



AGENDA REQUEST FORM
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF INYO

For Clerk's Use Only:
AGENDA NUMBER

- Consent Departmental Correspondence Action Public Hearing
 Scheduled Time for 10:00 a.m. Closed Session Informational

FROM: Inyo County Planning Commission

FOR THE BOARD MEETING OF: April 26, 2011

SUBJECT: Renewable Solar and Wind Energy General Plan Amendment (General Plan Amendment No. 2010-03/Inyo County)

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) Conduct a public hearing regarding the Renewable Solar and Wind Energy General Plan Amendment (General Plan Amendment No. 2010-03/Inyo County); and
- 2) Review and adopt the proposed Resolution (1) making certain findings with respect to General Plan Amendment No. 2010-03/Inyo County (Renewable Solar and Wind Energy) (2) making certain findings with respect to and certifying and adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration/Initial Study for General Plan Amendment No. 2010-03/Inyo County (Renewable Solar and Wind Energy), and (3) adopting General Plan Amendment No. 2010-03/Inyo County (Renewable Solar and Wind Energy) with modifications as recommended by staff.

SUMMARY DISCUSSION:

An update to the Inyo County General Plan is proposed to address renewable solar and wind energy development. As part of the update, a General Plan Land Use Designation Overlay is proposed in which renewable energy projects, specifically solar and wind, may be developed, based on site specific studies, environmental review, and permitting pursuant to the County's Renewable Energy Ordinance and other applicable State, federal, and local laws. Other updates proposed include the following: identifying appropriate means to develop renewable wind and solar energy resources, provided that social, economic, and environmental impacts are minimized; offsetting costs to the County and lost economic development potential, and mitigation of economic effects; working to protect military readiness, and; considering conversions of lands utilized for agriculture, mining, and recreation. Detailed information regarding the General Plan Amendment (GPA) is included in Exhibit B.

The Planning Commission reviewed the draft GPA at its special meeting on March 31, 2011, conducted a public hearing, and unanimously recommended that the Board of Supervisors approve the project. A summary of comments received at the Planning Commission with responses is provided in Exhibit C. Additional information submitted at the hearing with responses is included in Exhibit D.

Proposed Modifications to General Plan Amendment

Several requests have been received to modify the GPA before, during, and since the Planning Commission hearing. Specifically, the following has been requested:

- At the Planning Commission hearing, a representative of the Timbisha-Shoshone Tribe requested that the tribe's trust lands be removed from the Overlay. Staff has been unable to identify these lands, but will continue to work with the tribe to identify them.
- Department of Defense representatives were not aware that the China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station was proposed to be included in the Overlay. DOD has since requested that this Overlay be eliminated.
- Mr. Borders, a property owner in Pearsonville, requested that his property be removed from the Overlay at the Planning Commission hearing (refer to Exhibit D). However, staff subsequently has spoken with Mr. Borders, and he does not now wish to have this property removed from the Overlay.

Staff recommends that the China Lake Overlay and tribal trust lands of the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe, if identified, be removed from the GPA Overlay, as requested. Based on further discussions with Mr. Borders, no changes are proposed for the Pearsonville Overlay.

Environmental Review

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a Mitigated Negative Declaration/Initial Study (MND/IS) was distributed for public review between December 17, 2010 and February 14, 2011 (refer to Attachment 3 in Exhibit B). The document was circulated through the State Clearinghouse to relevant agencies, and the Notice of Availability/Intent was posted with the Inyo County Recorder and published in the Inyo Register. Numerous comments have been received and responded to appropriately (refer to Attachments 4 and 5 in Exhibit B). Staff and the Planning Commission recommend that the Board certify and adopt the MMND/IS, as described in Exhibits A and B.

ALTERNATIVES:

- Direct modifications to the GPA – refer to the Planning Commission staff report (pages 5-7 in Exhibit B) for a discussion of specific alternatives that may be considered
- Refer the item back to the Planning Commission for further input
- Return to staff with other direction

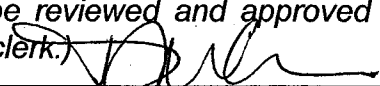
OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Numerous federal, State, and local agencies, including, but not limited to, the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Bureau of Land Management, California Energy Commission, and Department of Defense agencies.

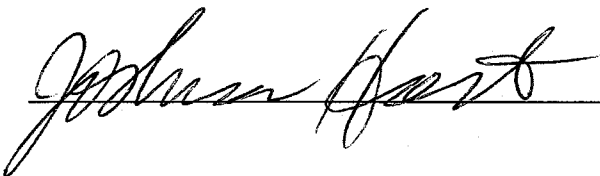
FINANCING:

Funds for the update effort have been provided by the General Fund/Planning Department budget.

APPROVALS

COUNTY COUNSEL:	AGREEMENTS, CONTRACTS AND ORDINANCES AND CLOSED SESSION AND RELATED ITEMS (Must be reviewed and approved by county counsel prior to submission to the board clerk.)  4/15/11 Yes
AUDITOR/CONTROLLER:	ACCOUNTING/FINANCE AND RELATED ITEMS (Must be reviewed and approved by the auditor-controller prior to submission to the board clerk.)
PERSONNEL DIRECTOR:	PERSONNEL AND RELATED ITEMS (Must be reviewed and approved by the director of personnel services prior to submission to the board clerk.)

DEPARTMENT HEAD SIGNATURE:
(Not to be signed until all approvals are received)



Date: 4-19-11

Exhibits:

- A. Board Resolution
- B. Planning Commission Agenda Report
- C. Summary of Comments Made at Planning Commission Hearing and Responses
- D. Additional Correspondence and Responses