

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
WARNER RANCH COMMITTEE OF THE
VISTA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

May 12, 2009

A Meeting of the Warner Ranch Committee of Vista Irrigation District was held on Tuesday, May 12, 2009, at the offices of the District, 1391 Engineer Street, Vista, California.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair MacKenzie called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Committee members present: Dorey and MacKenzie.

Committee members absent: None.

Staff present: Don Smith, Director of Water Resources; and Angela Morrow, Water Resources Project Manager; Lisa Soto, Secretary of the Board.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

No public comments were presented on items not appearing on the agenda.

5. SOLAR ENERGY ON THE WARNER RANCH

Director of Water Resources Don Smith reported that staff has received a letter of interest to construct a solar energy site at the former site of the La Jet solar project. He stated that he has also received a verbal expression of interest from another party. The Committee discussed the concept of allowing another solar site on this already disturbed area of Warner Ranch. The Committee recommended that Mr. Smith prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) to construct, operate and maintain a solar energy site at the former La Jet site, specifying that only photovoltaic projects would be considered. In the meantime, the Committee members would collect business cards of solar vendors while at the upcoming ACWA Conference in Sacramento, which will be provided to staff. Staff will bring the RFP and the list of vendors to whom the RFP will be sent to the full Board for its consideration.

6. CELLULAR TELECOMMUNICATIONS LICENSE AGREEMENTS ON THE WARNER RANCH

Mr. Smith stated that staff has been approached by Verizon Wireless, who has expressed an interest in constructing a cellular tower near the intersection of Highways 79 and S2. The Committee supported staff's preference to specify that the District will only entertain proposals for cellular sites which will accommodate more than one provider.

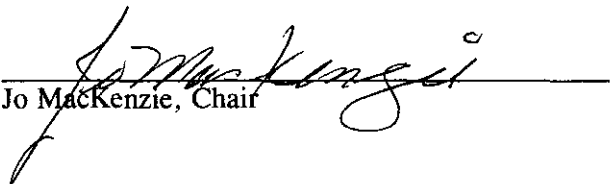
7. STATUS OF NAVY ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PREPARATION AND DISTRICT'S ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANT CONTRACT

The Committee received an update from staff regarding the status of the Navy's Environmental Assessment preparation and revised schedule for publication and public review. Mr. Smith informed the Committee that the District's costs to retain the Coleman Planning Group (GPG) to assist in assuring that the Navy's NEPA compliance fully meets the District's requirements to comply with CEQA have exceeded the original contract amount of \$24,900. CPG estimates that it will cost another \$14,400 in labor to complete the review and processing of the Navy's Environmental Assessment according to their currently proposed schedule. The Committee confirmed their continued support of the Navy's Environmental Assessment project. The Committee requested that staff investigate CPG's proposed scope of work and assure that CPG does not perform tasks at District expense which could reasonably be performed by the Navy.

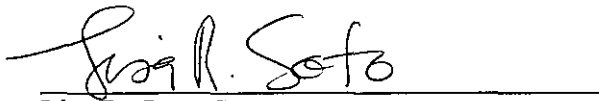
Mr. Smith shared that he had had discussions with Navy personnel regarding possible reimbursement of the District's expense in reviewing work products and coordinating their environmental efforts to date. Mr. Jonathan Olson, Environmental Planner for the Navy, said that while the Navy did not have any additional funding available at present, he thought it would be reasonable to include a one-time "cost recovery" fee in addition to the annual license fee when we negotiate our final license agreement with the Navy.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Chair MacKenzie adjourned the meeting 10:35 a.m.


Jo MacKenzie, Chair

ATTEST:



Lisa R. Soto, Secretary
Board of Directors
VISTA IRRIGATION DISTRICT



**VISTA
IRRIGATION
DISTRICT**

Agenda Item: 5

**WARNER RANCH COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

Committee Meeting Date:
Prepared By:
Approved By:

May 12, 2009
Don Smith
Roy Coox

SUBJECT: SOLAR ENERGY ON THE WARNER RANCH

RECOMMENDATION: Receive update from staff regarding recent interest shown on the old La Jet solar energy site on the Warner Ranch. Consider alternatives for the District's approach to solar energy development on the Warner Ranch.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION: On June 1, 1983, the Board approved execution of the La Jet Energy lease option.

FISCAL IMPACT: Unknown at this time. Lease revenue would depend on the type and scope of the project.

SUMMARY: The District has recently been contacted by several solar energy developers expressing an interest in redeveloping the La Jet site on the Warner Ranch for solar energy. Given the level of interest in alternative energy initiatives in the country in general and in California in particular, it appears timely to consider possible approaches to solar energy development on the Warner Ranch.

DETAILED REPORT: In 1983, the District entered into a lease with La Jet Energy Corporation for the development of solar energy on the Warner Ranch. Subsequently, the 40 acre site was developed with a series of parabolic solar arrays and a steam driven 3 MW turbine generator. By the late 1980's, La Jet Energy Corporation had declared bankruptcy and the District was left to salvage what it could of the abandoned equipment. Since that time the La Jet site has been left abandoned.

While the District intends to identify areas for possible future solar energy development in conjunction with its Warner Ranch Master Plan and conservation planning efforts, the La Jet site, as a previously disturbed solar energy project location, seems ideally suited for possible future redevelopment as a solar energy facility. It is also possible that such redevelopment might generate the funding that would facilitate the planning efforts contemplated by the District.

If this approach makes sense, staff would like to discuss with the Committee the options for proceeding. The District could negotiate with some of the currently interested developers, or we could advertise the project to a wider audience and publish a request for solar energy development proposals.

ATTACHMENTS: None.



**VISTA
IRRIGATION
DISTRICT**

Agenda Item: 6

**WARNER RANCH COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

Committee Meeting Date:
Prepared By:
Approved By:

May 12, 2009
Don Smith
Roy Coox

SUBJECT: CELLULAR TELECOMMUNICATIONS LICENSE AGREEMENTS ON THE WARNER RANCH

RECOMMENDATION: Receive update from staff regarding cellular telecommunications plans and proposals on the Warner Ranch.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION: On January 3, 2007, the Board authorized the General Manager to execute a license agreement with Vista Towers, Inc. to construct a wireless telecommunications facility (cellular telephone tower) on the Warner Ranch near the Puerta La Cruz facility.

FISCAL IMPACT: None.

SUMMARY: The District has recently been contacted by a cellular telephone provider expressing interest in developing a cellular telephone tower near the intersection of Highway 79 and S-2. District staff sees the value of increasing the coverage and quality of cellular telephone service on the Warner Ranch and the potential for District revenue, but is concerned about the potential environmental impacts of proliferating single-provider cellular telecommunications towers on District lands. An alternative is to encourage the construction of fewer multi-carrier towers in selected locations.

DETAILED REPORT: The November 2008 draft of the San Diego County General Plan includes the following language:

GOAL LU-15

Adequate Wireless Communication Facilities. Wireless telecommunication facilities that utilize State-of-the-art techniques to minimize impacts to communities and the environment.

LU-15.1 Telecommunication Facilities Compatibility with Setting. Require that wireless telecommunication facilities be sited and designed to minimize visual impacts, adverse impacts to the natural environment, and are compatible with existing development and community character.

LU-15.2 Co-Location of Telecommunication Facilities. Encourage wireless telecommunication service providers to co-locate their facilities whenever appropriate, consistent with Community Plans and the Zoning Ordinance.

Both Highway 79 and San Felipe Road (S-2) are part of the County Scenic Highway System. As such, cellular telephone towers in this undeveloped rural area are likely to receive close scrutiny from the County Planning Department. It may be that a network of new and existing multi-carrier towers located around the periphery of the Ranch would provide adequate cellular telephone coverage in this area while minimizing environmental disruption.

ATTACHMENTS: None.



**WARNER RANCH COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Item: 7

Committee Meeting Date:
Prepared By:
Approved By:

May 12, 2009
Don Smith
Roy Coox

SUBJECT: STATUS OF NAVY ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PREPARATION AND DISTRICT'S ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANT CONTRACT

RECOMMENDATION: Receive update from staff regarding the status of the Navy's Environmental Assessment preparation and revised schedule for publication and public review. Confirm the Board's previous direction on District support of this process, particularly as it pertains to a necessary amendment to the consulting contract of the Coleman Planning Group.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION: On January 19, 2005, the Board authorized the Navy to conduct an environmental assessment of an additional 4,300 acres of District land in preparation for discussions regarding a possible lease expansion. On September 21, 2005 the Board approved a renewal of the Navy's lease on the existing 1,197 acres of District land with an annual rent of \$40,000. On February 1, 2006 the Board received a status report on the Navy's Environmental Assessment, and authorized the District to enter into negotiations for an expanded lease on the Warner Ranch. On April 30, 2008, the Board affirmed District staff's continued cooperation with the Navy's lease expansion process.

FISCAL IMPACT: The Coleman Planning Group estimates that their existing agreement with the District will need to be amended to increase their fee limit from \$24,900 to \$39,300 (a \$14,400 increase) to complete the review and processing of the Navy's Environmental Assessment according to their currently proposed schedule.

SUMMARY: The Navy has published a third version of a draft Environmental Assessment for their proposed expansion of the Remote Training Site, Warner Springs (RTSWS). While they are nearing completion of this process, the time and level of effort that has been required has greatly exceeded their expectations. Per the Board's direction, District staff have supported this process and have been involved in coordination and review over the last several years. The District has also retained the Coleman Planning Group (CPG) to assist in assuring that the Navy's NEPA compliance fully meets the District's requirements to comply with CEQA. As of the end of March 2008, nearly all of the fee allowance in CPG's existing contract authorization of \$24,900 has been expended.

DETAILED REPORT: On April 20th, the Navy provided the following estimate of their schedule to complete the Environmental Assessment of their proposed expansion of operations at RTSWS:

TIME TO COMPLETION/DATE

- | | | |
|---|-------------|-----------|
| 1) Respond to comments received on last draft of EA | 2 weeks | (May 4) |
| 2) EA ready for public review | 5 weeks | (May 25) |
| 3) Launch of public notice | 6 weeks | (June 1) |
| 4) Public review period for EA | 10-11 weeks | (June 29) |

Michael Coleman with CPG has discussed this timeline with the Navy and has provided an estimate 96 hours (attached) needed to review and process the EA, and assure that a properly processed mitigated negative declaration is approved by the Board. At CPG's standard billing rate, this represents a \$14,400 increase in CPG's current fee authorization.

ATTACHMENTS: CPG estimate of hours to bring CEQA document to completion

Coleman Planning Group-Draft write up of CPG-VID/Navy tasks remaining to bring CEQA document to completion 4-27-09

VID-Navy Remote Training Center-Warner Ranch

Estimate of Hours needed to take NEPA/CEQA document through public review, receive public comments and respond to comments, prepare findings and bring to Board final CEQA document forward to the VID Board of Directors:

Note: Additional hours are needed due to the time line extended by the Navy, number of versions of the Navy Environmental Assessment (EA) and CEQA document versions reviewed, and continued monthly project management now required. While the Coleman Planning Group has stretched out their hours much longer than anticipated and made good use of the allocated hours, the original scope of work for Coleman Planning Group did not plan for this duration of work. Thus a change order is needed to bring the project through to completion.

<u>Month</u>	<u>Task</u>	<u>Estimated Hours</u>
April 2009	Carry over of hours not billed yet on major review of Navy EA/ CEQA document from March 2009 + April Coordination	16.0
May 2009	<u>Final Review and Revisions</u> of all documents and final revisions EA/CEQA documents, Notice of Intent (NOI), Newspaper Ad, and Ad Coordination with San Diego Union Tribune newspaper, Prepare State Clearinghouse forms, Notice of Completion (NOC) and environmental document transfer form, extensive coordination with Navy and VID as needed, coordinate shipment of CEQA documents and electronic media to Sacramento (state clearinghouse) via overnight mail, Coordinate on dual website needs. Note: Navy proposes June 1, 2009 release of EA and CEQA Document for 30 day public review which means everything must be ready in May.	32.0
June 2009	Navy proposes EA/CEQA review in June 1-29, 2009. Minimal Project management/coordination will be needed in the Navy meets its' proposed public review launch date of 6-1-09.	8.0

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New Fiscal Year

July 2009	Receive public comments received on the CEQA Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). Prepare written response to public comments for review by VID/Navy. Make any revisions requested. Note: number of comments to be received is unknown at this point.	16.0
August 2009	Navy will likely need a second month to respond. Project coordination continued.	8.0
September 2009	Prepare for VID Board approval of CEQA documentation. Write CEQA "Findings", attend VID Board approval. Navy Lease may follow at the same hearing date or follow 1-6 months later, etc.	16.0