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 1516 Ninth Street
 Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

Reference: DRECP Land Use Breakout Sessions 4/26/2012

To whom it may concern:

On behalf of Friends of Jawbone we would like to express our deep concern at the depth that your group has delved into Public Lands managed by BLM.

The BLM, Forest Service, State of California Parks and National Parks provide recreational resources for citizens to enjoy the great outdoors, in its natural state with all the glory of all the open space, unobstructed by development. The view of the open space from ground beauty to the stars in the sky is something that cannot be found in any city because of its infrastructure.

DRECP, in its mission on the front page of the web site states: “The DRECP, when completed, is expected to further these objectives by providing binding, long-term endangered species permit assurances, while facilitating the review and approval of renewable energy projects in the Mojave and Colorado Deserts in California “

This is all under the DRECP, “a major component of California renewable energy planning efforts.

Now when you read this, you can say, “OK, government wants to get to the “33% of all retail electricity sales by 2020” as a goal now. It seems someone in their infinite wisdom said, “Hey no one is using the California Desert, let’s go there.”

During the meeting of 4/25-26/2012 Mr. Harlow made it clear that the maps posted on the wall were nothing but a “Scenario”. Now only a blind person would take these comments lightly. There are scenarios that DRECP staff and consultants seriously are considering as a trial balloon to see what the reaction would be.

No one that I could see was happy with these Scenarios, from the Military, to City and Counties' staff, and especially the public.

In regards to the "Public"... This was the first meeting I had attended and this was because I was told that the public is discouraged from coming. I was informed if you did happen to show up; you did not get to talk, because there was no place for public comment in this process.

Now on 5/25-26, all of a sudden the public was allowed. Furthermore, you had breakout sessions. Interesting.

The DRECP process, because how it was set up, is excluding the public. Yes, you had those 2 days, but other than that, no public could make substantial comments, or even have an opportunity to make an effect on what was happening to our Public Lands.

The California Desert has millions of people living in the desert, and millions upon millions more that come to recreate in every possible form in the desert. Thus, this desert is not a barren landscape, but it is well populated and managed in the proper way. There are many management plans that have been developed since 1978 when Nixon created the CDCA.

So, you have a law for 33% renewable energy. Why has the DRECP focused on the desert? Why not on other parts of California, closer to the metropolitan areas of the cities to produce this 33% renewable energy?

Why does DRECP feel they have to come up with new plans to protect the desert, when we have every imaginable plan already in place and the public still has the use of the desert, though in some restrictive form?

Why? Is it because private enterprise wants to take hold of the public lands not only to make a profit on public lands, but use public lands to do mitigation.

Public lands are managed by the government. We, the public, expected the government to protect these lands for the public use. Only now we find those in the political people in Sacramento and Washington DC feel they can dispose or use public lands without even letting the public know. "How can do we protect ourselves from government?"

Breakout Session Land Use:

http://www.drecp.org/meetings/2012-04-25-26_meeting/presentations/07b_Land_Use_Breakout_Summary.pdf

Your slide pretty well sums up the concerns of those present in this meeting. Recreational resources have a mission, and they made it very clear what they will not accept wholesome take of public lands.

From information on your power point slide on Counties, they are not giving up control of their lands; they are making every effort to provide alternative energy and are to be commended using private property.

CDCA amendment will affect everyone in the desert. NEPA is not being followed to even have a planned amendment. BLM lands are going to be rezoned, to accommodate DRECP goals, and this all will be done at the cost of everyone else. Something sounds very illegal, if not morally wrong! The desert just completed 5 management plans and amendments, yet here we go again, and without public process.

In regards to your slide on recreation: It tells it how it is, SRMA's are being affected big time, and it seems that decisions again are being made without regard to the public access, and recreational values and resources. You are on a mission to take as much public land as you can, and you feel you are doing it legally. "Governments got it totally wrong."

DRECP promised to not take "Open areas", that means in areas where you can recreate without any restrictions". Yet, promises are broken by this very group we are supposed to "Trust". This is starting to look like the plight the American Indians had when the big "new settlers" brought their government along and made promises. How can anyone forget that? So here, centuries later, we are at again. Uncle Sam's here to take our land again with empty promises.

On your slide shows on Renewable Energy Goals. I personally pushed for this answer and it is very simple:

You started with your statement on the Web site as 33%. That now as I understand it, the percentage that you want take from the California Desert is 21,500 daily MW. Why does the California Desert have to provide the 21,500 daily MW?

You need to add up all the energy produced by Military, City, Counties, and Rooftops daily MW's. Once you have these numbers, they need to be subtracted from the 21,500 daily MW. Could it be 9,000 MW, or 5,000 MW is what we really need to get from Public Lands? No one would answer that question.

With that question, what exactly is the daily MW needed that is not already produced by all other sources than "Public Lands"?

You will find out that it is a total overkill by the DRECP and those with special interest to just go "shopping for land", our land, to satisfy their thirst. That is totally wrong.

Then you need to sit down with the public and decide OK, this is what we need, and these are the possible areas we could use. Have it be part of the public process, not this blanket take over the desert and put arbitrary land use plans on us under the guise of California Desert Plan amendment.

We all want to be part of the solution, but we are not willing to be the sole source of renewable energy from Public Lands, as they are spoken for by the American public in the form of “Recreational Resources”.

BLM will continue to issue permits on locations suitable for energy with or without the DRECP. DRECP does not serve the public; it services a very narrow special interest group who wants to make big bucks on getting land from the federal government.

Those government agents or elected officials should be ashamed of themselves to even give in to private enterprise service business adventure at the cost of the public lands and the American public.

Recreational Resources also have a mission, yet with only two representatives from CORVA, there are millions of Recreational users and residents in the desert and there is no one else on the Stakeholder Committee. Why is that?

I know. DRECP did not feel it important to even consider the ramifications of what you are planning to the general public. Even when a request was brought up to you and your contractors to provide a map of all the resources used in the desert, it was not done or even shared with the entire stakeholders. Thus, the California Desert Public and their visitors are totally ignored.

Earnestly,

/s/

Edward H. Waldheim
Friends of Jawbone, Friends of El Mirage
President

Cc:
Supervisor Zack Scrivner
Supervisor Jon McQuiston
Congressman Kevin McCarthy
Senator Jean Fuller
Friends of Jawbone
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