

Docket Optical System - CEC record-Docket #11-AFC-03 Quail Brush Power Generation Siting Case

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To: <ESolorio@energy.state.ca.us>
Date: 3/20/2012 1:23 PM
Subject: CEC record-Docket #11-AFC-03 Quail Brush Power Generation Siting Case
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11-AFC-3	
DATE	MAR 20 2012
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Hello,

As a resident of San Diego, I have had the fortune of growing up with Mission Trails as my backyard. The park's open space feel is an incredible rarity in a city as large as San Diego, and it is undoubtedly one of the spaces that we and future generations should seek to preserve. I was concerned, therefore, to learn of the impending power plant construction just North of West Hills High School. This unsightly blemish will undoubtedly mar both the pristine trails and climbing areas of Santee, as well as impact the residential areas of nearby East County communities. Audibly, the power plant is likely to be a thorn in the side of anyone living or hiking in an appreciable radius. Environmentally, the facility is destined to destroy local plant communities and reduce the available foraging areas of small mammals and raptors.

As an environmental and community activist, I am well aware that while protests and gatherings can be effective, they are often trumped by corporate pressure and coercion from the private sector. What can be, and indeed has been, effective is the use of public policy to delay and perhaps ultimately arrest the proceeding of unwanted development. As a field biologist, I am familiar with the importance of endangered species in their unique contributions to ecological communities, as well as their ability to halt development projects. The endangered species listing (IUCN) of the Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) in Washington and Oregon and Washington has thwarted numerous construction projects, and more locally the Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) has deterred a number of development efforts. This is because as a federally listed species, the development companies must submit formal reports addressing their impact on each threatened species they could potentially impact. If a quantifiable impact is predicted, they must then submit a recovery plan in order to offset their impact. This long, arduous, and peer reviewed process is often enough to stall would-be projects for long enough for the protest to gain adequate footing.

I submit that on this basis we should rally an arm of the general protest against the power plant's construction. Several federally endangered species could potentially utilize the area of proposed development. These include the Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), San Diego Ambrosia (*Ambrosia pumila*), and San Diego Thornmint (*Acanthomintha ilicifolia*) which is listed federally as "threatened", and "endangered" in the state of California. We should demand that Cogentrix first conduct comprehensive surveys of the proposed site for these federally endangered species and, if discovered,

submit a peer reviewed recovery plan to offset their impact. These plans and site surveys should be conducted in accordance with regulations set forth in the Endangered Species Act.

I feel very strongly that this project is ill-conceived and potentially dangerous. I have submitted my appeal to both the pathos and ethos of the San Diego community, and I now leave it in the hands of the policy-makers. Find your moral and logical footing and take a stand against this construction project. Help maintain our beautiful open space and ensure a healthy community for the generations to come.

Sincerely,

John Harley
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