

**Energy - Docket Optical System**

**From:** Richard Hess [richard.hess@gmail.com] on behalf of Richard L. Hess [richard@richardhess.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 21, 2013 5:24 PM  
**To:** Energy - Docket Optical System; jchilders@blm.gov  
**Subject:** DRECP Draft Alternatives: Protecting the Silurian Valley [09-RENEW EO-01]

I think that we all agree that the Mojave is a special, beautiful, and fragile place. We have set aside land forever to remain wild and undeveloped. However, developing a visual blight between Death Valley National Park and the Mojave National Preserve.

I lived in Southern California for 21 years and some of the most memorable days were those my wife and I explored and photographed the Mojave area. We have been to Death Valley numerous times, including one exciting drive through the south entrance...on little-travelled dirt roads.

The Silurian Valley is a key component of the vast landscape that makes Death Valley and the Mojave so special. There are already areas that could be developed for solar energy such as the former home of the Solar One power plant near Barstow. That area is already damaged and developing a new solar plant there would not increase the footprint of human intrusion on a fragile ecosystem.

Please consider the following:

- The Bureau of Land Management and California Energy Commission should not allow energy development in the remote Silurian Valley, and should focus on encouraging the generation of clean energy on rooftops and on already-disturbed lands closer to our cities.
- The Silurian Valley 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.
- The mostly undisturbed Silurian Valley provides an important wildlife connectivity corridor between Death Valley National Park, the sky islands of the Kingston and Clark Mountains, the Soda and Avawatz ranges, and Mojave National Preserve to the South.
- The Silurian Valley is a scenic and natural escape for visitors to the desert, and it is rich in the history of human transportation across the Mojave desert, including the Old Spanish Trail and Native American cultural sites.
- The Silurian Valley has been acknowledged for its stunning scenery, with the second highest rating for visual resources under the BLM's visual resource management criteria, and the local community supports designating the two-lane road that crosses the area as a scenic highway.

Thank you very much!

Sincerely,

Richard L Hess

(who still votes as a Californian from Glendale)

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