

Luning Solar Energy Project Geotechnical Investigation

BLM Office:

LLNVC01000

Stillwater Field Office

Lease/Serial/Case File No.:

N-92243

Proposed Action Title/Type:

Geotechnical bore hole drilling and sampling associated with the Luning Solar Energy Project.

Location of Proposed Action:

Mount Diablo Meridian, T. 8 N., R. 34 E., sec. 15, S½SW¼; sec. 16, S½S½; sec. 21, N½N½; sec. 22, N½N½.

Center of project area is approximately: 118°11'18.776"W, 38°32'42.835"N

Description of Proposed Action:

The studies would include up to twenty-six (26) borings in the 584 acre solar facility boundary shown on Figure 2 of the Plan of Development dated July 14, 2015. Two (2) borings would be advanced within the approximate footprint area of the proposed substation to depths up to 50 feet below the ground surface (bgs). Twenty (20) borings would be advanced within the solar arrays to depths up to 15 feet bgs. Four (4) borings would be advanced along the proposed transmission line alignment to depths up to 50 feet bgs. The borings would be completed using a track-mounted limited access drill rig (track rig) that can drive across the open landscape causing minimal impacts in the form of crushing of vegetation and imprints in the soil from the rubber tracks. Pivoting of tracks would be limited to avoid surface disturbance. Light-duty pickup trucks would make limited trips to drill locations to deliver supplies and equipment. Bore locations would be recorded using hand-held GPS devices. Once the needed samples have been collected, borings would be filled with cuttings.

Additional sampling would be completed at the two mineral material sites shown on Figure 2 of the POD. Up to 40 bore holes and 20 test pits dug using a backhoe or similar equipment would occur at each potential 40 acre mineral material site. Bore holes and test pits would be backfilled after completion. The test results would be shared with the BLM for use when the locations are designated as community pits.

Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name:

Carson City Field Office Consolidated Resource Management Plan (2001)

Date Approved/Amended:

May 11, 2001

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s) (objectives, terms, and conditions):

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with Administrative Actions listed on page ROW-4 of the Right-of-way Corridor section and would comply with the Standard Operating Procedures listed on pages ROW-4 through ROW-6.

Compliance with NEPA:

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9:

H-1790-1, Appendix 4 J(3) – Other – Conducting preliminary hazardous materials assessments and site investigations, site characterization studies and environmental monitoring. Included are siting, construction, installation and/or operation of small monitoring devices such as wells, particulate dust counters and automatic air or water samples.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply.

Approval and Contact Information

Teresa J. Knutson Field Manager Stillwater Field Office		Date 7/15/2015
---	---	-------------------

Contact Person

Matt Simons
Realty Specialist
Stillwater Field Office
5665 Morgan Mill Road
Carson City, NV 89701
775-885-6003
msimons@blm.gov

Categorical Exclusion – Screening for Extraordinary Circumstances

CX Number	DOI-BLM-NV-C010-2015-0036-CX
Date	July 2015
Lease/Case File/Serial Number:	N-92243
Regulatory Authority (CFR or Law):	43 CFR 2800, Federal Land Policy and Management Act

IMPORTANT: Appropriate staff should review the circumstances listed below, comment and initial for concurrence. Rationale supporting the concurrence should be included where appropriate.

Impacts on Public Health and Safety

1. Does the proposed action have significant impacts on public health and safety?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	CJ, 7-15-15	Ken Vicencio, Range Tech
	DJ, 7-15-15	Dave Schroeder, Environmental Protection Specialist

Impacts on Natural Resources or Unique Geographic Characteristics

2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness or wilderness study areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds (Executive Order 13186); and other ecologically significant or critical areas?

YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	RD 7/15/15	Ken Depaoli, Geologist
	RW 7/15/15	Jason Wright, Archaeologist
	DW 7/15/15	Dan Westermeyer, Outdoor Recreation Planner
	MS 7-15-15	Michelle Stropky, Hydrologist
	CK 7/15/15	Chris Kula, Wildlife Biologist
	OV 7-15-15	Ken Vicencio, Range Tech

Level of Controversy

3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)]?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	AR 7/15/15	Angelica Rose, Planning & Environmental Coordinator

Highly Uncertain or Unique or Unknown Environmental Risks

4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	AR 7/15/15	Angelica Rose, Planning & Environmental Coordinator.

Precedent Setting

5. Establish a precedent for future action, or represent a decision in principle about future actions, with potentially significant environmental effects?

YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	ADR 7/15/15	Angelica Rose, Planning & Environmental Coordinator.

Cumulatively Significant Effects

6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant, environmental effects?

YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	ADR 7/15/15	Angelica Rose, Planning & Environmental Coordinator.

Impacts on Cultural Properties

7. Have significant impacts on properties listed or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the Bureau or office?

YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	Jim 7/15/15	Jason Wright, Archaeologist

Impacts on Federally Listed Species or Critical Habitat

8. Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species?

YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	CK 7/15/15	Chris Kula, Wildlife Biologist

Compliance with Laws

9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	NO 7/15/15	Angelica Rose, Planning & Environmental Coordinator

Environmental Justice

10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898)?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	NO 7/15/15	Angelica Rose, Planning & Environmental Coordinator

Sacred Sites

11. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners, or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007)?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	NO 7/15/15	Jason Wright, Archaeologist

Noxious and Non-Native Invasive Species

12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area, or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112)?		
--	--	--

YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	OK 2-15-15	Ken Vicencio, Range Tech