



DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL

P.O. Box 1568
Ridgecrest, California 93556
www.deserttortoise.org

Date: 3 February 2013

To: Clara Stabiumi, Marisol Energy 2 LLC, **via email only** (Marisol.info@galileoaz.com)

From: Ed LaRue, Desert Tortoise Council

RE: 5 February 2013 public meeting on proposed project

Dear Ms. Stabiumi,

The Desert Tortoise Council (Council) is a private, non-profit organization comprised of hundreds of professionals and laypersons who share a common concern for wild desert tortoises and a commitment to advancing the public's understanding of this species. Established in 1976 to promote conservation of tortoises in the deserts of the southwestern United States and Mexico, the Council regularly provides information to individuals, organizations and regulatory agencies on matters potentially affecting the desert tortoise within its historical range.

We appreciate the invitation to attend your public meeting on 5 February 2013 for the proposed Maricopa Solar Park Project. Although we do not expect that a representative will attend this particular meeting, we understand from your letter, dated 22 January 2013, that "the official federal process ... will begin later this year," and that the Council will have an opportunity to review environmental documents as they become available. As such, please consider the Desert Tortoise Council an Interested Party, and please continue to send information to the address on our letterhead.

As our name implies, we are specifically interested in how your project may or may not affect Morafka's desert tortoise (*Gopherus morafkai*). In the absence of a project description, we assume that there will be both a solar array (solar field) and associated transmission lines. If so, please be sure that potential impacts of both of these project aspects are thoroughly analyzed in your environmental documents and that options for mitigation of any impact to the tortoise are presented. Also it will be important to address growth inducing impacts as they relate to Morafka's desert tortoise; for example: will the energy you generate promote or encourage new growth that will affect tortoises and their habitats outside the project footprint?

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to review environmental documents once they become available.

Regards,

Desert Tortoise Council
Edward L. LaRue, Jr., Ecosystems Advisory Committee