February 19, 2015

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

RE: DRECP NEPA/CEQA

I am writing with great concern regarding the above plan to significantly alter the Mojave Desert. As an employed, tax paying resident of Lucerne Valley, I am concerned that my custom home will become worthless as the surrounding beautiful desert is irrevocably and negatively changed. I am also concerned that the wildlife, Big Horn Sheep, etc., will slowly disappear from the area and perhaps completely lose their habitats.

I am opposed to any plan that forces San Bernardino County to provide 53 percent of the future power needs of the State of California as our geographical “fair share” contribution. An area should not be deemed worthless simply because of a parsimony of human population. It should also not be assumed that the population of the desert is unemployed and uneducated and therefore financially disenfranchised and powerless to fight the powers that be. I personally have a MA, a high income and in addition to my home in Lucerne Valley, a thriving business in Apple Valley.

I was not born in the High Desert. I moved here to be away from the big city and to enjoy a rural lifestyle. This was at considerable expense. I had to provide for my own well and septic system and invested in a windmill to offset energy costs and to support my personal belief in a greener way of life. I am currently considering a solar component. However, I have recently learned that the energy conservation measures that I, and others, have installed are not counted in the general percentage of power that our area is now going to be required to generate. Why is that? The following are more questions:

Why is San Bernardino County being asked to generate 53 percent of the entire requirement for the entire state of CA?
Why is this rare and beautiful desert going to be decimated to provide power for energy hogs elsewhere?
Why has the decision been made to remove recreation areas from the many that enjoy them and therefore force out of business all those who service the recreational and tourist industries? This will significantly reduce our tax base which will reduce tax revenues to the county and the state.
Why was this enormous project moved from the federal lands, as originally planned and moved onto private lands? This appears to be designed as a money making opportunity for a few who currently own these private lands and a deliberate attempt to force out the home owners and businesses in those areas as the land would become unlivable. The visual landscape would be industrial, the noise unbearable and the dust and contaminates unmeasurable.

Alternative energy generation methods must be considered. An alternative could be point-of-use energy generation (roofops or carports in business areas). Why not create a firm plan to improve efficiency capacity, shade urban sprawl with solar PV and install micro-grids where communities produce their own electricity and build their own local bank of power? Let every community be responsible for their own power creation along with the ability to design incentives that will entice the population to comply. Do not force those of us with the means and ability to move to another state where our voices will be heard and treated with respect. I am a native Californian and want to live here. Please don’t force me, and many others, to leave.

Respectfully,

Debra Nystrom Kelley
Lucerne Valley, CA
Response to Comment Letter F189

Debra Nystrom Kelley
February 19, 2015

F189-1  Thank you for your comment. While it has not resulted in a change in the document, the BLM has taken it into consideration.

F189-2  Following release of the Draft DRECP and in response to public comments received from a diverse group of stakeholders, the REAT Agencies (i.e., Bureau of Land Management [BLM], U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS], California Energy Commission, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife [CDFW]) have adjusted the planning process and are employing a phased approach for the DRECP: one phase addressing BLM lands and another phase addressing nonfederal lands. Under Phase I of the DRECP, the DRECP BLM LUPA and Final EIS addresses land uses, including renewable energy and transmission development, on BLM-administered lands only. As shown in Volume II mapping of each alternative, substantially less DFA acreage is proposed under the BLM LUPA, including reduced DFA acres in San Bernardino County.

F189-3  See response F189-2.

F189-4  See Section I.3.3 for a description of the renewable energy planning process used for the DRECP, which sets the renewable energy and transmission planning context for developing the BLM LUPA and Final EIS for BLM-administered lands.

F189-5  See response E43-226. See also Section II.3.4.2 for the revised CMAs that apply to activities on BLM-administered lands, including the management of recreation designations. Recreation designations (i.e., SRMAs and ERMA) provide guidance for recreational management and formalize already existing recreational use; these designations do not create additional areas for recreation or modify recreational routes or access.

F189-6  See response F189-2.

F189-7  Power from renewable energy sources would be introduced to the regional transmission grid. Once on the grid, it is not possible to match a particular power input to where it is consumed. It is acknowledged that encouraging distributed generation is a County priority; however, distributed generation was considered but not carried forward, as discussed in Volume II, Section II.8.2.1, as it does not meet the purpose and need of the DRECP BLM LUPA.
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