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March 28, 2013

NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND INITIAL STUDY

TO: Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties.

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15082). The Inyo County Planning Department is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Northland Power Independence, LLC Solar Project (proposed project) identified below. The Inyo County Planning Department is preparing an EIR for the proposed project.

ORGANIZATIONS AND INTERESTED PARTIES: The Inyo County Planning Department requests your comments regarding the proposed project.

PROJECT TITLE: Northland Power Independence, LLC Solar Project Development – General Plan Amendment No. 2012-05, Zone Reclassification No. 2012-06, Renewable Energy Development Agreement No. 2012-01

PROJECT LOCATION: The project site consists of a 1,280-acre site located about 5 miles east of Independence, CA. The site consists of Assessor Parcel Nos. (APN) 022-210-010 and 022-220-013 and is located in Sections 17-20 and 29, Township 13 South, Range 36 East, Mount Diablo Baseline and Meridian. The project's location is depicted in the attached **Figure 1, Regional Location and Project Vicinity Map**.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Northland Power Independence, LLC proposes to construct and operate a photovoltaic (PV) power plant generating about 200 megawatts of power intertying with the City of Los Angeles' transmission west of the site. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2014, with operations beginning later that year. The plant will consist primarily of PV panels, such as fixed racking, single axis (Horizontal) tilt, and/or single axis (Azimuth) tracker. Access will be via Mazourka Canyon Road, and two alternative intertie connections are being considered, one directly to the transmission facilities from the southwest side of the site, and the second via Mazourka Canyon Road. The useful life of the plant is 35 years.

FINDINGS: An Initial Study and Evaluation of Potential Impacts has been prepared by the Planning Department. The Initial Study, including an environmental checklist, indicates that the proposed project could potentially have a significant adverse impact on the environment or require mitigation to avoid potentially significant adverse effects on the environment for certain aspects of the following environmental topic areas: aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, and utilities and service systems. Accordingly, a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared.

RESPONSES AND COMMENTS: The Inyo County Planning Department will accept comments/responses to this Notice of Preparation for thirty days, from the date of this notice through and including April 29, 2013. Send comments/responses to:

13-00009

Nolan Bobroff, Planning Coordinator
Inyo County Planning Department
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168 N. Edwards Street
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Comments may also be sent by FAX to (760) 878-0382 or by email to nbobroff@inyocounty.us

SCOPING MEETING: A scoping meeting will be held on Thursday, April 18, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. at the Inyo County Board of Supervisors Room in Independence, CA in order to present general information on the project and provide a public forum to gather input from the public on what issues should be addressed in the EIR to be prepared for the project.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY: The Initial Study is available for review at all County libraries and on the Planning Department website at www.inyoplanning.org. If you would like a hard copy of the Initial Study, please contact Nolan Bobroff at (760) 878-0263.