

Appeals filed against Topaz Solar Farm

Aaron Crutchfield, Atascadero News, 6-16-11

Three appeals have been filed against Topaz Solar Farm, a 550-megawatt solar power plant proposed for the Carrizo Plain and approved by the San Luis Obispo county Planning Commission in May.

Carrizo Plain resident Michael Strobridge, Berkeley resident Jody Stegman and a coalition of environmental groups — Defenders of Wildlife, Center for Biological Diversity, North County Watch and Carrizo Commons — filed the appeals.

The appeals are raised on the same issues as what was argued before the Planning Commission during the approval process, particularly on the effect the project would have on the endangered species in the area and the thoroughness of the environmental impact report, which one appeal said fails to provide adequate identification and analysis of all the impacts of the project on the San Joaquin kit fox, longhorn and vernal pool fairy shrimp, golden eagles and other rare plants and animals.

The appeals also claimed that the project's EIR doesn't mitigate for the project's impact on the loss of farmland.