

**DESERT SUNLIGHT SOLAR PROJECT  
WEEKLY PROGRESS REPORT  
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES  
DESERT CENTER, CALIFORNIA**

OCTOBER 22-OCTOBER 28, 2012  
PUBLIC INFORMATION



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## **Summary:**

With BLM approval and per their guidance, both juvenile tortoises found during clearance surveys previously were released without transmitters or ID markers at the Sunlight recipient site, in the areas prepared last week.

The two newly translocated tortoises, 6005 and 6006 have been monitored closely throughout the week and have not shown any signs of stress since their translocation and have behaved very normally for the time of day and year.

All other tortoises were tracked throughout the week. There have not been any issues with the transmittered tortoises this week. All were observed out foraging and behaving normally.

Kit foxes were tracked daily and all remained at their typical den locations. The on-site foxes still reside in the den just north of the MSA. Both the juvenile pup and male adult have been observed at the MSA and both have been found back at their den close to the MSA. The previous den location was also under close observation to ensure that it was completely vacant for at least three consecutive evenings so that it could be collapsed. Collapse of the den was successful. Clearance surveys were completed in that section and there were no biological signs of concern.

Raven netting at the pond was partially removed and has been monitored closely per BLM guidance for any increase in raven activity or any problems with other birds.

Fall avian bird counts continued throughout the week and will continue through part of next week. Salvaged plants were watered.

All other daily and weekly biological checks were completed throughout the week and no major issues were observed. Daily tortoise fence inspections occurred. MSA bird netting was checked without issue. The wheel wash is still not working properly, but First Solar has provided staff to manually wash all vehicles entering the site.

Beta continued to work on pier foundations and removed dirt to block 3. First Solar finished installing tortoise fence around the MSA. Syntech took topographical information throughout the entire site and avoided all biological exclusion zones in the northern portions of the site.

**Monday:**

Translocated and resident tortoises were tracked. Kit foxes were tracked the entire week. Tortoises #6005 and #6006 as well as the juvenile tortoises were monitored closely. First Solar worked on the tortoise fence around the MSA as kit fox deterrence.

**Tuesday:**

Control tortoises were tracked. Internal tortoise fence was checked. The juvenile tortoises were translocated.

**Wednesday:**

Translocated tortoises were tracked. Netting on the pond was removed a quarter of the way to allow the grebe to leave the pond, but remained in the pond and still appeared healthy. The kit fox den previously occupied was checked for occupancy and was vacant.

**Thursday:**

Resident tortoises were tracked. Netting on the pond was adjusted to prevent any bird mortalities should they enter the pond – it was observed closely throughout the remainder of the week. The kit fox den was again checked and was vacant.

**Friday:**

Translocated and control tortoises were tracked. Bird netting in the MSA was checked. Tortoise fence was added to the security fence gate that is east of the MSA security fence. Internal tortoise fence was checked. Vacancy of the kit fox den was verified again and plugs were placed at all entrances to prevent kit foxes from occupying it overnight prior to it being collapsed.

**Saturday:**

The kit fox complex was collapsed and no tortoise sign or new kit fox sign was found. The male kit fox was tracked to the MSA. The perimeter fence was inspected. Daily compliance checks were completed as well as close observation of the pond. No construction activities took place on site that required biological monitors.

**Sunday:**

Clearance surveys were done within the exclusion area where the kit fox complex was located and no other biological signs of concern were found. The male kit fox was found back at its den. The grebe was found floating in the pond – cause of mortality is unclear with no visible injuries, signs of entanglement, and a normal body condition. The perimeter fence was inspected. Daily compliance checks were completed as well as close observation of the pond. No construction activities took place on site that required biological monitors.