

Montezuma II Wind Energy Project Draft Environmental Impact Report

Volume I

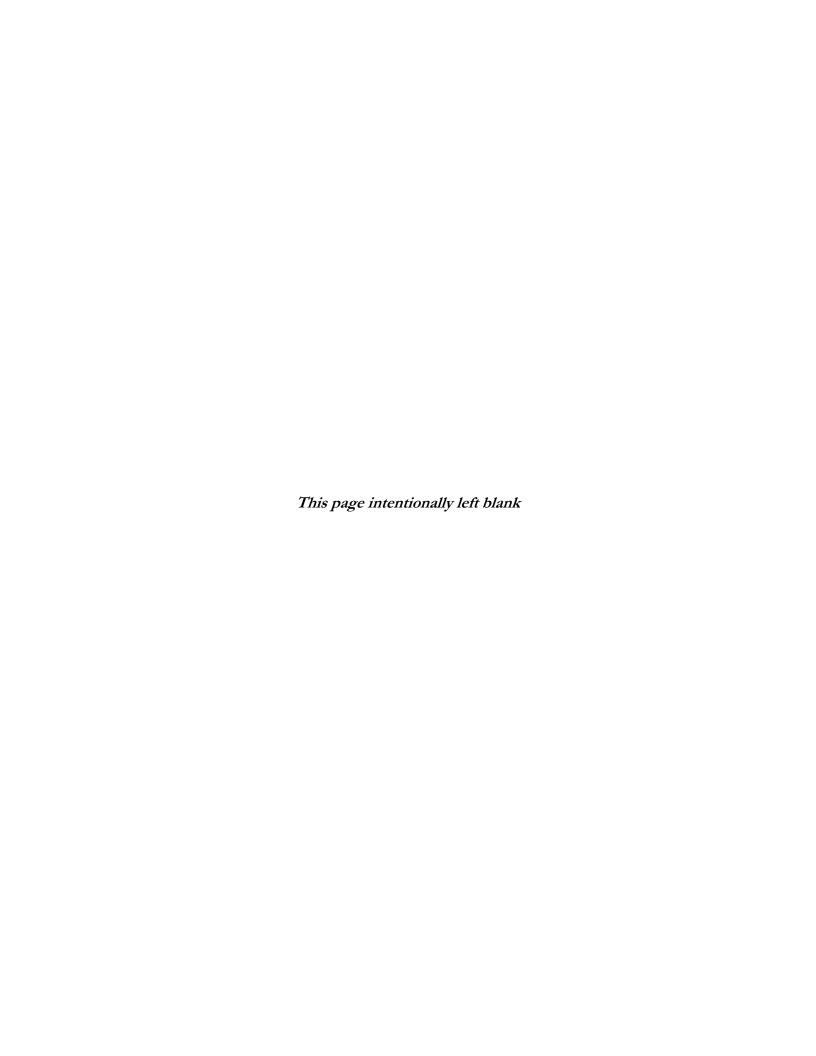
Prepared for Solano County Department of Resource Management

Prepared by

Point Impact Analysis, LLC

2555 Park Boulevard, Suite 10 Palo Alto, CA 94306 Telephone: 650.856.2800 Fax: 650.856.2801 Email: srussell@pointimpactanalysis.com







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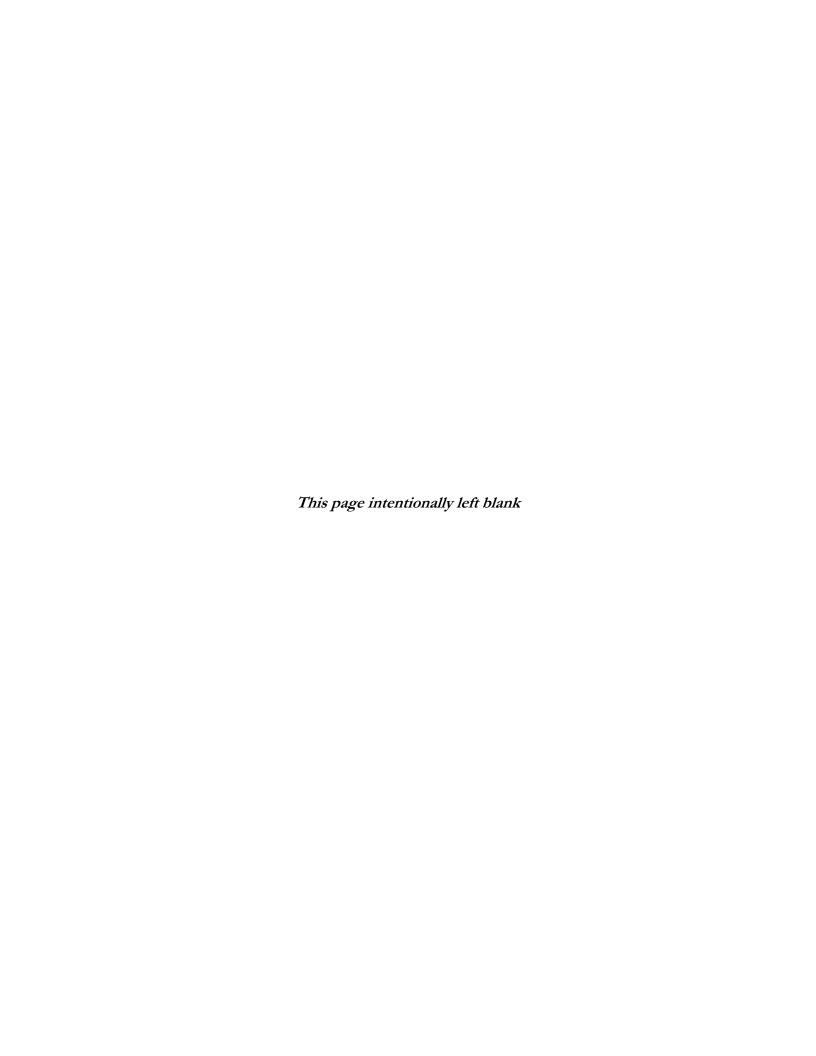
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March 8, 2011



Notice of Completion & Environmental Document Transmittal

Mail to: State Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 3044, Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 (916) 445-0613 For Hand Delivery/Street Address: 1400 Tenth Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

scн#201010204

| Project Title: Montezuma II | | | | | | |
|---|---|------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | Department of Resource Mar | nagement | | | | |
| Mailing Address: 675 Texas S | | | Phone: (707) 784-3164 | | | |
| City: Fairfield | | Zip: <u>94533</u> | County: Solano County | | | |
| Project Location: County:Sc | | City/Nearest Con | nmunity: Collinsville | | | |
| Cross Streets: Collinsville Road | | | - | Zip Code: 94512 | | |
| Longitude/Latitude (degrees, min | nutes and seconds): 38 ° 7 | ′ ″ _N / 121 | ∘ 55 ′ ″ W Tot | al Acres: 2,539 | | |
| Assessor's Parcel No.: See attac | | | nge: Base: | | | |
| Within 2 Miles: State Hwy #: | Waterways: Sacramento River | | | | | |
| Airports: n/a | | Railways: n/a | | nools: n/a | | |
| <u>-</u> | . – – – – – – – – | | | | | |
| Early Cons Neg Dec | ✓ Draft EIR ☐ Supplement/Subsequent EIF (Prior SCH No.) Other: | | NOI Other: EA Draft EIS FONSI | ☐ Joint Document ☐ Final Document ☐ Other: | | |
| Local Action Type: ☐ General Plan Update ☐ Specific Plan ☐ Rezone ☐ Annexation ☐ General Plan Amendment ☐ Master Plan ☐ Prezone ☐ Redevelopment ☐ General Plan Element ☐ Planned Unit Development ☑ Use Permit ☐ Coastal Permit ☐ Community Plan ☐ Site Plan ☐ Land Division (Subdivision, etc.) ☐ Other: | | | | | | |
| Commercial: Sq.ft. Industrial: Sq.ft. Educational: Recreational: | Acres Employees Acres Employees Employees Employees MGD | ☐ Mining: ☐ Power: ☐ Waste T | : Mineral Type Wind Fa Freatment: Type | arm MW 78.2 MGD | | |
| Project Issues Discussed in | | | | | | |
| ✓ Aesthetic/Visual ✓ Agricultural Land ✓ Air Quality ✓ Archeological/Historical ✓ Biological Resources ☐ Coastal Zone ✓ Drainage/Absorption ☐ Economic/Jobs | Fiscal Flood Plain/Flooding Forest Land/Fire Hazard Geologic/Seismic Minerals Noise Population/Housing Balan Public Services/Facilities | ✓ Solid Waste | versities ms city /Compaction/Grading dous | ✓ Vegetation ✓ Water Quality ✓ Water Supply/Groundwater ✓ Wetland/Riparian ✓ Growth Inducement ✓ Land Use ✓ Cumulative Effects ✓ Other: Greenhouse gases | | |
| Present Land Use/Zoning/General Plan Designation: Agriculture/Exclusive Agricultural (A-160)/Agriculture | | | | | | |
| Project Description: (please use a separate page if necessary) See attached. | | | | | | |

Reviewing Agencies Checklist

| | Agencies may recommend State Clearinghouse distr have already sent your document to the agency plea | | | | |
|---|--|----------|---|--|--|
| S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S | Air Resources Board Boating & Waterways, Department of California Highway Patrol Caltrans District #4 Caltrans Division of Aeronautics Caltrans Planning Central Valley Flood Protection Board Coachella Valley Mtns. Conservancy Coastal Commission Colorado River Board Conservation, Department of Corrections, Department of Delta Protection Commission Education, Department of Energy Commission Fish & Game Region #3 Food & Agriculture, Department of General Services, Department of Health Services, Department of Housing & Community Development Integrated Waste Management Board Native American Heritage Commission | | Office of Emergency Services Office of Historic Preservation Office of Public School Construction Parks & Recreation, Department of Pesticide Regulation, Department of Public Utilities Commission Regional WQCB # 2 & 5 Resources Agency S.F. Bay Conservation & Development Comm. San Gabriel & Lower L.A. Rivers & Mtns. Conservancy San Joaquin River Conservancy Santa Monica Mtns. Conservancy State Lands Commission SWRCB: Clean Water Grants SWRCB: Water Quality SWRCB: Water Rights Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Toxic Substances Control, Department of Water Resources, Department of Other: Other: | | |
| | Public Review Period (to be filled in by lead age | ncy) | | | |
| Starting Date March 9, 2011 | | | Ending Date _ April 22, 2011 | | |
| Lead . | Agency (Complete if applicable): | | | | |
| Consulting Firm: Point Impact Analysis, LLC Address: 2555 Park Boulevard, Suite 10 City/State/Zip: Palo Alto, CA 94306 Contact: Stu Russell Phone: (650) 856-2800 | | | Applicant: NextEra Energy Montezuma II Wind, LLC(NextEra) Address: 700 Universe Boulevard City/State/Zip: Juno Beach, FL 33458 Phone: (561) 304-5372 | | |
| Signa | ture of Lead Agency Representative: | Jamet | Date: 3/8/11 | | |

Authority cited: Section 21083, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 21161, Public Resources Code.

Notice of Completion and Environmental Document Transmittal Attachment Montezuma II Wind Energy Project

Assessor's Parcel Numbers:

0090-090-060

0090-090-070

0090-090-080

0090-090-090

0090-090-100

0090-090-110

0090-090-130

0090-090-140

0090-100-030

0090-100-140

0090-190-150

0090-190-160

Project Description:

NextEra proposes to develop the Montezuma II Wind Energy Project in the Montezuma Hills approximately four miles south of Highway 12 and approximately 15 miles southeast of Fairfield. Surrounding communities include Birds Landing 1.7 miles to the west, Collinsville approximately 1.5 miles to the south, and Rio Vista (City Limits) approximately 5.7 miles east of the closest project boundaries. The project area is entirely within private ownership; no public lands are included in the project area.

The Project would entail installation and operation of 34 wind turbines and associated facilities on a 2,539-acre site in Solano County adjacent to the existing Shiloh I, enXco V, and High Winds wind energy projects. The proposed project elements are as follows:

- Construction of 34 wind turbines, with associated generators, towers, foundations, and pad mounted transformers;
- One turbine model, the Siemens 2.3 MW, with a 263-foot hub height and two possible turbine blade lengths: either a 331-foot or 305-foot diameter rotor;
- A total generation capacity of 78.2 Megawatts (MW) of electricity; and
- Project pads and access roads, control cables, power collection system, a
 transmission line, two meteorological towers, a temporary laydown area, a new
 substation and switchyard with interconnection lines, and an operation and
 maintenance facility including a new maintenance building, outdoor storage area,
 and permanent laydown area.



Department of **Resource Management**

675 Texas Street, Suite 5500 Fairfield, CA 94533

Planning Services Division Phone: (707) 784-6765 / Fax: (707) 784-4805 Michael Yankovich Planning Program Manager

March 8, 2011

NOTICE OF COMPLETION, AVAILABILITY, AND PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, as amended

MONTEZUMA II WIND ENERGY PROJECT DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the County of Solano, as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Montezuma II Wind Energy Project. NextEra Energy Montezuma II Wind, LLC (NextEra), has proposed the Montezuma II Wind Energy Project, which would be located on approximately 2,539 acres of private properties in the Montezuma Hills area leased for wind power development. The Project requires a Use Permit (U-10-04) from Solano County.

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) analyzes the environmental effects of the Montezuma II Wind Energy Project - which includes the following elements:

- Construction of 34 wind turbines, with associated generators, towers, foundations, and pad mounted transformers;
- One turbine model, the Siemens 2.3 MW, with a 263-foot hub height and two possible turbine blade lengths: either a 331-foot or 305-foot diameter rotor;
- A total generation capacity of 78.2 Megawatts (MW) of electricity; and
- Project pads and access roads, control cables, power collection system, a transmission line, two meteorological towers, a temporary laydown area, a new substation and switchyard with interconnection lines, and an operation and maintenance facility including a new maintenance building, outdoor storage area, and permanent laydown area.

NextEra proposes to develop the Montezuma II Wind Energy Project in the Montezuma Hills, approximately 4 miles south of Highway 12, and 15 miles southeast of Fairfield. Surrounding communities include Birds Landing 1.7 miles to the west, Collinsville approximately 1.5 miles to the south, and Rio Vista (City Limits) approximately 5.7 miles east of the closest project boundaries.

The project area is characterized by gently rolling hills used for dry farming, grazing, rural residences, and wind power. The Montezuma Hills have a relatively constant crest elevation between 100 and 272 feet above mean sea level. The topography consists of valleys, sloped hillsides and relatively flat ridgelines. The Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers lie to the south and east. Existing agricultural and residential uses would continue while the Project is in operation.

The Montezuma Hills area contains existing wind energy facilities: enXco V, High Winds, Shiloh I and II, Solano Wind Phase 1 and 2, and Montezuma I. Two additional wind projects are expected to begin construction in 2011: Solano Wind Phase 3 and Shiloh III, as well as the decommissioning (removal) of portions of the older enXco V facilities. The project area is bisected by Montezuma Hills Road, and is bounded by Birds Landing Road to the north, Talbert Lane to the south, and Collinsville Road to the southwest. Primary access to the project area is from State Route 12, and direct access to project facilities will be provided via Birds Landing Road, Montezuma Hills Road, Collinsville Road, and Talbert Lane.

The Draft EIR examines the significant environmental effects of the Montezuma II Wind Energy Project as well as alternatives and/or mitigation measures to reduce or avoid any significant impacts identified. For the Project, the Draft EIR concludes that there could be significant adverse environmental effects in the areas of aesthetics/visual resources, agricultural resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geologic resources, hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use, noise, public services and utilities, safety, and transportation. Mitigation measures are identified to reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level, except for certain impacts related to aesthetics/visual, air quality, biological resources and cumulative impacts, for which there is no effective mitigation. As identified in the Draft EIR, the following impacts from the proposed Montezuma II Wind Energy Project would be significant even after implementation of mitigation measures:

Aesthetics

Impacts AES-1 and AES-5: The Montezuma II Wind Energy Project would result in a significant degradation of views from Collinsville and would degrade the visual character of the landscape from public roads and dispersed rural residences.

Air Quality

Impact AIR-2: The Project would result in significant impacts on air quality during construction due to the generation of dust (PM10) from trenching, grading, and other ground-disturbing activities.

Biological Resources

Impact BIO-8: The Project could result in low rates of mortality to protected avian species and, therefore, result in significant impacts even with the incorporation of mitigation measures. Raptor species most likely to be affected by turbine operation are the American kestrel and red-tailed hawk. The golden eagle, a California species of special concern, could have a mortality rate of less than one individual per year. Impacts to Swainson's hawk and bat populations are also potentially significant.

Alternatives that would avoid or reduce these and any other significant environmental impacts of the Project were considered and evaluated. Alternatives also were evaluated on the basis of their feasibility. Other factors in the evaluation of alternatives included engineering constraints, cost, access to existing infrastructure, and ease of installation.

EIR Process and Comment Period

The Draft EIR is being published for a 45-day public review and comment period that begins on March 9, 2011, and ends on April 22, 2011. The Solano County Department of Resource Management will prepare a Final EIR to respond to comments received during the review period and will present it at a date to be determined. The Solano County Planning Commission must certify the EIR as a complete, accurate, and objective analysis prior to taking action on the proposed Use Permit at a date to be determined.

We welcome your views on the adequacy and completeness of the Draft EIR. If you represent a public agency, please provide information that is germane to your statutory responsibilities as they may be affected by this Project. Responsible and trustee agencies will need to use the EIR prepared by the County when considering approvals they may grant related to the Montezuma II Wind Energy Project. If you decide to challenge the action of the County in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at or prior to the final public hearing on the Project.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your comments must be received by the County prior to the close of the 45-day review period at 5:00 p.m. on April 22, 2011. The Solano County Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing to review the Draft EIR and receive public comments at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 7, 2011, at the Solano County Board of Supervisors Board Room, County Administration Center, 675 Texas Street, Fairfield, California.

Please submit any requests for a copy of the Draft EIR, indicating preference for paper or CD copy (depends on availability), and your written comments to:

Mr. Ken Solomon

Solano County Department of Resource Management 675 Texas Street, Suite 5500 Fairfield, CA 94533 kmsolomon@solanocounty.com

Please include your name, address, and telephone number with comments and requests for copies.

Copies of the Draft EIR can be reviewed and obtained at the **Department of Resource Management, 675 Texas Street, Suite 5500, Fairfield**. A copy can also be viewed online at the following website: www.solanocounty.com, and reviewed at the following local libraries:

Fairfield Civic Center Library

1150 Kentucky Street Fairfield

Suisun City Library 601 Pintail Drive Suisun City

Rio Vista Library 44 South Second Street Rio Vista

