To:  
California Energy Commission  
Dockets Office, MS-4  
Docket No. 09-RENEW EO-01  
1516 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512  
Email: docket@energy.ca.gov.

Comment re: Draft DRECP and EIR/EIR

Nov. 8, 2014

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.
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Response to Comment Letter F23

Donald Ferguson
November 8, 2014

F23-1 Thank you for your comment. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has taken it into consideration in developing the BLM Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). See Volume II, Section II.3.3, for a description of the renewable energy and transmission development activities, which is considered a sufficient description of these activities to support the BLM DRECP Proposed LUPA and Final EIS. See also 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 Proposed LUPA and Final EIS for BLM-administered lands.