



## ALAMEDA COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

### MEMORANDUM

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**Date:** November 12, 2013

**To:** Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area (APWRA) Scientific Review Committee (SRC)

**From:** Sandi Rivera, Assistant Deputy Director

**Subject:** Draft Environmental Impact Report for Proposed Sand Hill Wind Repowering Project

The APWRA SRC is scheduled to review and provide input at its November 22, 2013 conference call meeting on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the repowering project proposed by Sand Hill Wind, LLC.

The Sand Hill Wind repowering project would replace existing (formerly SeaWest/AES) turbines on approximately 1,000 acres with turbines of a shrouded design developed by FloDesign Wind Turbine Corporation that has been referred to as a Mixer/Ejector Wind Turbine (MEWT) design. The applicant's project includes initial and full repower phases. Sand Hill Wind is currently seeking a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the Initial Phase. This phase would decommission 70-80 existing turbines and install 40 shrouded turbines as part of Shawn Smallwood's three-year PIER-funded avian validation study, developed with SRC guidance, that began in April 2012 to examine whether the shrouded design could reduce impacts to birds compared to standard turbine designs. The results of the Initial Phase and the study would inform Sand Hill Wind's approach to repowering their remaining old generation turbines. The Full Repower phase would decommission the remaining 300+ turbines and could add up to 30 MW of capacity. The DEIR provides a project-level review of the Initial Phase and a programmatic-level review of the proposed Full Repower phase; that Full Repower phase would be subject to a separate conditional use permit and environmental review.

**Desired Outcome:** Alameda County is seeking the SRC's scientific expertise and best professional judgment on those aspects of the DEIR related to avian biological resources. The County would like to receive the SRC's consensus comments on key issues it identifies in each of the following topics:

1. **Methodology:** What are the SRC's thoughts on the methodology used in the DEIR for analyzing impacts to avian biological resources?
2. **Assumptions:** What is the SRC's perspective on DEIR assumptions in relation to avian biological resources?
3. **Mitigations:** What is the SRC's assessment of the appropriateness of the avian-related on- and off-site mitigations set out in the draft document?

The discussion at the November meeting will focus on these broad topics. Individual SRC members can submit comments on more detailed issues in written form, which CCP will compile for submittal. The deadline to receive comments is 5 PM, December 23, 2013.