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To:
California Energy Commission
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Comment re: Draft DRECP and EIR/EIR

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The Draft EIR only briefly mentions solar chimneys and describes them inadequately. For example, the DEIR states that "A tall chimney is located in the center of the Greenhouse".

This is only one of possible configurations. A more accurate description would be that the chimney exit should be located at the highest point of the greenhouse, not necessarily the center. The Spanish prototype mentioned is not the only possible configuration of this technology.

A proposal dating from 1928 proposed a solar chimney installation with the chimney snaking up a mountainside and using the mountainside as a support for the chimney. The advantage for this configuration is that it could be constructed much more cheaply than the conventional idea of a chimney that goes straight up and is self-supporting.

The California desert with its mix of mountains, low desert terrain and abundant sunshine would be a perfect place for the exploration and perfection of this technology. As pointed out in the EIR, solar chimneys produce electricity 24/7 without the need for storage systems (batteries) or fossil fuels. Only a residual heat difference is needed. The difference between daytime temperatures and nighttime temperatures in the desert can be quite dramatic, sometimes varying as much as 40 degrees F. A valuable energy source is not being explored or developed and it should be.

Such a system would not kill birds either. Other side benefits might follow as well. In the Spanish prototype it was discovered that there was a significant amount of precipitation around the base of the chimney.