
From: Kaye <kaye@coopmead.com>
Sent: Sunday, July 9, 2023 6:15 PM
To: ranchoviejosolar@aes.com
Cc: hhughes@santafecountynm.gov; jsgreene@santafecountynm.gov;
athamilton@santafecountynm.gov; ahansen@santafecountynm.gov;
cbustamante@santafecountynm.gov; joselarra@santafecountynm.gov;
gcbustos@santafecountynm.gov
Subject: AES email requesting information on Rancho Viejo Solar Project
Attachments: AES email of July 9th.docx

WARNING:

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear AES:

Please find attached my email to you dated today with information I am requesting on your planned Rancho Viejo Solar Project. I have copied the Santa Fe County Commissioners and staff as I am sure they will be interested in also receiving answers to the questions I pose as well as the photographic material that does not appear in your Conditional Use Permit application or various attachments submitted with the Conditional Use Permit Application.

I look forward to your response. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kaye Cooper-Mead

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July 9, 2023

AES (via email)

Dear AES:

I am a resident of Eldorado and after reviewing the meeting notes of the meeting you held on October 4, 2022, your Conditional Use Permit Application dated January 2023 and the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) dated January 2023, I have the following questions and requests in order to fully evaluate your Conditional Use Permit Application (CUP). I have copied the County Commissioners on this email as I think they will also need to receive this information in order to fully evaluate the CUP.

- Please provide the complete specs for the Samsung SDI E5D lithium-ion battery you intend to use and the complete environmental testing and rating data for this battery. I went to the link you provided and it does not reference this battery which you said is confidential. Please understand that we must be able to review the complete data for this battery especially what environment these batteries have been tested and rated for. It is absolutely necessary to review this data prior to any public hearing or vote by the Santa Fe county officials as it is a crucial component of the system and any safety review of this proposal.

I have contacted the manufacturer Samsung and though they acknowledged my call, they have not provided the information so we must receive it from you.

- Where will these thousands of batteries be manufactured?
 - How and where will these batteries be transported to arrive here for installation?
 - One of the major fire risks for BESS systems arise from damage to any one battery cell. How are this many battery cells – over 400,000 – going to be inspected prior to installation to ensure there is not even one damaged cell?
 - How many battery cells will be housed in the revised total of 69 battery containers?
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- Many of the maps done originally are no longer accurate because the layout of the facility changed after your October meeting. Please provide an updated map that shows the actual layout of the facility and the placement of the BESS system and substation against the actual home placements and streets in the three neighborhoods that were removed from all maps.
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- Please provide a photo of the actual substation being proposed. If you don't have exactly the same one, provide a photo of a similar sized substation. I have seen some pictures of a substation and they are not at all what I thought they would look like. An extremely industrial looking area that is not in keeping with a residential area and that is why it is vital you supply photos so we all know exactly what this 2 acre portion of the facility would look like.

- Please provide a photo of the proposed high voltage transmission line and its supporting H-frames. I believe these are to be 40' to 50' (one place said 50') with structural spans of 250 feet. What is the correct measurements for these? How many support structures (H-frames) will be used to cover the run of the line stated to be 2.3 miles in one section and 2.4 miles in another section? Believe you indicated 10 poles per mile. I assume the H-frames are different than the poles so how many of each will be used?
- Please provide a photo of the proposed 69 BESS system battery containers. The two HVAC systems on each container are placed where on each container? Do these HVAC systems use any water? Is it correct that only one HVAC unit runs at a time and the other is a backup? Is there any scenario where both HVAC units on each container would run at the same time?
- What happens if the power is cut off to the facility for any reason? How is power generated to the HVAC systems if the power is out? For example a month ago, our power here in Eldorado was out from 9:45 am to 3:15pm with no warning. How would the system operate with power out for 5 ½ hours – are there any backup generators? Are there any plans to add a UPS (Uninterruptable Power Source)?
- We have only been given general references – such as over a mile – as far as the distances to our three communities. It is absolutely necessary for you to provide the following actual footage details for:
 - Actual distance in feet of the BESS to the nearest residence in Eldorado. Please state which residence this is or note it on a map placement.
 - Actual distance in feet of the BESS to the nearest residence in Rancho Viejo. Please state which residence this is or note it on a map placement.
 - Actual distance in feet of the BESS to the nearest residence in Rancho San Marcos. Please state which residence this is or note it on a map placement.
 - Actual distance in feet of the substation to each of the communities listed above.
- Please provide photos of the solar panels in more than their flat position. These panels move and it is deceptive to not show panels in other positions to evaluate glare and landscape views.
- The dB levels provided do not include the tracking motors. Please provide the total number of tracking motors and what the dB level is for all combined.
- What are the dB levels for the increase in HVAC units that will be required when you went from 39 45' battery containers to 69 20' battery containers that each have 2 HVAC's. Why did you choose to go to 20' containers over the original 45' containers?

- What is the dB level of the inverters and how many are now required?
- What is the dB level for the High Transmission line? It is often mentioned that these lines emit a humming sound continuously.
- What is the dB level for the substation and its power transformer? What is the MVA and BIL rating of the high voltage winding?
- The sound maps located on page 3-54 of the EIR show Eldorado homes in the 3200 feet (0.6mile) range to hear 48 dB. So for sound purposes, we are no longer a mile away?
- Water use – under 1.1.2.4 of the EIR, you indicate 100-150 acre-feet over a 12 month construction period. This in gallons is 32,585,143 gallons to 48,877,714 gallons of water. You indicate the water will be sourced from third party providers and trucked to the site or from permitted groundwater wells. We have very limited water resources in this area with a very shallow aquifer. Many of us in Eldorado are on wells so we are opposed to water being taken from the aquifer. It is imperative you give complete information on who the “third party providers” are and if any of these third party providers would be wells. How much water would be coming from “permitted ground water wells”? We are now reading all about utility- size solar projects draining wells of the surrounding homeowners. This is totally unacceptable.
- Now I go back to the CUP because on page 2-7 you indicate that “water would be sourced from third party providers and would be trucked to the site.” The mention of “or from permitted groundwater wells” has disappeared in the CUP. Why was this removed and which document takes precedence? You must be consistent and either add this to the CUP document or remove these references from EIR so they can no longer be considered as part of your Application.
- You indicate on Page 2-7 and Page 3-3 of the CUP that there would be no need for a permanent water supply. So why are there references in the EIR (page 3-65) “If drilling permitted wells associated with the project is necessary, Rancho Viejo will adhere to specific well EPMs listed in Section 3.14.3.” And on page 3-66 of the EIR, “Any new water wells drilled or diversions of existing water rights in the analysis area of the Project will be appropriately permitted with the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer, and the agreement of the water rights holder.”
- We are absolutely opposed to your drilling wells on the Property to remove water from the aquifer we rely on and you must be very specific now as to whether you will drill wells on this property at any time as there seems to be a discrepancy between what you say in the CUP and what is included in the EIR as an attachment to the CUP. And if any of the third party providers you mention will be drawing any water from wells in this area? Without all this specific information this CUP cannot possibly be evaluated for the serious detrimental effect it will have on our water supply.
- There is also no mention of the potential water supply that would be necessary to fight fires in the BESS and exactly where this water would come from. If you don’t have amounts, you need

to indicate where the water would come from. In a fire situation, we could not have you draining our local water supply leaving no water to use for our fire-fighting needs.

- Construction Waste Management – page 2-5 of the EIR – you say “Most of the hazardous waste generated during construction will consist of liquid waste, such as flushing and cleaning fluids and solvents. Please provide complete information on the actual chemicals being used. This is liquid waste so how can it possibly be collected and therefore, prevented from entering the ground water? As you have stated these are hazardous waste and they can not be permitted in any way to enter the groundwater and contaminate our wells.
- Operations and Management – page 2-5 of the EIR – you say, “Water will be trucked to the Project site and will be sourced from local production wells or may include municipal water.” We object to any water for this purpose coming from local production wells. So as not to damage the aquifer, you must use municipal water for this purpose.
- In the meeting notes from the October 4th you mentioned a solvent may be used in cleaning and the mention of this has been removed from the EIR. What is the solvent and why was this removed? Under no circumstances can a toxic solvent be permitted to enter the groundwater so it is vital that you specify any chemical that will be used.
- On page 3-1 of the CUP you mention a fire suppressant to be used but provide no specific information as to the suppressant. At one time there was a mention of Novec 1230 but as we know this is a “forever chemical” along with other forever chemicals produced by 3M, for which it has just been fined \$10.3 Billion for polluting waterways and will no longer be manufactured by them by the end of 2025. The money from the settlement is to be used to build water treatment plants to try and remove the toxic chemical from the municipal water supplies but no one has a way to remove this from the wells they polluted. No “forever chemical” or toxic chemical can be allowed to be used to contaminate our ground water so I believe the Commissioners must ensure that the CUP is revised to specify this before any evaluation of the CUP can go forward.
- Under the new Inflation Reduction Act which offers investment tax credits for battery storage projects, what investment tax credits is AES receiving for the 96MW Rancho Viejo facility with a 48MW BESS?
- Why was a meeting never held with Eldorado residents especially since you have placed the BESS with the most risk of a fire potential nearest to our community?

I have copied the County Commissioners on this email as I think it is imperative that they see the list of questions being asked by those of us impacted by this facility to ensure that AES provide complete information that is lacking in their CUP and/or EIR to all of us. There is no way for the county to determine “if the location will unduly impair important environmental values” as required under the 2016 SLDC without complete information from you as requested in this email. I look forward to

receiving this information in a timely way to allow us to properly evaluate your Conditional Use Permit Application. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kaye Cooper-Mead

