DOCKETED

Docket Number:	11-AFC-02
Project Title:	Hidden Hills Solar Electric Generating Station
TN #:	204111
Document Title:	Opposition to Petition for Continued Suspension
Description:	The Amargosa Conservancy opposes the continued suspension of Docket 11-AFC-02
Filer:	Patrick Donnelly
Organization:	Amargosa Conservancy
Submitter Role:	Intervenor
Submission Date:	4/10/2015 8:08:38 AM
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April 10, 2015

California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth St.
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Docket No. 11-AFC-02 (Suspended), Application for Certification for the Hidden Hills Solar Energy Generating System

Opposition to Petition for Continued Suspension by Intervenor Amargosa Conservancy

The Amargosa Conservancy, an intervenor in the matter of Docket 11-AFC-02, opposes the Applicant's Petition for Continued Suspension dated 04-08-2015. The primary reason for this opposition is that the regulatory environment in the area has changed, and thus this project is no longer permissible under local land-use planning.

The Inyo County Board of Supervisors passed a Renewable Energy General Plan Amendment (REGPA) on March 24, 2015. This REGPA was developed with a grant from the California Energy Commission, and ostensibly was intended to harmonize local and state land-use policy regarding renewable energy development in Inyo County. The Applicant's proposal runs afoul of the REGPA in several ways:

Per Policy LU-1.21, "The County does not support renewable energy solar development other than those that use PV technologies," with PV previously defined as photovoltaic. The Applicant is proposing a solar thermal project.

Per Policy WR-3.7, "Projects proposed in Charleston View shall be water sustainable and shall require project applicants to purchase and retire water rights along the same flow path for the water that will be used for the project (construction and maintenance) at a minimum of a 1 to 1 ratio." The Applicant's proposal involves the annual use of relatively large amounts of groundwater, and given the best current hydrologic data (please see attachment), there are no potential existing water rights which could be retired along the flow path between Mt. Charleston, Charleston View, California Valley, and Tecopa. Therefore, any project such as the one being proposed by the Applicant would not be in accord with the REGPA.

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Based on the aforementioned conflicts, the Applicant's project is not appropriate for development, and their Petition for Continued Suspension should be denied so that the extreme current uncertainty over development in Charleston View can be brought toward some resolution. The community of Southern Inyo County has had uncertainty for five years over the fate of this area, and deserves the respect of terminating this project if it clearly won't be built.

Thank you for your consideration,

Patrick Donnelly, *Executive Director*
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Attachments: "2014 State of the Basin Report, Amargosa River Basin" (Zdon, 2014).