

DOCKETED

Docket Number:	11-AFC-02
Project Title:	Hidden Hills Solar Electric Generating Station
TN #:	204109
Document Title:	Basin and Range Watch/Kevin Emmerich Comments: Letter Opposing the Petition to Extend Suspension
Description:	N/A
Filer:	System
Organization:	Basin and Range Watch
Submitter Role:	Public
Submission Date:	4/9/2015 6:30:02 PM
Docketed Date:	4/10/2015

Comment Received From: Kevin Emmerich

Submitted On: 4/9/2015

Docket Number: 11-AFC-02

Letter Opposing the Petition to Extend Suspension

Additional submitted attachment is included below.



Basin and Range Watch

April 9th, 2015

To: California Energy Commission

Subject: Letter Opposing the Petition to Extend Suspension

To Whom it May Concern,

Basin and Range Watch would like to request that the California Energy Commission reject the BrightSource Energy Petition for Continued Suspension for Application for Certification for the Hidden Hills Solar Electric Generating System. We believe that any CEC consideration to hold on to this application would contradict the recent amendment of the Renewable Energy General Plan Amendment adopted by the Inyo County Board of Supervisors to allow photovoltaic projects only - Resolution No. 2015-26 and GPA No. 2013-02/Inyo County (Renewable Energy) <http://www.inyoplanning.org/projects/REGPA.htm> BrightSource has stated quite clearly that they do not build PV projects.

As the CEC is quite aware, the Hidden Hills Power Tower would create negative visual impacts, impact local property values, kill wildlife, potentially draw down the aquifer, damage local wells, increase salinity in local wells, and potentially impact tourism in the eastern portion of the county.

The draw-down of the aquifer could impact the flora and fauna of the Stump Spring Area of Critical Environmental Concern. As we know too well from the Ivanpah Solar Project and the Crescent Dunes Solar Project, big power towers kill birds through solar flux and the polarized glare of the heliostats. Dr. Shawn Smallwood made one estimate that the Ivanpah Project could potentially kill up to 20,000 birds per year. Staff of the California Energy Commission decaded that the Hidden Hills Project “will kill golden eagles” in 2012. For quick reference purposes, the story of the Crescent Dunes Solar Project flux bird kill of 130 birds in 4 hours can be seen here: <http://www.basinandrangewatch.org/CrescentDune.html#birdkill>

The project would be built adjacent to private residents, wilderness areas, Stump Springs and the Old Spanish Trial historical site. The visual impacts are inconsistent with traditional uses of the region.

The Inyo County amendment also limits development in Charleston View to 2,400 acres while the applicant's project is over 3,700 acres.

Also, the recent Petition to Extend Suspension was filed after April 3rd, 2015 after the suspension has expired.

Due to the recent changes in county planning and the missed timing for filing, we believe the CEC should reject the applicant's petition to extend the suspension for the Application for Certification. We would like to request that the CEC ends the entire proceeding for this once and for all.

Thanks,

Kevin Emmerich
Laura Cunningham
Basin and Range Watch
P.O. Box 70
Beatty, NV 89003
775-553-2806
atomicoadranch@netzero.net
www.basinandrangewatch.org