

DOCKETED

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Opposition to 26-SPPE-01RB Inyokern Data Center

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

Hello, I'm Sarah Halsey, city of Ridgecrest resident. I am writing to you as a concerned community member to express my strong opposition to the proposed data center project planned for our region, RB Inyokern Data Center docket (26-SPPE-01).

While technological development and economic growth are important, this project appears fundamentally misaligned with the long-term sustainability, environmental realities, and quality of life priorities of Inyokern and Ridgecrest. Our community exists in a high desert ecosystem already facing serious resource limitations, most notably water scarcity.

The Indian Wells Valley has long struggled with groundwater overdraft, and any large-scale industrial project with significant cooling or operational demands introduces additional pressure to an already unsustainable system. Water is not an expendable resource in our region; it is one of our most critical vulnerabilities. In addition to water concerns, the project's immense energy demands and reported backup generation infrastructure raise concerns regarding air quality, noise pollution, and environmental health.

Industrial-scale generator use and cooling systems may increase emissions, contribute to noise disturbances, and alter the quiet rural character that residents intentionally choose when living in this area. Equally concerning is the impact this project may have on local wildlife and fragile desert habitats. The Mojave Desert is home to highly specialized plant and animal communities uniquely adapted to this environment.

Large industrial development can result in habitat fragmentation, disruption of migration corridors, increased light pollution, heat output, traffic, and noise—all of which can negatively affect native wildlife populations. Species in our region, including desert reptiles, migratory birds, small mammals, pollinators, and other sensitive desert organisms, depend on increasingly limited, intact habitat. Once disturbed or developed, these ecosystems are exceptionally difficult—if not impossible—to fully restore. Beyond environmental concerns, I question whether this project offers proportional long-term benefit to residents.

Data centers typically provide limited permanent employment relative to their substantial land, utility, and infrastructure demands. The project is being marketed as 'AI-ready' and 'hyperscale,' yet no binding disclosure has been made regarding future tenants, operational intensity, water demand growth, or future expansion phases. The public cannot meaningfully evaluate impacts when the ultimate scale and use remain undefined.

Our community should not be expected to absorb environmental risk, resource strain, and industrial burden for minimal lasting economic return. I respectfully urge the governing bodies to prioritize the long-term interests of residents, environmental stewardship, and sustainable regional planning by opposing this project or, at minimum, requiring a comprehensive and transparent review process with robust environmental impact analysis and meaningful public input before any approvals are granted. Informed community consent is impossible without meaningful disclosure.

Please protect the future of Inyokern and Ridgecrest, our water resources, desert ecosystems, and the quality of life that makes this community unique.

Sarah Halsey