPSON NO. 2  
SECT. 3 T17S R14E  
EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER  
(760) 353-8200 EXT.40420

Verizon

1:25 PM

75%

Calexico

August 14, 2021 9:11 AM

Edit

HDR







May 31, 2005

Mr. Greg Griffith, Plant Manager  
Ormat Heber Field Company  
947 Dogwood Road  
Heber, CA 92249

(Via Facsimile)

RE: NOTICE OF DEFAULT

Dear Greg:

This letter serves as your official notice of default to Article 13 of that certain Geothermal Lease dated February 15, 1977 for Tract 244 which states "Lessee will keep Occupied Land in a clean weed-free condition at all times. If Lessor so desires, he may do the work required and bill Lessee for his actual costs."

Additionally, this letter serves as official notice of default to Article 13 of that certain Pipeline Easement dated September 1, 1984 which states in part "Grantee shall keep and maintain the Permanent Easement free and clear of all weeds, brush and debris, and shall mow, clean and clear the same as may be necessary to keep the same neat in appearance and free of such weeds, brush and debris and shall chemically treat or remove the same as may be necessary to conform to the requirements hereof. Grantee shall coordinate with Grantor as to the type and application thereof of all chemicals to be used on the Permanent Easement". It further states in Article 13 "If Grantee defaults in the performance of any of the above requirements, Grantor shall have the right to give notice to Grantee specifying the nature such default. If Grantee fails to correct such default within a reasonable time thereafter (reasonable time shall depend upon the nature of the default and in any event shall not exceed seven days), Grantor may correct the same and Grantee shall pay for the costs thereof."

As you know, we have discussed the problem with the weeds around the pipelines on several occasions over the last few months, both in person and in writing. You assured us it would be taken care of right away and to date nothing has happened except the problem has become significantly worse. We have been left with no choice but to take official action, thus this letter which serves as Heber Field Company's Official Notice of Default to both the Geothermal Lease for Tract 244 and the Pipeline Easement.

We explained to you several months ago we were contemplating leasing the ranches out this summer and one area of concern was the weed problem around the pipelines. We indicated to potential tenants this would be taken care of based on our conversation with you. The weed problem has the potential of damaging us monetarily by reducing the optimum rental amount as well as by already damaging our credibility. Losses could exceed \$25,000 over the next three years because of this problem.

Mr. Greg Griffith, Plant Manager  
May 31, 2005  
Page Two

This problem must be dealt with immediately. We expect a plan of action to be presented in writing by the end of the week which will detail how Heber Field Company will cure the default.

Both the Lease and the Pipeline Easement give us the option of cleaning up the weeds. This has been discussed and to date you have indicated that you were going to take care of it, but nothing has happened. Unfortunately, now the problem has become a much greater task and will require significantly more time and effort.

If it is left up to us as Lessor to clean up the weed problem, which is within our rights under the Lease we would expect payment no later than seven (7) days after presenting an invoice for payment.

It is unfortunate we had to take such an extreme and official position to get action on this problem; however, we were left with no other choice. Thank you in advance for your immediate attention to this. We look forward to hearing from you with a solution no later than the end of this week.

Sincerely,

Walter and Toni Holtz  
102 Ralph Road  
Imperial, CA 92251  
(760)355-2872

W - Final result  
Ormat  
started weed spraying  
project then quit

cc: Heber Field Company  
980 Greg Street  
Sparks, NV 89431  
Attn: Director of Asset Management

cc: Larry Ebner, Morrison and Foerster, LLP

Skills

Product

SECOND SUPPERAL  
GEO THERMAL COMPAN  
GEO THERMAL WELLS  
HGU-225 (P-5)  
SECTION 32, 1168 814  
EMERGENCY PHONE NUM  
(750) 353-4200 EXT. 400

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY. IT IS NOT TO BE USED AS A BASIS FOR ANY DECISIONS. THE INFORMATION IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE.

NO POSTING SHALL BE MADE AT THIS WELL.





## SECTION 3 Operation and Maintenance Plan

The Dogwood Project is located within APN 054-250-31; APN 059-020-001; and APN 054-250-017, near the existing geothermal energy complex located at 855 Dogwood Road, Heber, California. The following non-structural water quality best management practices (BMPs) are proposed for the Project:

- Good Housekeeping
- Preventative Maintenance
- Spill Response
- Material Handling and Storage
- Employee Training
- Waste Handling/Recycling
- Record Keeping and Internal Reporting
- Erosion Control and Site Stabilization

(See next pages 8+9)

### 3.1 MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY

The Heber Field Company (subsidiary of ORMAT) is the property owner and is responsible for BMP maintenance. Since HFC/ORMAT is the owner, no access agreement or easement is necessary to maintain the BMPs. HFC/ORMAT funds will be used to support Operation and Maintenance (O&M) activities to maintain BMP functionality. HFC/ORMAT maintenance staff are expected to perform the maintenance.

### 3.2 MAINTENANCE ACTIONS AND FREQUENCY

Maintenance actions are generally grouped into two categories: routine and intermittent.

#### Routine Maintenance

Routine inspections of the Project facilities and grounds will be performed annually. During these inspections staff evaluate if there is significant accumulation of trash, debris, or sediment that would need to be removed. Cleaning is done as needed based on the results of the inspections. The inspection frequency may be adjusted based on experience at the site (e.g., if inspections rarely find any material that needs to be cleaned out, then the inspection frequency can be reduced).

#### Intermittent Maintenance

Intermittent maintenance activities include more substantial maintenance that is not required as frequently as routine maintenance. The most likely form of intermediate maintenance is removal of sediment from existing drainage infrastructure and detention basins where necessary to maintain the capacity of the basins. Given that the Project Site is pervious and will not be graded or significantly altered and that rain is infrequent in Heber, this type of maintenance is expected to be required approximately once every year.

### 2.1.1 Good Housekeeping

As a component of this program, good housekeeping practices are performed so that facility is kept in a clean and orderly condition. Proper housekeeping practices include:

- Periodic cleanup of equipment, as needed, based upon facility inspections,
- Sweeping impervious surfaces, as needed, based upon facility inspections,
- Proper waste disposal practices and covering of waste storage areas at all times,
- Proper storage and covering of materials at all times,
- Removal of any oil-stained soil/gravel, especially around equipment locations and loading areas,
- Cleaning of significant oil and grease stains on surfaces that drain to the stormwater drainage areas, and
- Cleaning the exterior of oil containers on hydraulic machinery upon discovery of an accumulation of hydraulic fluid.

### 2.1.2 Preventative Maintenance

As a component of this program, operations and maintenance staff perform preventative maintenance of stormwater management devices to assure their proper operation. Preventative maintenance of stormwater management devices includes the following:

- Cleaning of accumulated sediment, potential contaminants, and debris from the Site;
- Inspection of secondary containment structures as part of the regular daily visual inspections;
- Maintenance and inspection of secondary containment structures, as needed, based upon inspections;
- Daily inspection and maintenance of equipment and associated piping and valves as required by preventive maintenance procedures;
- Inspection and maintenance of rainfall protection coverings for waste storage bins and receptacles on a periodic basis; and
- A comprehensive preventive maintenance schedule is performed on all facility operations equipment as part of routine procedures.

### 2.1.3 Spill Response

Spill prevention and response is performed according to the facility's SPCC Plan. Copies of this plan are located in the on-site ORMAT office.

A limited amount of spill cleanup equipment is stored onsite. This equipment is found within hazardous material storage areas. Detailed information concerning spill cleanup equipment and resources is included in the SPCC Plan.

The volume of containment areas surrounding each potential source is designed to hold the contents of a spill from the largest vessel / container. The SPCC Plan summarizes the capacity of potential sources and volume of the respective secondary containment areas.



#### *2.1.4 Material Handling and Storage*

The primary hazardous material to be stored on-site is isopentane. The additional isopentane will be stored in the appropriately designed (2x) 20,000 gallon above ground storage tanks, as well as the existing (2x) 10,000 gallon tanks for Heber 2 OEC. The isopentane is used as a motive fluid for geothermal energy generation and is not directly discharged, rather is released as an air emission. Therefore, the isopentane would not be directly exposed to stormwater. All other hazardous waste would be stored in 55-gallon drums and other Department of Transportation (DOT) approved packaging within a contained area located on the Site. Stormwater that accumulates within the hazardous material and hazardous waste containment area is collected via vacuum truck and disposed of off-site or recycled back into the production system. A bill of lading, non-hazardous waste manifest or uniform hazardous waste manifest is used to document all such shipments.

#### *2.1.5 Employee Training*

A combined annual Storm Water Compliance / SPCC Plan training program is conducted for the Pollution Prevention Team members and operations personnel. Participants undergo stormwater management training for all areas and operations at this facility, as well as reviewing the spill response, control and countermeasure procedures. Other stormwater training is done on an as-needed basis.

#### *2.1.6 Waste Handling/Recycling*

At times, product or oily waste streams are transferred from the facility in 55-gallon drums. A bill of lading, non-hazardous waste manifest or uniform hazardous waste manifest is used to document all such shipments. Operations or contractor personnel closely monitor loading of transport vehicles. Collection and satellite accumulation containers for hazardous and non-hazardous waste are kept covered to prevent contact with stormwater. Appropriate spill control equipment and supplies are kept readily available in case of a spill.

#### *2.1.7 Record Keeping and Internal Reporting*

All inspection, sampling, maintenance, corrective action records, and any other information that is a part of this plan are maintained at the facility office. All records are maintained for a period of at least three (3) years.

#### *2.1.8 Erosion Control and Site Stabilization*

Permanent BMPs used at the existing HGEC facility to prevent soil erosion include routing runoff along earthen swales or drainage areas, and preventing run-off with berms along certain sections of the property line. Temporary BMPs used at the Site to prevent soil erosion include the use of sandbags, crushed rock, and silt fence. These BMPs are used as and where needed, especially in areas that are undeveloped or in the process of being developed.

Geothermal Royalty Owners Group  
a Rossi  
96, Aptos, CA 95001

SAN JOSE CA 950

3 APR 2024 PM 4 L

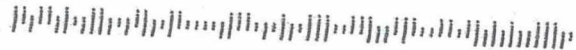


**RECEIVED**  
APR 10 2024

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

HDR Engineering, Inc.  
591 Camino de la Reina, Suite 300  
San Diego, CA 92108-3104

92108-310575



# Heber Geothermal Royalty Owners Group

P.O. Box 96, Aptos, CA 95001

(831) 320-8131

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April 2, 2024

Jim Minnick  
County of Imperial  
Planning & Development Services Department  
801 Main Street  
El Centro, CA 92243

Subject: Conditional Use Permit Application for Dogwood Geothermal Energy Project  
CUP 23-0020, CUP 23-0021, CUP 23-0022

Dear Mr. Minnick:

I represent Heber Geothermal Royalty Owners Group (HGROG) consisting of a group of approximately 57% of the landowners under various Geothermal Leases and Unit Agreements initially dating back to February 15, 1977 and subsequently amended via various operators and now operated and binding to Ormat for the Heber Geothermal Complex. This letter is in follow-up to the recent Environmental Evaluation Committee meeting held on February 8, 2024.

At the meeting, Larry Grogan, geothermal consultant for several Imperial County landowners and HGROG members, brought forth several areas of concern to the landowners and farmers of the agricultural lands surrounding this proposed project and existing CUP's in effect as follows:

1. Pipeline Maintenance
  - a. Cracked and crumbling stanchions not maintained by Ormat and when reported as a potential safety hazard, ignored by Ormat forcing landowners to seek county assistance and red tag procedures in July 2023. The issue was finally repaired on January 29, 2024, a little more than a week before the EEC Hearing on February 8, 2024. Refer to Exhibit 1.
2. Weed Control and Abatement
  - a. Uncontrolled noxious weeds growing around wells, pipelines and landowner easements including Ormat owned facilities that spread to surrounding agricultural lands and spread seed, harbor potential viruses and other pathogens such as mildew. Refer to Exhibit 2.
  - b. Per existing Conditional Use Permits, Ormat is required to maintain weeds around wells, pipelines and easements. Ormat fails without consequence from

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#### Committee Members

Steve Holtz, Toni & Walter Holtz, Alex Abatti, Jr., William Plourd, Mary Jackson, James Hawk, Carol Saikhon, Nancy Saikhon-Borelli, Tim Labrucherie, Suzanne Labrucherie Enis, Larry Smith, Larry Osburn, Russ Love

county officials. Weed abatement is also addressed in landowners leases, existing pipeline and wellsite agreements.

- c. Landowners have been requesting Ormat maintain surface structures in a clean and weed free condition for as long as Ormat has been operating the Heber Geothermal facilities dating back to 2004 without response or action and remains in breach of landowner agreements.
  - i. Section 17 of Lease - "Lessee will keep Occupied land in a clean and weed-free condition at all times..."

3. Standing water in well sources and leaks from poorly maintained pipelines. Refer to Exhibit 3
  - a. Potential harm to farmlands.
  - b. Potential for mosquito infestation.
  - c. Potential discharge of brine into public Imperial Irrigation District drains.

We want to state clearly, we are not opposed to this project, however based on many years of failed attempts in dealing with Ormat, on clearly stated conditions in existing Conditional Use Permits, we are requesting the county assist it's landowners with the following additional requirements as a condition of approval of this new project to ensure Ormat is a good steward to our lands:

1. Require routine and documented inspection of pipelines, wells and surface equipment on landowners property for structural integrity for safety to farm operators, tenants and the surrounding agricultural lands.
2. Require Ormat to contract with a Botanist or allow the County Ag Department to inspect pipelines, pipeline easements, wells and any surface equipment monthly for weeds with suggested remediation efforts with time restrictions.
3. Environmental inspection to monitor mosquitoes in standing water.
4. Require Ormat to designate a contact that landowners can report surface issues to with the requirement to respond and report remediation plan within 7 days of notification.
  - a. Failure to respond will result in the landowner being allowed to take action to cure by the removal of the issue and recover cost from Ormat. Failure to cure or reimburse landowner shall result in Red Tag measures.
5. Require Ormat to develop and maintain an Inspection and Remediation Report covering requirements #1, #2, #3 and #4 above that will be submitted to the affected landowner and Heber Geothermal Royalty Owners Group on a quarterly basis. In addition, report related to #2 (Botanist/Ag Department) to be submitted to the Ag Commissioner's Office.
6. Develop a method for enforcement by county officials for Ormat's failure to comply with existing and new CUP's.

The members of HGROG are hopeful that you will consider our request and look forward to working collectively with you to ensure these applications are approved with some added protections for Imperial County landowners and farm operators. These requirements are not

unreasonable and should be considered good business practices for the general safety and well being of our county and the surrounding community in the vicinity of this project.

Warm Regards,

For Heber Geothermal Royalty Owners Group (HGROG)



Linda Scaroni Rossi  
Member and Treasurer

CC:

Luis Valenzuela, Planner II, County of Imperial, Planning Department

HDR Engineering, Inc.

Rudy Schaffner, Chairman, Imperial County Planning Commissioner, District 5  
Carson Kalin, Vice-Chairman, Imperial County Planning Commissioner, District 4  
Dennis Bergh, Supervisor, Imperial County Planning Commissioner, District 2  
Sergio Cabanas, Supervisor, Imperial County Planning Commissioner, District 2  
Scott Wright, Imperial County Planning Commissioner, District 3  
Ernesto Medina, Imperial County Planning Commissioner, District 1  
Katheryn Cynthia Dunn, Imperial County Planning Commissioner, District 4  
Russell Roben, Imperial County Planning Commissioner, District 3  
Lewis Pacheco, Imperial County Planning Commissioner, District 1  
Jesus E. Escobar, Imperial County Board of Supervisor, Division 1  
Luis A. Plancarte, Imperial County Board of Supervisor, Division 2  
Michael W. Kelley, Imperial County Board of Supervisor, Division 3  
Ryan E. Kelley, Imperial County Board of Supervisor, Division 4  
John Hawk, Imperial County Board of Supervisor, Division 5  
Larry Grogan, Consultant  
Heber Geothermal Royalty Owner Group Members

EXHIBIT 1

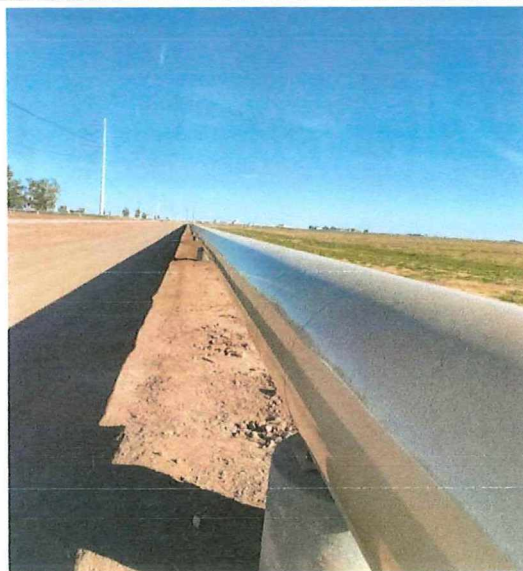


EXHIBIT 2

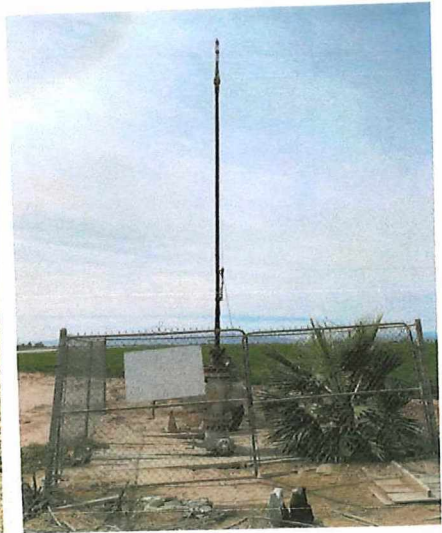
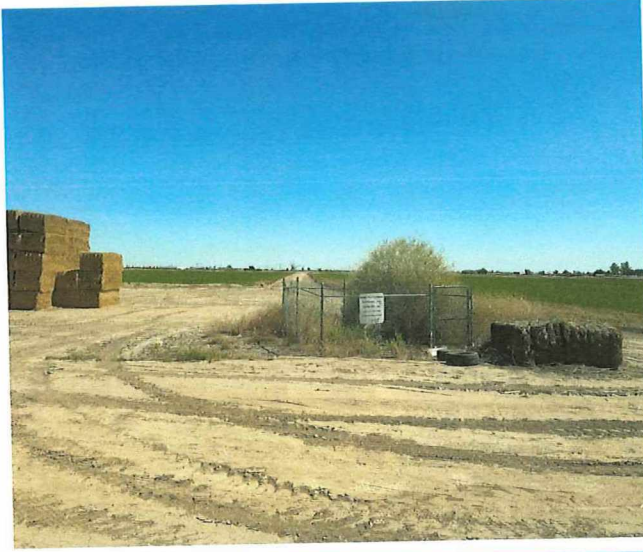


EXHIBIT 3

