

Notice of Determination**- 1 -****To:**

☒ Office of Planning and Research
 For U.S. Mail:
 P.O. Box 3044
 Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

Street Address:

1400 Tenth Street
 Sacramento, CA 95814

From:

Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
 Region 4 – Central Region
 1234 East Shaw Avenue
 Contact: Jim Vang, Senior Environmental Scientist
 (Specialist)
 Phone: (559) 580-3203

Lead Agency
 Merced County
 Community and Economic Development Department
 2222 M Street
 Merced, California 95340
 Contact: Tiffany Ho
 Phone: (209) 385-7654 ext. 4407

SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21108

State Clearinghouse Number: 2021080196

Project Title: Las Camas Solar Facility Project (California Endangered Species Act Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2023-008-04 (ITP))

Project Location: The Project is located in western Merced County, approximately three miles south of Santa Nella, California, and is bordered by State Route (SR) 33/SR 152 to the north, Interstate 5 to the east, the Jasper Sears Mitigation Parcels to the west, and privately owned farmland and the Billy Wright Landfill to the south and west.

Project Description: The Project includes the construction and operation of a 200-mega-watt (MW) alternating current (AC) ground-mounted solar photovoltaic power plant. The Project will include access roads, solar PV panels, single-axis trackers, direct current to AC power collection wires and electrical inverters, lithium-ion battery energy storage system, battery enclosures, a solar project substation, a 230-kV gen-tie line, and a supervisory control and data acquisition system.

The Project is expected to result in incidental take of the State threatened San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*), the State threatened Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), and the State candidate western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*) (collectively the Covered Species) which are protected under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). The Project is expected to cause impacts to 1,269 acres of upland grassland habitat which provides moderately suitable habitat for the Covered Species.

The Permittee will permanently conserve 2,048 acres of high quality occupied Covered Species habitat that will include a monitoring program and an adaptive management plan, approved by CDFW to fully mitigate the impacts of the authorized take of the species.

This is to advise that CDFW, acting as [☐ the lead agency / ☒ a responsible agency] approved the above-described project on 7/7/2025 and made the following determinations regarding the above-described project:

1. The project [☐ will / ☒ 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 / ☐ A negative declaration] was prepared by the lead agency for the original project.
3. Additional mitigation measures [☒ were / ☐ were not] made a condition of CDFW's approval of the project.
4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan [☒ was / ☐ was not] adopted by CDFW for this project.
5. A Statement of Overriding Considerations [☐ was / ☒ was not] adopted by CDFW for this project.
6. Findings [☒ were / ☐ were not] 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 (check one):
 - ☐ Payment is submitted with this notice.
 - ☒ A copy of a receipt showing prior payment was submitted to CDFW.

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- ☒ Responsible Agency statement: The EIR prepared by the lead agency 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.

DocuSigned by:

Signature

Krista Tomlinson

Date: 7/7/2025

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for Julie A. Vance, *Regional Manager*

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____