

January 9, 2010

California Energy Commission
Attn: Eric K. Solorio, Project Manager
1516 Ninth Street, MS-15
Sacramento, CA 95814

DOCKET	
09-AFC-9	
DATE	JAN 09 2010
RECD.	JAN 15 2010

Re: Ridgecrest Solar Power Project (09-AFC-9)

This letter reiterates some of the comments I made at the January 5th, 2010, Public input workshop held in Ridgecrest, California, where I spoke opposing approval of certification of the project as currently proposed by the applicant.

I am a long time resident of the City of Ridgecrest. I serve on the Steering Committee of the local Ridgecrest Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) where I represent the interests of the Kerncrest Audubon Society, Audubon California and the National Audubon Society. As a long time recreational vehicle (RV) owner and member of the Sagebrush Sams Camping Club, a Chapter of Good Sams Camping Clubs of America, I also watch out for RV owners' interests in the use of our public lands.

Kerncrest Audubon is an advocate of solar and other forms of power generation that do not generate heat trapping gases as we believe the consequent global warming will be devastating to some species of birds and other wildlife. However, we also believe that selection of an appropriate site is extremely important. **The relocation of this project to previously disturbed land will minimize the cumulative effects of habitat loss in our desert southwest.** The California Energy Commission biologist (Mr. Anderson) showed at the 15 December 2009 workshop that the habitat that will be destroyed if this project goes forward is very important to the long time survival of the Desert Tortoise and the Mojave Ground Squirrel. It makes one wonder why we are even talking about going forward with this plan.

Camping is an important recreational benefit of the multiple uses of our public lands managed by the BLM. Two RV camping clubs exist in the Ridgecrest area. They are the Sagebrush Sams Club with about a dozen family members and the Elks RV Club with 50 to 90 families. Both clubs hold monthly outings to various places. About once or twice a year one of the clubs elects to hold an outing to our beautiful local desert for a weekend of relaxation and visiting with other members. Unfortunately, the only previously disturbed acre suitable for such an event in the Indian Wells Valley lays smack dab in the center of the south unit of the proposed project.

Sincerely,



Lee Sutton, 231 S. Lilac St., R/C CA 93555, 760-375-1981
Vice President and Past President, Kerncrest Audubon Society
Member and Past President, Sagebrush Sams

Ccs: Audubon California