



Death Valley

Chamber of Commerce

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

February 17, 2015

California Energy Commission

DOCKETED

09-RENEW EO-1

TN 74754

FEB 22 2015

Re: DRECP NEPA/CEQA

To Whom It May Concern:

I am the Executive Director of the Death Valley Chamber of Commerce, located in Tecopa, CA. The area represented by the Death Valley Chamber of Commerce includes all of Death Valley National Park, Shoshone, Tecopa, Charleston View, Stewart Valley and Death Valley Junction. Our membership also includes businesses, organizations and individuals from Owens Valley, Beatty, NV, Ridgecrest, CA, and other surrounding National Park gateway communities.

Death Valley Chamber of Commerce is very apprehensive about pristine desert lands being populated with large-scale renewable energy projects. This would most certainly impact our enigmatic vistas in the Death Valley region if we were to be suddenly blighted with unsightly behemoth energy projects. Moreover, projects that incorporate intense water usage would have a huge and potentially irreparable impact on the Amargosa River watershed and the many endangered, rare, beautiful, and endemic species that make these areas their home. The resultant loss of tourism dollar would severely damage our local economy.

Our viewsheds are absolutely unique and of priceless value to those of us who live and work here as well as to the one million plus visitors who adventure here annually. As dependent as we are upon film producers, photographers and other visitors who seek out our picturesque wilderness areas, we would prefer such large scale renewable energy projects be situated in urban areas and that local solar energy generation be of a distributive nature as much as is practical. We applaud the efforts of all of the committed and concerned people who have contributed long hours to the creation of county-wide REGPA and CEDA designations who have voiced similar concerns. We are appreciative of the efforts of our County Supervisors toward the determination and implementation of Inyo County energy policy that originates systemically from within our diverse districts rather than from without.

We acknowledge that renewable energy companies have been applying, and will continue to apply, to develop more and more of our public desert lands. We therefore are grateful that the Bureau of Land Management, along with the CEC and other agencies, has issued the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan. Thank you for including many important areas in National Conservation Lands in the Preferred Alternative, such as Afton Canyon, Amargosa River region, Chemehuevi Valley, Chicago Valley, Chuckwalla Bench, Dublin Hills, Indian Pass/Milpitas Wash, Mojave Trails/Route 66, Panamint Valley, Shadow Valley, Ship Mountains, and Upper McCoy Valley. If the BLM proceeds with the Preferred Alternative, we would like to draw attention to places in our deserts that the Preferred Alternative does not go far enough to protect. I ask the BLM to expand the protection blanket of the Preferred

Alternative of the DRECP by including the following additional places, in their entirety, in National Conservation Lands:

- Argos and Ash Hill (Rte. 66)
- Avawatz Mountains area (including the "Bowling Alley")
- Big Maria Mountains and surrounding flats
- Bristol Lake area
- Cadiz Valley/Iron Mountains
- California Valley (including Charleston View)
- Coso Range area
- Danby Lake area
- Lower Centennial Flat
- Malpais Mesa area (including northwestern Talc City Hills, Santa Rosa Flat, Conglomerate Mesa)
- Mule Mountains
- Orocopia Mountains area
- Palen McCoy/Ward Valley/Rice Valley area
- Pinto Mountains area
- Ragtown (Rte. 66)
- Red Mountain
- Riverside Mountains area
- Rodman Mountains area
- Rose Valley/McCloud Flat
- Sacramento Mountains
- Silurian Valley area (including Silurian Hills)
- Slate Range
- Sperry Hills/Kingston Range
- Valley Mountain
- Vidal
- Whipple Mountains area

I respectfully request that the BLM consider as well the following changes to the Preferred Alternative:

- Designate National Conservation Lands as either Visual Resource Management Class I or II, so that approved activities will only cause limited changes to landscape character; and
- Retain Areas of Critical Environmental Concern within National Conservation Lands (instead of removing that special management designation), so that there will be an added layer of protection for more specific values within these areas.

Sincerely,
Suzi Dennett


Executive Director

Death Valley Chamber of Commerce

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