

Energy - Docket Optical System

From: Matthew Jatovsky [mjatovsky@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, August 21, 2013 2:39 PM
To: Energy - Docket Optical System
Subject: Silurian Valley Proposal

To Whom It May Concern:

As a former park ranger at the Mojave National Preserve, I am astounded by the continued industrialization of fragile desert ecosystems by the BLM and California Energy Commission in the name of renewable energy. The latest affront to our desert heritage is the proposal to allow solar arrays in one of the most beautiful places in the Mojave Desert, the Silurian Valley, which I have spent countless hours in solitude admiring. The California Desert Protection Act of 1996, which Senator Dianne Feinstein championed, created, intentionally, a wildlife corridor between Death Valley and Joshua Tree National Parks by creating the Preserve. The development of these resources with little regard for their ecological importance violates the both the text and spirit of this law. In addition, this valley is a significant cultural landscape including the Old Spanish Trails and numerous Native American cultural sites. Ironically, the BLM itself recognized the importance of this valley by granting it the second highest rating for visual resources under its own resource management criteria. Has something changed to radically that the BLM will ignore it's own policies? There are more appropriate places to site solar arrays closer to the population centers they serve. There is no need to sacrifice our deserts in such an unsustainable manner in the name of maximizing utility profits. Therefore, I urge the BLM and the California Energy Commission to do the right thing by acting on the following

1. The BLM and CEC should not allow energy development in the Silurian Valley. Solar arrays should be concentrated within or near population centers, including rooftops, and on already disturbed lands.
2. To prevent future threats to The Silurian Valley it should be designated as part of the National Landscape Conservation System, along with the other natural treasures of the Mojave Desert that provide intact habitat for wildlife and places for people to enjoy the outdoors as intended by the California Desert Protection Act.

A copy of this email has been sent to Senator Dianne Feinstein.

Sincerely,

Matthew Jatovsky
Former NPS Park Ranger
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