County of Santa Cruz

Department of Community Development and Infrastructure

701 Ocean Street, Fourth Floor, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Planning (831) 454-2580 Public Works (831) 454-2160

https://cdi.santacruzcountyca.gov/

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A NEGATIVE DECLARATION

NOTICE OF PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the following project has been reviewed by the County Environmental Coordinator to determine if it has a potential to create significant impacts to the environment and, if so, how such impacts may be avoided. A Negative Declaration is prepared in cases where the project is determined not to have any significant environmental impacts. Either a Mitigated Negative Declaration or Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is prepared for projects that may result in a significant impact to the environment.

Public review periods are provided for these Environmental Determinations according to the requirements of the CEQA Guidelines. The environmental document is available for review at the County Planning Department located at 701 Ocean Street, in Santa Cruz. You may also view the environmental document on the web at www.sccoplanning.com under the Planning Department menu. If you have questions or comments about this Notice of Intent, please contact Project Planner, Rebecca Rockom, at (831) 454-3121.

The County of Santa Cruz does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and no person shall, by reason of a disability, be denied the benefits of its services, programs or activities. If you require special assistance in order to review this information, please contact Angelica Diaz at (831) 454-3137 (TDD number (831) 454-2123 or (831) 763-8123) to make arrangements.

PROJECT: Application 251463, Mt. Hermon Solar Array

APN(s): 071-331-06 and 071-331-05

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Proposal to construct an approximately 39,800-square-foot private microgrid utility facility consisting of an 831.60 kW ground-mounted photovoltaic (PV) system with a maximum height of nine feet, on a vacant 8.88-acre parcel to provide electric power exclusively for use by the Mt. Hermon Camp and Conference Center. All excess energy will be used to offset the client's usage; this project will not have an Energy Storage System. The array is proposed to be sited on a knoll in the center of the parcel, outside of the oak woodland and needlegrass grassland habitats (Figure 1.2, Site Plan). The project requires a Conditional Use Permit (CUP), a Conditional Site Development Permit (CSP), Biotic Report, Geotechnical Report, and a Variance to increase the lot coverage from 10% to about 10.5%.

The project includes the removal of 5 significant (equal to or greater than 20 inches diameter at 4.5 feet above ground level) oak trees, the addition of a six-foot-tall perimeter fence around the array, and a new gravel road to access the site from the west over the adjacent parcel APN 071-331-05, also owned by the Mount Hermon Camp and Conference Center.

EXISTING ZONE DISTRICT: 1
APPLICANT: Mars Energy Group
OWNER: Mt. Hermon Association
PROJECT PLANNER: Rebecca Rockom
EMAIL: Rebecca.rockom@santacruzcountyca.gov
ACTION: Negative Declaration with mitigations
REVIEW PERIOD: 10/13/2026 – 11/1/2026

This project will be considered at a public hearing by the Planning Commission. The time, date, and location have not been set When scheduling does occur, these items will be included in all public hearing notices for the project.