



**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

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Order Instituting Rulemaking Regarding Policies,  
Procedures and Rules for the California Solar Initiative,  
the Self-Generation Incentive Program and Other  
Distributed Generation Issues.

Rulemaking R.10-05-004  
(Filed May 6, 2010)

**OPENING COMMENTS OF RECOLTE ENERGY ON COMMISSIONER  
PEEVEY'S PROPOSED DECISION ON CALIFORNIA SOLAR INITIATIVE  
PHASE 1 MODIFICATIONS**

**RECOLTE ENERGY**

Gopal Shanker  
410 Lafata Street, Suite 102  
St. Helena, CA 94574  
Telephone: (707) 480-1960  
Facsimile: (866) 561-9002  
Email: [gopal@recolteenergy.com](mailto:gopal@recolteenergy.com)

Date: June 29, 2011

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PHASE 1 MODIFICATIONS**

Pursuant to *Commissioner Peevey’s Proposed Decision on CSI Phase 1 Issues* (“Proposed Decision”), Récolte Energy (Récolte) hereby submits these Opening Comments. Récolte’s comments pertain to Sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 of, and Conclusions of Law 2, 3, 5, and 6 in, the Proposed Decision on virtual net metering (VNM) and the Bill Credit Transfer (BCT) option.

Récolte appreciates the consideration that Commissioner Peevey, ALJ Duda, and Commission staff have shown for Récolte’s perspectives in the Proposed Decision. In these Opening Comments, Récolte requests the addition of some clarifying language to the existing Conclusions of Law and makes additional recommendations to ensure that a particular customer or technology isn’t unintentionally excluded from participation in VNM and BCT.

## I. BACKGROUND ON RECOLTE ENERGY

Récolte Energy is a Napa Valley based energy consultancy that helps its clients become more economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable, by developing energy conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy (primarily solar and fuel cell) generation projects. Récolte's clients are from the non-profit, agricultural, commercial, and public sectors, and include *wineries* such as Chateau Montelena, Far Niente, and Sutter Home; *wine industry suppliers* like M.A. Silva Corks USA; *non-profits* including the Gasser Foundation, Del Mesa Carmel, and Napa Transitional Housing; and *school districts* in Napa, Sonoma, and Contra Costa counties.

These clients usually have multiple meters to offset. The meters may be in one electrical closet, in multiple locations on the same parcel, on contiguous parcels, on non-contiguous parcels, and assigned to the same, related, or unrelated customers.

These customers have had to expend unnecessary amounts of time, effort, and expense to become self-generators. Some, like Del Mesa Carmel, have not been able to become self-generators at all. Their situations have been described in Récolte's Opening and Reply Comments on Phase I issues.

While the Proposed Decision addresses these concerns and proposes to expand VNM and BCT for future customers, the Conclusions of Law, as written, may unintentionally exclude current customers and non-solar technologies. Récolte requests the addition of some clarifying language to eliminate any ambiguity in interpretation. In the next section, Récolte will list the Conclusions of Law to be clarified, and in the third section, propose alternate language and make additional recommendations.

## **II. EXCERPTS FROM CONCLUSIONS OF LAW SECTION OF PROPOSED DECISION**

The second, third, fifth, and sixth Conclusions of Law from the Proposed Decision state:

2. VNM tariffs should be expanded to allow any multitenant property to take VNM service and thereby receive the benefits of a solar energy system and net energy metering.
3. For properties other than MASH-participating affordable housing developments, an expanded VNM tariff should be limited to accounts served by a single SDP.
5. The expanded VNM tariff can apply to any DG technology that is allowed under net energy metering.
6. Expansion of the RES-BCT tariff to all customers would provide flexibility for solar energy system owners to share production at one site with other accounts registered to the same customer.

### III. RECOLTE ENERGY COMMENTS

In reference to the second Conclusion of Law, because electricity meters can be in one electrical closet, in multiple locations on the same parcel, on contiguous parcels, on non-contiguous parcels, and belong to the same or different customers, Récolte requests that the term “multitenant” be replaced with “multi-meter”, and that the second Conclusion of Law be restated as follows:

2. VNM tariffs should be expanded to allow any multi-*meter* property to take VNM service and thereby receive the benefits of a solar energy system and net energy metering.

In reference to the third Conclusion of Law, so there is no unintended restriction against “properties other than MASH-participating affordable housing developments” on separate parcels, Récolte requests that the phrase “even if the meters are separated by a street, highway or public thoroughfare” be appended, and that the third Conclusion of Law be restated as follows:

3. For properties other than MASH-participating affordable housing developments, an expanded VNM tariff should be limited to accounts served by a single SDP, *even if the meters are separated by a street, highway or public thoroughfare.*

In reference to the sixth Conclusion of Law, Récolte requests that the RES-BCT tariff also apply to any DG technology, consistent with the fifth Conclusion of Law, and that the sixth Conclusion of Law be restated as follows:

6. Expansion of the RES-BCT tariff to all customers, *and all DG technologies*, would provide flexibility for solar, *and other distributed*, energy system

owners to share production at one site with other accounts registered to the same customer.

Finally, in order that customers who had to or may have to install multiple DG systems to offset multiple meters on the same or contiguous properties also benefit from the expansion of VNM and BCT, and to simplify the billing for all customers, Récolte makes the following recommendations vis-à-vis VNM:

- a. The definition of a generating account for VNM should change from its current definition in the NEMVNMA tariff to be similar to the definition of a generating account under the RES-BCT tariff. In other words, a generating account for VNM should not be precluded from having associated load.
- b. If all the meters on a VNM tariff belong to one customer, then the annual true-up for the customer should be based on the sum of the debit and credit balances of all the associated generating and benefiting accounts (meters).
- c. If the meters on a VNM tariff belong to different customers, then the Applicant (landlord, manager, etc.) for the VNM tariff should be able to provide the allocation of PV production to individual meters on an as-needed basis. The utility should be able to recoup from the Applicant the cost of changing the allocation percentages every time he requests a change.

Without these clarifications, many generator-customers with multiple meters won't be able to benefit from the expansion of VNM and BCT.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

To increase market penetration of renewables, especially with rebates declining more rapidly than anticipated, VNM and RES-BCT, which are elegant software solutions, should be expanded to all distributed generation customers – current and future – and technologies.

Respectfully submitted this 29<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2011 at San Francisco, California.

**RECOLTE ENERGY**

Gopal Shanker

410 Lafata Street, Suite 102

St. Helena, CA 94574

Telephone: (707) 480-1960

Facsimile: (866) 561-9002

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*Gopal Shanker*

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Gopal Shanker