

DOCKETED

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Document Title:	Letter of Support for Presiding Member's Proposed Decision
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United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Joshua Tree National Park
74485 National Park Drive
Twentynine Palms, California 92277-3597

IN REPLY REFER TO:

A.10 (JOTR-RM)

January 6, 2014

California Energy Commission
Docket Unit
Docket number: 09-AFC-07C
1516 Ninth Street, MS-4
Sacramento, California 95614
Via email: docket@energy.ca.gov

Re: Presiding Member's Proposed Decision to Deny the petition to Amend the proposed Palen Solar Electric Generating System

Dear Commissioners:

The National Park Service (NPS) appreciates this opportunity to express support for the California Energy Commission's (CEC) decision to deny the petition to amend the proposed Palen Solar Electricity Generating System (PSEGS) for all of the reasons set forth in the Presiding Member's Proposed Decision (PMPD). The NPS commends the CEC and its staff for their thorough analysis and careful consideration in regard to the construction and operation of a solar power tower project in this location.

The NPS supports renewable energy projects on public lands when such projects can be constructed and operated in an environmentally responsible manner that serves the public interest, protects natural and cultural resources, and protects our treasured landscapes. As indicated in the PMPD, there are multiple factors associated with the PSEGS project that will likely have unavoidable and unmitigatable impacts. These impacts will alter the landscape and impact valuable resources of Joshua Tree National Park and the surrounding wilderness areas. The NPS concurs that the decision to deny the PSEGS amendment is based on the comparison of the PSEGS entire suite of benefits against its suite of impacts. The NPS supports CEC's assertion in the PMPD that "the impacts outweigh the benefits."

As stated in the PMPD, the CEC has identified "two alternatives, the parabolic solar trough (no-project alternative) and the photovoltaic single axis tracking project, as environmentally superior to the PSEGS project." The NPS similarly supports these technologies for this location and encourages the full Commission to support these alternatives.

Thank you for this opportunity to review and provide comments on the PMPD. If you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact me at (760)367-5502, or Andrea Compton, Chief of Resources at (760)367-5560, Andrea_Compton@NPS.gov.

Sincerely,



Mark A. Butler
Superintendent

cc:

Environmental Quality Division, NPS-WASO
Christine Lehnertz, NPS-PWRO
Martha Lee, NPS-PWRO
Deborah Bardwick, DOI Solicitor's Office
Raymond Sauvajot, NPS-PWRO
Sarah Quinn, NPS-WASO
Lara Rozzell, NPS-PWRO
Amea Howard, NPS-PWRO
Andrea Compton, NPS-JOTR