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State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Central Region
1234 East Shaw Avenue
Fresno, California 93710
559-243-4005
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
VALERIE TERMINI, Acting Director

To:
Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
CEQA Submit

From:
Department of Fish and Wildlife Central Region
1234 East Shaw Avenue
Fresno, CA 93710
Contact: Jim Vang
Email: Jim.Vang@wildlife.ca.gov
Phone: 559-580-3203

Lead Agency
Kern County
Planning and Natural Resources Department
2700 "M" Street, Suite 100
Bakersfield, CA 93301
Contact: Ronelle Candia
Email: CandiaR@kerncounty.com
Phone: 661-862-8997

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

Subject: Filing of Notice of Determination pursuant to Section 21108 of the Public Resources Code

State Clearinghouse Number: 2021020513

Project Title: Aratina 2 Solar Project (California Endangered Species Act Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2024-038-04 (ITP) Major Amendment No. 1)

Project Location: The Project is generally located within an unincorporated area in the southeastern corner of Kern County, south and west of the unincorporated community of Boron.

Project Description: The Project includes the construction, operation, and maintenance of a photovoltaic (PV) solar facility that will include service roads, photovoltaic panels supported on solar trackers, a power collection system, communication cables, overhead and underground transmission lines, electrical switchyards, substations, energy storage system(s), weather stations and operations and maintenance facilities.

The Project will result in permanent impacts throughout the 1,059-acre Project area of desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizzii*), Mohave ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus mohavensis*), western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*), Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*), and western Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*) habitat. The Project is expected to result in incidental take of desert tortoise, Mohave ground squirrel, western burrowing owl, Crotch's bumble bee, and western Joshua tree, where both the former two are designated as endangered and threatened species, respectively, and the latter three are designated as Candidates for listing, under the California Endangered Species Act. The ITP referenced above as issued by CDFW authorizes incidental take of species listed under CESA that may occur as a result of Project implementation.

Major Amendment No. 1 adds Crotch's bumble bee and western Joshua tree to the ITP as Covered Species.

This is to advise that CDFW, acting as a Responsible Agency, approved the project described above on 1/30/2026 and has made the following determinations regarding the above-described project:

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1. The project **will not** have a significant effect on the environment. This determination is limited to effects within CDFW's permitting jurisdiction as a Responsible Agency.
2. An environmental impact report **was** prepared by the lead agency for the original project.
3. Additional mitigation measures **were** made a condition of CDFW's approval of the project.
4. A Mitigation Reporting or Monitoring Plan **was** adopted by CDFW for this project.
5. A Statement of Overriding Considerations **was not** adopted by CDFW for this project.
6. Findings **were** made by CDFW pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21081(a).
7. Compliance with the environmental filing fee requirement at Fish and Game Code § 711.4: **A copy of a receipt showing prior payment was submitted to CDFW.**

The environmental impact report prepared by Kern County Planning and Natural Resources Department for the Project is available to the general public at the office location listed above for the lead agency. CDFW's administrative record of proceedings related to the incidental take permit is available to the public for review at CDFW's regional office.

Signature: DocuSigned by: Julie Vance FA83F09FE08945A... *Date:* 1/30/2026

Julie A. Vance, Regional Manager