

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:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
Central Region
 1234 East Shaw Avenue, Fresno, CA 93710
 Contact: Alya Wakeman-Hill, (559) 317-7335

Lead Agency

Kern County Planning Department
 2700 "M" Street, Suite 100, Bakersfield, CA 93301
 Contact: Terrance Smalls
SmallsT@kerncounty.com
 Phone: (661) 862-8607

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

State Clearinghouse Number: 2021090602

Project Title: Azalea Solar Project, by SF Azalea, LLC; Major Amendment No. 4 to the California Endangered Species Act, Incidental Take Permit (ITP) No. 2081-2022-037-04.

Project Location: The Project is located on a 640-acre property in an unincorporated area of northwest Kern County, immediately south of the boundary line between Kings County and Kern County. It is anticipated that all permanent impacts of the Project will occur on 395-acres, within the larger 640-acre property, and on 2.70-acres for the associated generation tie line.

Project Description: The Project includes the construction, operation, and maintenance of a utility-scale solar farm that will include solar arrays, collector lines, energy storage systems, substation, ancillary facilities, and associated electrical infrastructure. Major Amendment No. 4 authorizes take of the CESA candidate species western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*) during the construction, operations, and maintenance of the Project and adds modifications and clarifications to certain measures.

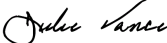
The Project is expected to result in incidental take to State threatened San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*), State endangered giant kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys ingens*), and State candidate for listing western burrowing owl (collectively the Covered Species) which are protected under the CESA. The Project is expected to cause impacts to 397.7-acre Project Area, which provides low to moderate suitable habitat for the Covered Species. The ITP referenced above as issued by CDFW authorized incidental take of species listed under CESA that may occur as a result of Project implementation. Major Amendment No. 4 of the ITP adds as a Covered Species, which is designated as a candidate species for listing under CESA. Major Amendment No. 4 of the ITP does not increase the Project impacts.

This is to advise that CDFW, acting as ☐ the lead agency / ☒ a responsible agency] approved the above-described project on 9/5/2025 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:

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SignatureDate: 9/5/2025Julie A. Vance, *Regional Manager*

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____