

Page 1 of 4

TO:  
California Energy Commission  
Dockets Unit, MS-4  
Re Docket No. 09-Renew EO-01  
1516 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512  
docket@energy.state.ca.us  
Re: DRECP Scoping Comments  
**Docket No.09-Renew EO-01**

<b>DOCKET</b>	
<b>9-RENEW EO-1</b>	
DATE	AUG 13 2011
RECD.	AUG 16 2011

From:  
David Beaumont  
Alternate DRECP Stakeholder representing the California Off Road Vehicle Association (CORVA). Founder of Mojave Trails Group. Life Member of Blue Ribbon Coalition.  
Email: savecaliforniasdeserts@gmail.com  
Date: August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Please include the following commentary and suggestions regarding Back Country Camping, into the Scoping Process for the DRECP.

Sincerely,

David Beaumont

First off, let me explain that my primary function and activity in being in the outdoors is that which I label as a "Connection With Nature". I cannot exactly explain this connection, nor can I offer up the results of scientific study by others, but I can guarantee you, it exists inside my being. It is some biological and Spiritual aspect of myself which occurs when I come into contact with the remote regions of nature, it is some process which promotes my health and well being on physical, emotional, and Spiritual levels. It is truly some yet to be identified aspect of the human interconnection with nature. The DRECP has erroneously included the physical presence of human beings in nature as a "non biological" activity. Thus it is denying me, and those I associate with, as the biological entities of nature which we are, our place inside nature as nature has evolved us. This connection with nature of which I speak and feel, cannot be written into your science based computer models, it is not some quantifiable aspect of the "Self" to be reduced to numbers and data, it is that inner most level of the Self, that which can only be identified and analyzed from a human point of reference and perspective. It is something which I experience simply by being in the presence of more remote areas of nature, it is

that which compels me to visit, explore, and spend time in, Back Country Areas. That we engage in these “recreational” activities is purely incidental in the underlying process, and human need, which is ultimately establishing and maintaining, our personal Connection With Nature. These activities, which I will list below, are essential tools and opportunities, enabling us as human beings to facilitate that process of connecting to nature. It is from this perspective, of affording tools and opportunities to connect with nature, which I ask you to consider the value of these items which are being listed here as “recreational”.

As part of the process to develop this submission I will be responding to a few questions as provided by Randy Banis, CORVA Stakeholder and organizer of this effort.

Q1. In what recreational activities do you or your organization engage on public lands in the desert?

Answers:

1a. Motor dependant backcountry camping in small dispersed groups, typically in very primitive campsites.

1b. Hiking on established trails, or cross country in a random manner just to see what might be on the other side of some hill or up some wash. For myself, due to a permanent foot injury, round trip distances of a mile or so. Trail heads are those which are remote enough that they have to be reached by motorized vehicles.

1c. Stargazing and astronomy.

1d. Just relaxing with friends, or in solitude, while escaping the city and soaking up nature.

Q2. Where in the desert do you recreate, in general or specifically?

Answers:

2a. Outlying areas of Death Valley National Park, Red Rock Canyon State Park, along power line roads where side roads exist which are long enough to get away from the immediate noise and sight of the power lines, Soda Mountains, Avawatz Mountains.

Q3. How would you or your organization be affected if additional roads were closed and access to public lands further restricted or eliminated?

Answers:

3a. Further alienation from nature and from that aspect of our society which mandates that the full range of humanity does not belong in contact with nature. Expanded closures support an exclusionary concept which essentially states that only those who are young, or in above average physical condition, or financially able to afford horses and the vehicles required to transport them, are entitled to visit remote locations.

3b. Detrimental effects to physical, emotional, and Spiritual, health by way of denied opportunity to experience nature and get physical exercise.

3c. This would continue the process of over crowding the ever shrinking list of places left available for people who rely on motorized vehicles as a means of access to our public lands. Not only does this reduce the personal experience of such activities, but it also concentrates the potential environmental damage. Forcing many people into smaller and smaller areas creates a scenario which is contrary to the conservation aspects of the DRECP in that these areas would be less able to adapt to, and recover from, the effects of concentrated use.

As a suggested solution:

Rather than creating a situation as described above with concentrated use, the conservation aspect of the DRECP should be expanding opportunity in a manner which affords less concentrated impact, a wider range of experience of public lands, and the rotation of areas in and out of public access on a yearly basis to allow areas to recover for a years time before being put back into public use for another year. The concept would be to manage the lands and their amenities and conservation values, rather than just close them permanently. If the access routes and areas for motor dependant recreation activities were expanded appropriately, then rotated in and out of use in a reasonable manner, the overall status of managing areas for increased conservation could be achieved while maintaining a situation where public access is not limited to the point of concentrating potential environmental damage, as well as maintaining a wide diversity of human contact with nature.

Such a concept would include expanding opportunity by including routes in non critical habitat areas, which had been previously closed, back into the designated route system. This could include routes which were previously closed due to efforts to minimize the number of routes which traveled to the same locations. Then, on an alternating annual basis, one set of routes would be opened, while an equal amount would be closed. In the case of routes which had been closed because they were duplicates which traveled to the same destination, access would switch from one to the other on an annual basis.

To make this an acceptable concept to the motor dependant community, it would have to result in a “no net loss” situation for the number of miles we are able to travel. For example, if the route network opportunity was expanded by 30% through reopening previously closed roads, then only 30% of the entire route system in the DRECP Plan Area could be closed at any one time.

### **Suggestions To Better Inform The General Public of The Effects of the DRECP Process on Public Access Inside The DRECP Plan Area.**

The Preferred Alternative, in both draft and final form, as developed by this Scoping process, must include detailed maps which clearly indicate, closures, restrictions, or elevations of conservation status, of all affected areas of any type or purpose, and routes of travel of any type or purpose, inside the DRECP Plan Area due to the application of the conservation aspect of the DRECP. This request also includes a full disclosure of known, and planned mitigation areas, which have been, or believed will be, established as a result

Page 4 of 4, CORVA/David Beaumont DRECP Scoping Comments.

of mitigation requirements of the DRECP, or any applicable law, or government agency policy, which requires establishing mitigation lands as a result of renewable energy projects inside the DRECP Plan Area since November of 2008.

END