



WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service

www.washoecounty.us

STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: April 28, 2020

DATE: April 4, 2020

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Dan Cahalane, Planner, Community Services
775-328-3628, dcahalane@washoecounty.us

THROUGH: Mojra Hauenstein, Arch., Planner, Division Director, Planning & Building, Community Services Dept., 328-3619,
mhauenstein@washoecounty.us

SUBJECT: Public Hearing: To approve and authorize the chair to sign a resolution initiating an amendment to the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan—Map 3, Regional Utility Corridors & Sites—in order to establish a new connection line from the generation point at APN 074-040-61 to the NV Energy line at APN 074-040-060 for Fish Springs Ranch, LLC. The line will connect the new 300-megawatt Fish Springs Solar energy generation facility/farm to the NV Energy power grid. The solar energy farm will operate on 2,191 noncontiguous acres in the vicinity of southeastern Honey Lake Valley approximately 45 miles north of Reno, at APNs 074-040-15, 23, 24, 56, 57, 58, 61; 074-420-07, 11, 14, 15, 16; 074-070-16, 28, 72, 73, 74, which has already been approved as a special use permit WSUP20-0001 by the County Planning Commission and is awaiting review and approval/conformance by the regional planning authorities as a project of regional significance. If approved, this separate but related resolution initiating an amendment to the regional utility corridor map for the solar farm's connection line will also be subject to approval by the regional planning authorities. (Commission District 5.)

SUMMARY

The applicant, Fish Springs Solar, LLC, is requesting to establish a 300MW renewable energy production use type on 2,191 non-contiguous acres. This triggers the 5MW production threshold for a project of regional significance. Therefore, this project requires establishing a new generation point and a connection line from APN 074-040-61 to the NV Energy line at APN 074-040-60 on the Regional Utility Corridors & Sites map (map 3) of the currently adopted Truckee Meadows Regional Plan. The application was approved unanimously by the Planning Commission on March 3, 2020.

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item: Proactive Economic Development and Diversification

AGENDA ITEM # _____

PREVIOUS ACTION

On March 3, 2020, the application was heard by the Washoe County Planning Commission. The Planning Commission approved the application with a unanimous approval of 5-0.

On February 13, 2020, the application was heard by the Gerlach/Empire Citizen Advisory Board who did not vote on the item. However, they noted their general approval.

BACKGROUND

The applicant is requesting to establish a 300 MW solar renewable energy use type on 2,191 noncontiguous acres across 17 parcels south of Flannigan. This project will also include 300 MW of battery storage. The proposed project will be split into two phases.

Phase 1 is estimated to take approximately 10 months and provide 100 MW of renewable solar energy through solar arrays and accompanying battery storage.

Phase 2 is estimated to take approximately 12 months and provide an additional 200 MW of renewable solar power through solar arrays and accompanying battery storage.

This project meets the criteria for a project of regional significance as it will generate more than 5 MW of electricity and proposes creating a substation within the facility per the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency 2019 Regional Plan Appendix 2. The proposed facility will connect to the existing 345kV Fort Sage Substation via one of three open 345kV bays or open 24.9kV bay. The applicant is proposing to construct a 34.5kV substation on site to modulate power depending on the final attachment bay.

The proposed facility is replacing the approved Special Use Permit SW09-002. The previously approved project proposed a 100 MW solar renewable energy on 2,588 acres. This project was never built, and the approval for special use permit expired in January of 2020. The proposed facility will require less acreage due to advances in photo-voltaic technology.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended the Board review the record and information received during the public hearing and affirm the Planning Commission's unanimous approval of case number WSUP20-0001 Fish Springs Solar.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be:

“Move to adopt the resolution to initiate an amendment to the regional plan Map 3 – Regional Utility Corridors & Sites and a review of conformance with the 2019 Truckee Meadows Regional Plan in its entirety”

Attachments:

- A. Resolution
- B. Planning Commission signed Action Order dated 3/5/2020
- C. Minutes of the 3/3/20 Planning Commission meeting
- D. Conditions of Approval
- E. Planning Commission staff report dated 3/3/2020.

cc: Applicant: Fish Springs Ranch, LLC, 3480 GS Richards Blvd.
Suite 101, Carson City, NV 89703

Representative: Dudek, 605 Third Street, Encinitas, CA 92024