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Sent: Wednesday, May 01, 2013 8:04 AM
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Subject: Comments for April 30 Workshop
Attachments: 034.JPG

California Energy Commission

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MAY 23 2013

Greetings,

Basin and Range Watch attended the April 30th, 2013 Palen workshop by phone and attempted to make a comment concerning air quality, but we had some difficulty getting our phone to work and nobody was able to hear us in the afternoon. We believe it may have been our phone connection. We would like to submit these comments just in case we have the same difficulty today.

We have the following three comments about air quality and public health:

1. The Center for Disease Control has determined that Coccidioidomycosis (Valley Fever) is on the rise in the southwest where "cases in Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah have risen from 2,265 in 1998 to more than 22,000 in 2011." The cumulative impacts of big solar projects in Riverside County along I- 10 have the ability to spread the disease to the communities of Blythe, Desert Center and the Coachella Valley. This could also impact motorists and visitors to adjacent wilderness areas and national parks. We have provided photos of dust blackouts on the Genesis and Desert Sunlight Solar Projects. Here is a reference on Web MD: <http://www.webmd.com/lung/news/20130328/valley-fever-fungal-infection-on-rise-in-southwest> The cumulative public health scenario concerning fugitive dust is very real in this part of Riverside County. A 149,000 acre Solar Study Zone was recently designated.
2. The County of Los Angeles recently shut down construction of the Antelope Valley Solar Ranch due to dust blackout violations. The article can be referenced here: <http://www.kcet.org/news/rewire/solar/photovoltaic-pv/dust-pollution-halts-solar-project.html>
3. Just last night (after the workshop) we learned from the Los Angeles Times that 28 solar construction workers have been diagnosed with Valley Fever on two large solar power construction sites in San Luis Obispo County, California. The article can be referenced here: <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-solar-fever-20130501,0,7994390,print.story>

We are not satisfied that big solar developers are doing enough to mitigate fugitive dust emissions. While these are recent articles, it is disturbing that as many as 28 workers may now have Valley Fever due to the chaos of the inadequacy to mitigate fugitive dust emissions. The Palen Project will develop about 5 square miles of desert and we do not feel that the dust mitigation is working on the Ivanpah Project.

We attached our photo of the Ivanpah Project taken on February 23rd, 2013 during a high wind event. We saw no efforts to control this dust.

Thank you,

Kevin Emmerich
Laura Cunningham
Basin and Range Watch

