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*Comment Received From: Stacy Goss
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Opposition to Soda Mountain Solar Project

Additional submitted attachment is included below.



Desert Survivors



2648 International Blvd., Suite 301 • Oakland, CA 94601 • desert-survivors.org

California Energy Commission
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

February 27, 2026

Re: Comments on Soda Mountain Solar Staff Assessment / Draft EIR

Dear Chair Hochschild, and Members of the California Energy Commission:

Desert Survivors is a non-profit organization of people who love the desert and are committed to preserving its unique beauty and value. Founded in 1981, the organization promotes a mission of experiencing, sharing and protecting the desert as wilderness. Desert Survivors has approximately 300 members, who mostly live in California and Nevada.

We write to express our opposition to siting a solar facility in the Soda Mountain region.

In addition to the project not being consistent with the DRECP and the Western Solar Plan, Desert Survivors is most concerned about the significant impacts to both biological and visual resources of the Mojave Desert.

Biological Resources

We sponsor hiking and camping trips in these areas of the California desert, in part, to view and study wildlife such as bighorn sheep, desert tortoise, a variety of migrating and desert-adapted birds, and unique vegetation including cacti and wildflowers. These creatures will be put at tremendous risk by this project, and the likelihood of experiencing these animals around the area will be significantly impacted.

The California Energy Commission staff acknowledge that this project would lead to significant and unavoidable impacts to desert bighorn sheep. It is not unusual to see bighorn sheep in the Soda and Cady Mountains, and they are often seen by visitors driving down Zzyzx road, as the sheep make their way to Soda Lake in the morning. These animals are Fully Protected by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Our likelihood of seeing desert tortoise has already been significantly impacted by the catastrophic decline of the species to the west of the proposed project area due to OHV impacts. This project is yet another nail in their extinction coffin.

Visual Resources

The iconic, open, sweeping landscapes of the Mojave Desert is what draws many people to this area. Looking on a map, this project seems to have been shoe-horned into the small area of unprotected land in the center of multiple Wilderness Areas—Soda Mountains to the north/northwest, Cady Mountains to the south/southwest, Kelso Dunes Wilderness to the south, and the Mojave Wilderness and the Mojave National Preserve to the west. Desert Survivors has sponsored numerous camping and hiking trips to all of these areas, for participants to experience the desert as wilderness. The proposed 2,670 acre, solar photovoltaic generating and storage facility would not only devastate its

parcel of desert, but would blight the vistas of the greater region. It would be difficult to find a more inappropriate area than Soda Mountain for an industrial-scale solar project.

There is a reason that this project has failed to move forward several times over the past 19 years; the location. Again, Desert Survivors is strongly opposed to the siting of this proposed project in Soda Mountain.

Sincerely,

Stacy Goss,
President, Desert Survivors