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California Energy Commission
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California Energy Commission
Dockets Office, MS-4
Docket No. 09-RENEW EO-01
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512
docket@energy.ca.gov

SUBJECT: Description and Comparative Evaluation of Draft DRECP Alternatives of 12/17/12

I am deeply concerned about how the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan is being developed and its ultimate effect on Morongo Basin communities and the area's unique and sensitive desert lands.

Request Public Meeting. The citizens in this area have been completely ignored in the DRECP planning process, with no public meetings being held in the region. We have the right to ask questions and be informed on this complex issue that will dramatically affect us, and I request a public meeting be held in the Morongo Basin before the DRECP planning process proceeds further.

Development Focus Areas Inappropriate in the Morongo Basin. Our high-desert small towns and rural communities and their surrounding pristine public lands should not be destroyed by utility-scale energy development; the area is inappropriate for industrial development, and I request that all DFAs in the Morongo Basin be eliminated from the DRECP. Such development would destroy the quality of life of the area's citizens and would devastate our economy, which is dependent on tourism, with visitors attracted to Joshua Tree National Park and the area's surrounding scenic beauty. Many of the proposed DFAs would also sound a death knell for biodiversity, as the DFAs would replace critical wildlife linkages with industrial development.

No Utility Corridor Exists. Common to all of the current alternatives seems to be a lack of understanding of the fact that there is no approved utility corridor in the Morongo Basin. Area citizens successfully opposed a previous attempt by LADWP to designate a utility corridor in this area; our united voice and committed effort resulted in LADWP withdrawing its Green Path North transmission line application. I oppose DFAs being planned in an area where the will of citizens has clearly shown they will not allow a utility corridor to transmit energy.

Eliminate Variance Lands. I request that variance lands be removed from the DRECP, as they have not been evaluated as part of the DRECP process and their placement in the Morongo Basin is inappropriate as cited above regarding DFAs.

Consider Alternatives to Remote, Utility-Scale Renewable Energy Development on Public Lands. I request that distributed generation within the built environment at point of use be considered within the DRECP as opposed to unnecessarily destroying pristine desert lands within the DRECP area.

Respectfully,

Phyllis L. Swinnerton
(signature)