

**DOCKETED**

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## **Request to Deny Small Power Plant Exemption**

I am writing as a concerned citizen living within approximately eight miles of the proposed data center. The Indian Wells Valley area is entirely unsuited to the development of the proposed data center because of the water demand that is contrary to the Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Management Plan.

The Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Authority (IWVGA) was created in response to state law and has spent a number of years studying the existing groundwater situation in the Indian Wells Valley (IWC). Current groundwater yield, the amount of groundwater pumped from the aquifer by all parties, in the IWV is in the neighborhood of 21,000 acre-feet/year (AFY). Researchers have calculated that the maximum sustainable groundwater yield in the IWV is approximately 14,300 AFY as shown in the "Assessment of Safe Yield for the Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Basin" dated September 4, 2024. This means that accomplishing the goals of the groundwater management plan would require sourcing approximately 6,700 AFY from an as-yet undetermined source and injecting it into the aquifer to balance out existing use.

I understand from local and county reporting that the proposed data center would use as much as about 16 million gallons of water annually. This is equivalent to a little over 50 AFY as an additional impact on the groundwater management plan. While this may seem like a small amount by comparison, the fact is that any increase in groundwater use will have a substantial adverse impact on the groundwater management plan and ability of the groundwater authority to accomplish its legal mandate.

The CEC, according to the information on its own website, can only issue the proposed small power plant exemption "if it finds that that the proposed facility would not create a substantial adverse impact on the environment or energy resources". I do not believe it can be disputed that the proposed facility would create a substantial adverse impact on groundwater resources, so it is inappropriate for the CEC to grant the proposed exemption for this project.

Respectfully,  
Frank DeMaris