



**NOTICE OF PREPARATION
HIGH VALLEY AND RANGELAND SOLAR PROJECTS**

DATE: JULY 6, 2021

TO: STATE CLEARINGHOUSE AND INTERESTED PARTIES

FROM: CITY OF LANCASTER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP) OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT REPORT (EIR) FOR THE HIGH VALLEY AND
RANGELAND SOLAR PROJECTS

Jocelyn Swain

The City of Lancaster is the lead agency in charge of environmental review for the High Valley and Rangeland Solar Projects, as proposed by the applicant. The City of Lancaster and Los Angeles County have agreed to do a joint, project level Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to cover all sites, with the City serving as the lead agency. The City is soliciting comments from reviewing agencies and the public regarding the scope and content of the environmental document. For reviewing agencies, the City requests comments with respect to your agency's statutory responsibility as related to the proposed projects in accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15082(b). Your agency may need to use the EIR when considering relevant permits or other approvals for the project. The City is also seeking the views of residents, property owners, and concerned citizens regarding issues that should be addressed in the EIR.

Comment Period: Comments may be sent anytime during the 30-day NOP comment period. The NOP review and comment period begins on July 6, 2021 and ends on August 5, 2021. All comments must be received during the comment period and no later than 6:00 PM on August 5, 2021. Please include the name of a contact for your agency, if applicable. All comments should be directed to:

City of Lancaster
Attention: Jocelyn Swain, Senior Planner
44933 Fern Avenue
Lancaster, California 93534

Comments may also be emailed to jswain@cityoflanasterca.org.

Specific questions regarding the High Valley projects should be directed to:

Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning
Attn: Soyeon Choi, Senior Planner
320 W. Temple Street, 13th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90012
schoi@planning.lacounty.gov

Scoping Meeting: Oral comments may be provided at the Scoping Meeting to be held on July 20, 2021 from 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM via zoom. The meeting link is:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84824331519?pwd=RjJDRFU2bDNXUGsyTTVoWDQ3Z3Y0Zz09>.

Project Location:

The proposed High Valley and Rangeland solar projects would be located in the northern portion of Los Angeles County within the Antelope Valley. The High Valley projects would be located within unincorporated Los Angeles County and consists of five Conditional Use Permits (CUP) on 505 acres. The Rangeland projects would be located within the City of Lancaster and consist of three CUPs on 215 acres. Please refer to Exhibit 1, Project Locations.

The High Valley sites are as follows:

Site 1: 314 acres west of 110th Street West and north Avenue I. Approximately 38 megawatts (MWs) would be developed on 260 of the 314 acres. (APNs 3265-018, -001, -002; 3265-019-030) (Case Number: RPPL 2020006535).

Site 2: 78 acres east of 105th Street West and on both sides of Avenue I. A total of 7 MW's would be developed on 49 of the 78 acres. (APNs 3265-022-044, -045, -010, -011, -013, -015, -012, -014; 3267-005-021, -022) (Case Number: RPPL2020006533).

Site 3: 63 acres at the northwest corner of 90th Street West and Avenue I. A total of 7 MWs would be developed on 49 of the 63 acres. (APN's 3219-021-008, -009, -010, and -011) (Case Number: RRPL 2020006530).

Site 4: 10 acres at 85th Street West and south of Avenue I. One MW would be developed on this site. (APN 3203-001-036, -038) (Case Number: RRPL2020006531).

Site 5: 40 acres at the northwest corner of Avenue I-12 and 85th Street West, south of Site 4. A total of 5 MWs would be developed on this site (APNs 3203-002-007, -008, -006 and -005) (Case Number: RRPL2020008343).

The Rangeland sites are as follows:

Site 1: 79 acres at the southwest corner of Avenue I and 100th Street West. Approximately 5 MWs would be developed on 32 acres of the site, as the remainder of the property is developed with the Antelope Valley Resource Conservation District's Native Plant Nursery. (APN 3267-005-902) (CUP 20-07).

Site 2: 98 acres at the southeast corner of 87th Street West and Avenue I, just east of the existing subdivision on the corner. Approximately 12 MWs would be developed on 85 of the 98 acres. (APN 3203-001-009, -041; 3203-002-009, -010) (CUP 20-08).

Site 3: 38 acres at the southwest corner of 80th Street West and Avenue I. Approximately 5 MWs would be developed on 34 of the 38 acres. (APN 3203-001-031) (CUP 20-09).

Project Description:

The project applicant, AES Clean Energy, LLC, proposes a total of 80 megawatts of solar and battery storage to be constructed on approximately 720 acres within the unincorporated area of Los Angeles County and the City of Lancaster. The High Valley project involve a total of 505 acres and would generate 58 MWs. These properties are zoned A-2, Heavy Agriculture. The Rangeland project involves a total of 215 acres and would generate 22 MWs. All properties within the City are zoned as Rural Residential (RR) 2.5.

The proposed projects involve the construction of utility-scale solar generating facilities (SGF) and operational battery energy storage systems (BESS) that would generate, charge, store, and discharge renewable solar electricity. The projects would employ photovoltaic (PV) modules that convert sunlight directly into electrical energy without the use of heat transfer fluid or cooling water. The facilities would include battery storage, switchgear, communication lines and one of three proposed generation-tie (gen-tie) line options. Each of the project sites would have gated entries, interior access roads and access around the perimeters, as well as perimeter landscaping. A minimum 10,000-gallon fire water storage tank would be proposed at each site. 8-foot high standard security fencing would be provided with wildlife pass through areas. Limited lighting would be installed for safety and security and brush clearance would be conducted pursuant to clearance regulations. The proposed facilities would operate year-round, producing electric power during the daytime hours and discharging stored electric power at night.

Solar electricity generated by the projects would preferably connect via a line-tap to the existing Southern California Edison (SCE) 230 kilovolt (kV) Antelope-Munden Transmission line located in the northeast corner of High Valley Site 1. This is the preferred alternative for interconnection. In addition to the line-tap, two routes are being considered to run the transmission line to either AES's Big Sky Original Substation or Big Sky North Substation. Both options would utilize public rights-of-way and a few privately owned parcels. Under both gen-tie options, the project would connect to the existing Southern California Edison transmission system via approximately 5 to 8 miles of underground 34 kV gen-tie lines originating at a direct current (DC) collection system located at the project sites. The estimated width of the disturbed area needed for the underground gen-tie corridor is 10 to 50 feet; however, it should be noted that a 10-foot wide corridor is being pursued via easements and a franchise agreement to ensure the least amount of impact.

The first gen-tie option, the Big Sky North Gen-Tie, would extend from 82nd Street West to 110th Street West, along Avenue I. The gen-tie line would then head north along 110th Street West and east along private easements. This option would also include a gen-tie line that runs north from the intersection of 90th Street West and Avenue I, turns west at Avenue H, north at 93rd Street West, and west at Avenue G-12, along a private easement. The gen-tie lines would connect to the Big Sky North Substation, northeast of the intersection of 100th Street West and Avenue G-8, within the City of Lancaster. Underground medium-voltage feeders from each project site would connect to the described underground gen-tie corridor.

The second option, the Big Sky Original Gen-Tie, would consist of several segments. The first segment would start at the intersection of 110th Street West and Avenue I, extend south for one mile, where it would head east at Avenue J for one mile, south at 100th Street West for 0.25 mile, and terminate at the Big Sky Substation. The second segment would follow the same corridor as the Big Sky North Gen-Tie along Avenue I, extending 2.75 miles from 82nd Street West to 110th Street West. The third segment would extend south for one mile from the intersection of 90th Street West and Avenue I, turn west along West Avenue J for one mile, south at 100th Street West for 0.25 mile, and terminate at the Big Sky Substation. Two smaller segments would connect to the portion of the gen-tie line along 90th Street West, one beginning at the intersection of 87th Street West and extending west for 0.25 mile, and the other starting at the intersection of Lancaster Boulevard and Avenue I-12, extending south for 0.25 mile, and continuing west along Avenue J for 0.35 mile. Underground medium-voltage feeders from each project side would connect to the described underground gen-tie corridor.

The major components of the proposed projects are as follows:

- North-south rows of PV panels, mounted on either fixed tilt or single axis tracking systems on steel support structures.
- An electrical collection system. PV modules would be electrically connected into strings and each string would be funneled by underground electrical conduit to combiner boxes located throughout the solar field power blocks. Cables from the combiner boxes would again be consolidated to feed the DC electricity into inverters which convert the DC to AC.
- Energy storage technology that uses telecommunication systems and real-time control software to charge and discharge the battery according to power delivery needs.
- A switch gear area for the transformer equipment, control building foundation, oil containment area, and a water tank.
- A data collection system to remotely monitor the facility operation and/or remotely control critical components.
- A line-tap to the existing SCE 230 kV Antelope-Munden transmission line or gen-tie lines installed underground to connect the project to either the Big Sky Original substation or the Big Sky North Substation.

Environmental Review:

It is anticipated that the EIR will address potentially significant impacts associated the following topical areas:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Biological Resources
- Cultural, Paleontological and Tribal Resources
- Energy

- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Drainage
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population, and Housing
- Public Services and Recreation
- Traffic and Transportation
- Utilities and Service Systems

Based on the proposed sites, the proposed projects would not result in significant impacts with respect to Agriculture and Forestry Resources; Mineral Resources; or Wildfires. Therefore, these topics will be address in the Effects Found Not To Be Significant Section of the EIR.

