

DOCKET**11-AFC-4**DATE FEB 02 2012RECD. FEB 08 2012

From: "Alfredo A. Figueroa" <lacunadeaztlan@aol.com>
To: <publicadviser@energy.state.ca.us>
CC: <LaCunaDeAztlan@aol.com>
Date: 2/3/2012 3:48 PM
Subject: Rio Mesa Solar Electric Generating Facility
Attachments: Rio Mesa Solar.pdf; Mule Mountain Pictures and Information.pdf

Dear California Energy Commission,


Our organization La Cuna de Aztlan Sacred Sites Protection Circle is in total opposition to the proposed Rio Mesa Solar project. We were present and gave a presentation at the scoping meeting that was held in Blythe, California on February 1, 2012.

Attached you will find added comments and pictures of the sacred Mule Mountains.

Sincerely,

Alfredo Acosta Figueroa
Chemehuevi Tribal Monitor
Elder/Historian of La Cuna de Aztlan Sacred Sites Protection Circle
424 North Calton Ave.
Blythe, CA 92225
(760) 922-6422
lacunadeaztlan@aol.com

The following recommendation letters are from different agencies and departments that have been toured to the east mesa of the Mule Mountains and other solar power sites. These letters explain the sacredness of the Mule Mountains and why we should protect them. Also included is an article from the Palo Verde Valley Times newspaper that talks about the tour and the participants

<p>RIVERSIDE OFFICE: 4080 Lemon Street, 14th Floor Riverside, CA 92502-1647 (909) 955-1040 Fax (909) 955-2194</p>	<p>County of Riverside</p>  <p>SUPERVISOR ROY WILSON FOURTH DISTRICT</p>	<p>DISTRICT OFFICE/MAILING ADDRESS: 46-200 Oasis Street, Ste. 318 Indio, CA 92201-5933 (760) 863-8211 Fax (760) 863-8905</p>
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March 11, 2003

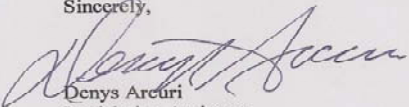
Mr. Alfredo Figueroa
424 North Carlton Street
Blythe, California 92225

Dear Mr. Figueroa,

Thank you for being our guide to the Blythe Intaglios during our Palo Verde Outlook Conference visit on March 6. Your knowledge of the value of these important cultural artifacts made our visit educational as well as pleasant.

While we could already see the importance of safeguarding them during our visit to the site along the Colorado River north of town, it was certainly fortuitous timing that allowed us to see ongoing destruction of the intaglios in the Mesa Verde area. That we actually saw people in the process of tearing up intaglios by removing stones apparently for landscaping purposes contributed to our appreciation of the need for quick and effective action. For a long time I had thought that off-road vehicle use was the only serious threat to the intaglios, but now I realize that destruction can come sometimes from unexpected sources—both deliberate and accidental.

Thanks again for the tour and your hospitality; good luck with your efforts to preserve these rare and significant giant figures.

Sincerely,

Denys Arcuri
Legislative Assistant
to Supervisor Roy Wilson

922-6422

F:\DArcuri\03\Letters\03\figueroa.0311.doc

INTERNET: district4@co.riverside.ca.us

EDAW

EDAW INC

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February 22, 2005

Mr. Alfredo Figueroa
Escuela de La Raza Unida
424 North Carlton Steeet
Blythe, California 92225

Re: Protection of Cultural Heritage Sites

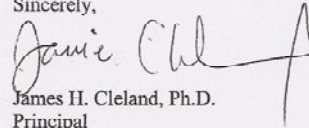
Dear Mr. Figueroa:

As you are well aware, the California deserts are experiencing rapidly increasing development in the form of housing, commercial enterprises, transportation projects, and other modern intrusions into formerly untouched areas. Such projects have the potential, if poorly planned and implemented, to adversely affect the cultural heritage of Native American groups. The unique intaglios, rock art, and trail system of the Colorado and Mojave deserts, as well as former habitation sites, form an extensive, inter-connected cultural landscape that is integral to the culture of the Mojave, Quechan, Chemehuevi, and other groups along the lower Colorado River.

I appreciated working with your organization in identifying and avoiding important cultural heritage sites during the environmental studies conducted for the North Baja Pipeline Project, 2000-2002. Your group helped to identify significant sites and called attention to the need to protect them during the public scoping meetings held during preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement. You brought to our attention locations that we had not previously identified through our literature search and archaeological surveys. You also assisted in a field inspection of sites to assist the pipeline company in avoiding impacts. As you acknowledged, as a result of these efforts and those of interested tribes and governmental agencies, North Baja Pipeline did an outstanding job of siting and building its project so as to avoid harming cultural heritage sites. This could not have been accomplished without advocacy from the public.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you well in your future endeavors (1) to educate the public about the importance of cultural heritage and (2) to work within the context of environmental and historic preservation programs to protect these unique and non-renewable resources from unnecessary damage.

Sincerely,



James H. Cleland, Ph.D.
Principal

UNITED STATES

EUROPE

AUSTRALIA

ASIA

DESIGN. PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTS WORLDWIDE

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 8
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING (MS 825)
464 W. FOURTH STREET, 6TH FLOOR
SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92401-1400
PHONE (909) 383-4042
FAX (909) 383-6494
TTY (909) 383-6300



*Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!*

January 3, 2006

Sacred Sites Protection Circle
Alfredo Figueroa
424 N. Carleton Street
Blythe, CA 92225

08-SBd-95-PM 42.4/42.9
KP 68.3/69.4
Proposed Road Realignment
EA 25960

Dear Mr. Figueroa:

The California Department of Transportation (Department) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are currently conducting environmental studies for a proposed project to improve motorist safety and provide a clear recovery area for vehicles. The proposed project will realign a portion of State Route 95 at PM 42.4/42.9. The project is in San Bernardino County within the Monumental Pass 7.5' USGS quadrangle, Township 6N, Range 22E, Sections 1 and 12.

The studies include cultural resources investigations and consultation with interested parties. The Department is interested in receiving input from your community regarding any concerns related to the proposed project. Please inform us of any areas of cultural significance that we should take into account for the purpose of this project. This letter will be followed shortly with a telephone call to discuss any issues and/or comments that you may have. The Department requests to receive your comments by Friday, February 3, 2006.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the proposed project, please feel free to contact me at (909) 383-4042 or by email at karen_k_swope@dot.ca.gov. In return correspondence please refer to this project by the EA number provided. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

KAREN K. SWOPE, Ph.D.
Associate Environmental Planner, Archaeologist
District Native American Coordinator
Environmental Support/Cultural Studies

Enclosures

KS/kh

"Caltrans improves mobility across California"

Friday, June 15, 2001

<http://www.paloverdevalleytimes.com>

Palo Verde Valley Times / Quartzsite Times

Valley News

A tour of cultural sites in the path of the pipeline

A tour of Native American cultural sites led by Alfredo Figueroa scheduled for yesterday was to include a representative of EDAW Inc, the archeological and anthropological consultant for the North Baja Pipeline Project.

Figueroa, leading the tour as "an elder historian Colorado River native," said representatives of the Bureau of Land Management, Native Americans of the Colorado River, and a "monitor of sacred land sites" were scheduled to take part.

"Native Americans and Blythe power plant intrevrnors will meet with a coalition of archeologists and BLM (representatives) for a tour of consecrated

land of Native American cultural sites of the surrounding Palo Verde Valley," Figueroa said.

Clyde Woods, representing EDAW, said his group would provide two four-wheel drive vehicles to visit sites along the proposed route of the North Baja Pipeline.

Archaeologist Boma Johnson, of Ivins, Utah, in a letter addressed to Carmella Garnica, and included in the packet about the tour, said that a review of the resources section of the Blythe Energy Project Environmental Report showed that while the report was well done and met basic legal requirements it overlooked the concepts of "sacred geogra-

phy" and "spiritual landscape."

"Sometimes no archaeological features or artifacts may be present," Johnson said. "Native American people often hesitate to discuss this level of concern because of the usual negative reactions by the non-Indian community. The usual result is that projects proceed with little or no mention of the Native American spiritual, non-physical cultural values that exist in the region."

"Is there any evidence of sacred geography in the area of the proposed project? The answer is a definite yes," Johnson said. "There are a great number of seen and unseen features in the nearby area that are part of the sacred landscape."

Johnson said there are ancient and sacred trails systems extending east west through the proposed project, including the Xam Kwatchan trail, which is visible north of Blythe in the Big Maria foothills. "Associated with the trail is the greatest concentration of geoglyphs in North America, including an intricate path site on the river terrace only two miles north of the power plant site," Johnson said. "The trail is still used today by local Native Americans for cultural events."

Johnson said Mule Mountain is considered sacred and that there are sacred cremation areas three miles south of the project site.

The Mule Mountains

(Palo Verde Valley Times Newspaper Blog: April 10, 2010)

The following 7-pictures are from the Palo Verde Valley Times website. These pictures show some of the hundreds of pictography that are in located on the east/north side of the Mule Mountains. In addition you will see one of the main trails that traverse east/west to the Chuckwalla Mountains.









Mule Mountain tour of June 14, 2001

These pictures were taken during the tour of the proposed Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) North Baja Natural Gas Line that was proposed to be built on the eastside of the Mule Mountains which is the same location as the proposed Rio Mesa Solar project site. The BLM of El Centro & Palm Springs, California and Yuma, Arizona office were also present on the tour that included the companies archeologist, antropologist and members of the Colorado River Tribes, Chumas and Chemehuevi. The PG&E decided to circumvent all these sacred sites that were shown to them in this tour. The mentioned BLM offices have all this archeological information.



Picture shows main Quechan North/South Trail and Palo Verde Peak in the background (south)



Picture of media and BLM on the eastside of the Mule Mountains (In background).
This picture was taken near one of the cremation sites.



Picture of the many agencies, media and tribal members (Mule Mountains in the background)

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