

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
AND PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING FOR THE
ROSEMARY SOLAR AND ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM COMPLEX PROJECT**

TO: Responsible and Trustee Agencies, other interested agencies, and members of the public

FROM: County of Fresno, Department of Public Works and Planning
Development Services and Capital Projects Division
2220 Tulare Street, Sixth Floor
Fresno, CA 93721

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Rosemary Solar and Energy Storage System Complex

Date: November 8, 2024

Action: The County of Fresno (County) will be the Lead Agency for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and will be responsible for preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) pursuant to CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines for the Rosemary Solar and Energy Storage System Complex.

Project Title: Rosemary Solar and Energy Storage System Complex, Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application Nos. 3795, 3796, 3797, and 3798; EIR #8575

Project Applicant: Rosemary Solar, LLC

Project Location and Summary:

Rosemary Solar, LLC proposes to construct, operate, maintain, and provide for the future decommissioning of the Rosemary Solar and Energy Storage System Complex project, located on approximately 1,172 acres in unincorporated Fresno County (the Project). The Project site is located approximately 25 miles southwest of Fresno and approximately 5 miles south of the City of San Joaquin. The legal description for the Project is in USGS San Joaquin 7.5-minute quadrangle in Section 19, Township 16 South and Range 17 East, Sections 23 and 24 of Township 16 South and Ranges 16 East of the Mount Diablo Base Meridian. The Project proposes to generate up to an estimated 140 megawatts of alternating current (MWac) and include energy storage capacity of an estimated 8 hours of 140 MWac. Related facilities would include O&M buildings, parking, and an onsite substation. Four separate facilities are proposed, each on a distinct site. An approximately 2-mile-long transmission (generation-tie) line would deliver power via one of four possible pathways to the existing Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) owned 70 kilovolt (kV) Crescent Substation, which would be the Project's point of interconnection with the grid.

The EIR will include evaluation of the environmental impacts of reconductoring approximately 5 linear miles of the PG&E Helm to Crescent 70 kV electric transmission line to facilitate Project interconnection and enhance electrical service reliability. Related activities include replacing or improving poles within an approximately 50-foot-wide corridor, pulling and tensioning of new conductor, and using equipment storage, storage and laydown areas and a helicopter landing zone with a temporary approximately 2.0-acre footprint.

A project description, maps, and figures are available for review at the following locations:

- Fresno County Public Works and Planning Department, 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A Street Level, Fresno, CA 93721
- Fresno County website: <https://www.fresnocountyca.gov/eir8575>

Written Comments:

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) solicits input from Responsible and Trustee Agencies and other public agencies so that Project-related concerns relevant to each agency's statutory responsibilities can be addressed in the EIR. This NOP also solicits input from Tribes and members of the public. The County requests that any potential Responsible or Trustee Agencies responding to this NOP reply in a manner consistent with CEQA Guidelines §15082(b), which allows for submittal of any comments in response to this notice no later than 30 days after receipt of the NOP. Comments in response to this NOP will be accepted through December 9, 2024.

Please send written scoping input to:

Attn: Jeremy Shaw
Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning
Development Services and Capital Projects Division
2220 Tulare Street, Sixth Floor
Fresno, CA 93721
Phone: (559) 600-4207 Fax: (559) 600-4200
Email: jshaw@FresnoCountyCA.gov

Please reference EIR #8575, Rosemary Solar and Energy Storage System Complex. Please include your name, address, and phone number and/or email address so that we may contact you for clarification, if necessary.

Public Scoping Meeting:

CEQA encourages public input throughout the planning process. Consistent with CEQA and CEQA Guidelines §15083, oral and written comments may be presented at a meeting where the County will solicit input on the scope and content of the EIR, including environmental impacts of concern and mitigation measures or alternatives that should be considered. The scoping meeting will be held online for 30 minutes or until all who wish to speak have had an opportunity to do so. Scoping meeting details are as follows:

Date: Tuesday, November 19, 2024

Time: 10 a.m.

If joining from a computer, please use this Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/RosemarySolarScopingMtg>

Webinar ID: 837 4243 5613

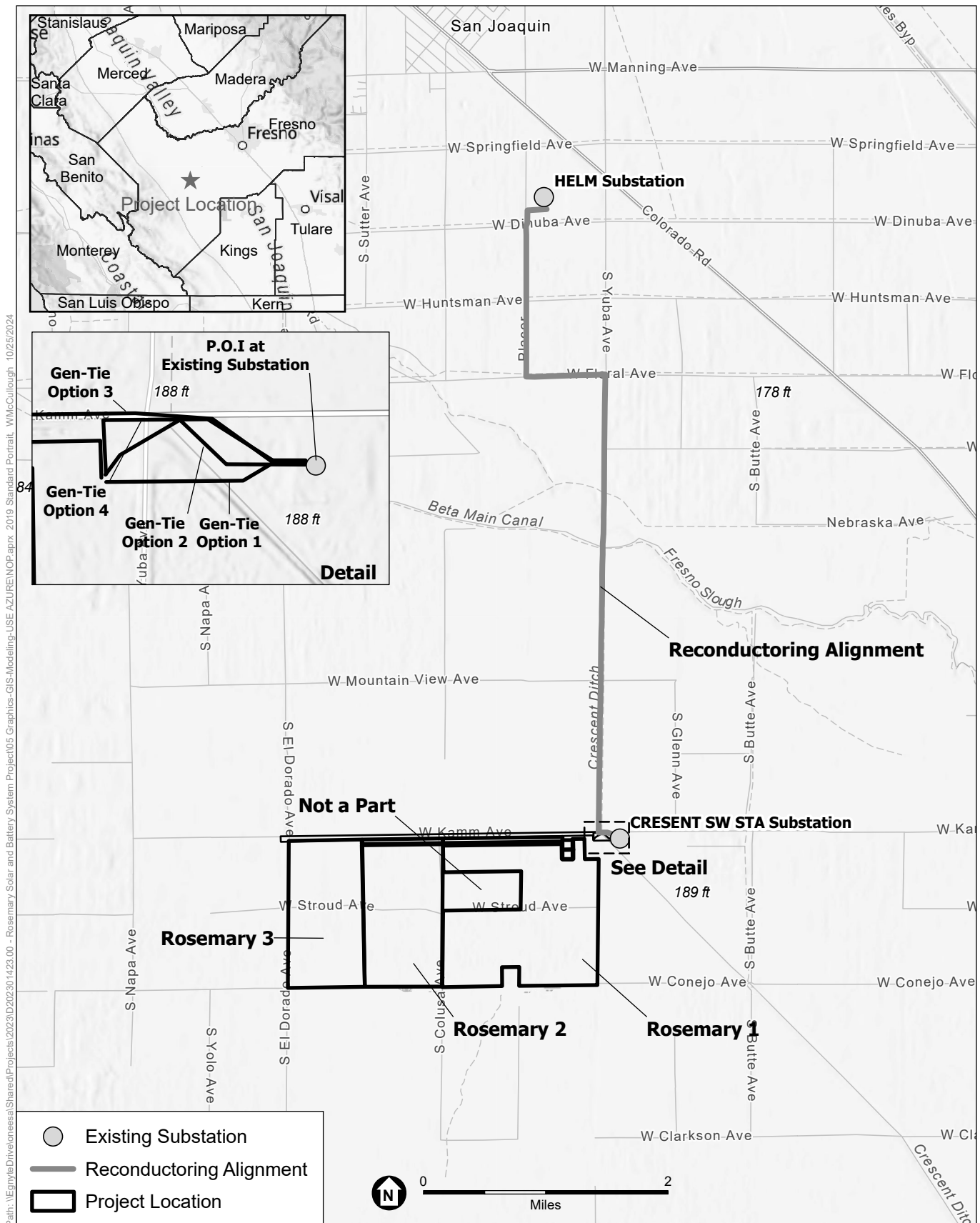
If joining by phone: (888) 788-0099

Physical Setting:

The Project site is bounded by W. Kamm Avenue to the north, S. El Dorado Avenue to the west, W. Conejo Avenue to the south, and S. Yuba Avenue to the east. Of these, only W. Kamm Avenue is paved and public. See **Figure 1**. The Project site has not been irrigated for approximately 20 years and its physical setting reflects dryland farming use. Undeveloped active and/or fallowed agricultural lands exist to the north, east, south, and west of the Project site. A fertilizer manufacturer is approximately 0.5-mile to the east of the site and a PV solar facility is approximately 2.5 miles to the east of the Project site. There are no schools, hospitals, or airports within 2 miles. The nearest residence is approximately 1 mile away.

Land Use Designation:

The Fresno County General Plan designates the Project site for Agriculture. The County's Zoning Map identifies the Project site as AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture, 20-acre minimum parcel size). The Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) designates the site as Farmland of Local Importance. The Project site is not subject to a Williamson Act contract.



Source: ESA, 2024

Rosemary Solar and Energy Storage System Complex

Figure 1
Project Location

Alternatives to be Analyzed in the EIR:

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines §15126.6, the Draft EIR will assess a reasonable range of alternatives to the Project, including a No Project Alternative and other alternatives that would meet most of the basic objectives of the Project while avoiding or reducing any of its significant environmental effects. Input is requested in identifying potential alternatives for consideration in the EIR.

Potential Environmental Impacts:

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15060(d), the County has determined that this Project could result in one or more significant impacts on the physical environment, thereby necessitating the preparation of an EIR, and so has not prepared an Initial Study. The EIR will analyze all topics identified in the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Environmental Checklist after establishing the environmental setting (or baseline), for the analysis. The EIR will identify potential significant direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Project and alternatives related to:

- Aesthetic quality and views from publicly accessible vantage points;
- Agriculture and forestry resources, including the use of property for renewable energy uses for the duration of any Project approvals;
- Air quality and noise affecting potential sensitive receptors, particularly during construction;
- The intersection of air quality, energy use, transportation, and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions;
- Biological resources, including species and habitats, based on database queries, field surveys, and agency consultations, if required;
- Cultural and tribal cultural resources that could be disturbed during construction, based on record searches, field surveys, and input that may be received from California Native American Tribes;
- Geology and soils, paleontological resources, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, and related considerations and constraints;
- The Project's relationship to land use and planning, as well as lands subject to special resources management activities, such as mineral resources and recreation;
- Population and housing, public services, and utilities and service systems;
- Wildfire, including the potential to exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose people to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire; and
- Growth inducement, particularly in relation to existing, adopted development plans for Fresno County.