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**From:** Eric Solorio  
**To:** Docket Optical System  
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**Subject:** Fwd: Ridgecrest solar Power Plant DEIS Comments ...

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My takeaway was this: BLM had four main recommendations, an as-planned, an option A, option B, and a no-action recommendation. The as planned included a field A and field B in a slightly new configuration from the original plan, the second two options include either field A or B, each of which is roughly half of the 250MW overall field, and the obvious and required no-action plan. On page 18 of the report, BLM gives their overall recommendation and I will quote it: "The environmentally preferred alternative is the no action alternative. This alternative would not allow the development of renewable energy and would not have impacts on resources. However, it also would not provide the positive impacts of developing renewable energy related to climate change and global warming."

However, if you read through the whole report (or skim it as it is insanely long) you will see they actually analyzed a number of environmental concerns. These included Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Efficiency, Facility Design, Geology & Paleontology, Hazardous Materials, Land, Noise and Vibration, Public Health, Reliability, Socioeconomic Resources, Soil & Water Resources, Traffic & Transportation, Transmission Line, Safety/Nuisance, Transmission System Engineering, Visual Resources, Waste Management, and Worker Safety and Fire Protection. Out of all of these BLM only felt TWO items were unable to be mitigated (if mitigation was even needed) - the Biological Resources and the Visual recourses.

As might be expected, BLM is highly concerned about Turtles and Squirrels on the plot of land. They are also concerned with the visual impact to the 395 / 14 corridor. They felt the solar power plant is needed but that a different location might be better; however, I didn't see any proof that other locations didn't also have desert wildlife. I also wasn't impressed by a very short section on the positive socioeconomic impact on Ridgecrest, which is a positive impact for the community (jobs and taxes!). I am fully aware that people here want to preserve the desert wildlife but when you look at the overall territory of the Mohave ground squirrel, for example, this project barely touches the overall land available to them. The bottom line is there is a lot of desert, it all has animals on it, and so it makes sense to build this plant near a city and near transmission lines. Anywhere they plunk it is going to hit some type of desert wildlife. All too often you get a NIMBY attitude when this is one of those things that Ridgecrest should be proud to have nearby.

That is not to say this writer doesn't have concerns - what SHOULD have been BLM's top concern would be lifecycle water usage and construction dust. They were mentioned but not to the extent I had hoped. Construction dust can be mitigated with gray water from the city, but water usage overall cannot. Dirty water isn't going to clean mirrors or

be used for most of the other usages. The report mentioned the cash-for-grass plan but I am skeptical that will head off this issue. I don't see people who have lawn giving it up. This writer thinks the plant should buy a stake in the water that flows through that pipe, since this power will be for LA anyway, right?

In the end, this BLM report is only a recommendation, so Ridgecrest may yet get ourselves a power plant, whether it be 250 MW, or some smaller version of plan 'A' or plan 'B'. This writer hopes to see something there and doesn't see it as ugly, rather, a beautiful source of clean energy that Ridgecrest could be proud of. I certainly have never driven by the plant in Kramer Junction and thought it to be 'ugly'. California needs power, clean power, and it seems sad to think we have all this desert perfect for solar power and BLM doesn't want to utilize it. Last I checked, BLM is public land, and therefore it should be put to use for the public when it can be - and this is one of those cases. Please don't reject this power plant!

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