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California Energy Commission
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09-RENEW EO-1
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February 19, 2015
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Endorsed by:

Homestead Valley
Community Council
www.hvccsite.org

Morongo Basin
Historical Society
www.mbhs.org

Flamingo Heights
Community Association
www.fhca.com

Johnson Valley
Improvement Association
see www.johnsonvalley.com

Hammering Productions
dave@kingofthehammers.com

Landers Association

Yucca Mesa
Improvement Association
www.yuccamesa.org

Western American
Railroad Museum
www.barstowrailmuseum.org

Lucerne Valley
Chamber of Commerce

Lucerne Valley
Economic Development Association

Lucerne Valley
Market and Hardware

Lucerne Valley Museum

Route 66
Mother Road Museum
www.route66museum.org

Joshua Tree
Gateway Communities
Tourism Committee
www.joshuatreegatewaycommunities.com

Points of Interest Promotions
Lucerne Valley
billlembright@thenewlight.net

Rockhound Field Trip Fanatics!
<http://rockhound-field-trips.ning.com>

Morongo Basin
Conservation Association
www.mbconservation.org

Lucerne Valley-Johnson Valley
Municipal Advisory Council

Barstow Chamber of Commerce
www.barstowchamber.com

Morongo Basin
Municipal Advisory Council

re: DRECP Draft EIR/EIS

It is an ironic coincidence that after years of research and planning, our small volunteer Scenic 247 Committee has run headlong into massive corporate, federal and state campaigns to use the desert for industrial-scale renewable energy generation and transmission.

Even more ironic, the County of San Bernardino recently launched a marketing program to spread the word worldwide that this County offers so much for the traveler, vacationer and tourist.

The Scenic 247 Committee's campaign to change the status of State Route 247 from "eligible" to Scenic Highway status dovetails with the County program. Scenic 247 is the central link between population centers and our recreational gold mine. A Scenic Highway is a proven magnet for travelers, building the economies of small towns and rural settlements, and community pride in our unique world.

Municipal Advisory Councils to the County Supervisor as well as many organizations and tourist destinations have endorsed Scenic 247.

San Bernardino County suffers from lack of revenues, lack of jobs. Population losses greatly concern our schools and businesses.

The County exports mineral resources, but little else to bring outside money into the region - except exporting the story of our attractions, to build tourism to support resident-serving enterprises.

Highway businesses cannot survive on local population alone. The stores, restaurants, medical offices in our communities are patronized by residents whose incomes benefit from tourism and recreation revenues. We are seeing too many small businesses close their doors.

Promotion of Scenic 247 was spurred by these considerations, as well as our fascination with the prehistoric and historic heritage of the territory it traverses, and some of the least developed scenery remaining in the State of California.

A major consideration for development in a scenic corridor is Visual Impact - how compatible is it with the character of the area? (Note: Many states and countries treat their rural and wild scenery as a natural resource, and it is).

Promoters of industrial renewable energy generation in the desert seem ignorant of the values of Visual Impact. Unpleasant vistas of wind turbines, massive solar fields and miles of transmission lines already mar the legendary California experience for the traveler.

Studies prove that people come to this desert from cities, other states and countries around the world, not for industrialization, but

SCENIC 247 COMMITTEE

51720 Hacienda Rd.#247, Johnson Valley, CA 92285 • www.scenichighway247.com
A committee of the Homestead Valley Community Council



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for wide open spaces. They seek these open spaces for relaxation, adventure and an opportunity to reconnect with nature.

Two major threats to Scenic 247 values that have emerged are:
-this huge Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan, deciding which parts of the wide open spaces to sacrifice in order to export energy at no benefit to ratepayers and taxpayers, and
-Southern California Edison's proposal to run the Coolwater-Lugo transmission line through undeveloped views and rural residences in the Scenic 247 corridor, seemingly permissible in the DRECP Draft EIR/EIS.

A Scenic Highway is proven to increase tourism, which will increase revenues for the County of San Bernardino and the State of California.

Industrial-scale renewable energy development will diminish tourism, and is proven to diminish property tax revenues.

The County and California need revitalizing, not further depression, not ghost towns. Promises of added jobs from the energy developers have not materialized; instead we witness the destruction of our desert and our property values as payrolls and profits leave the County.

We urge use of rooftop and parking lot solar at the point-of-use.

We urge the BLM to remember that if the desert is given over for the profit of private industry, what they will do cannot be undone.

We urge all the planners to heed Caltrans' advice in their comment:

"Ensure each energy project considers impact upon officially designated and eligible State Scenic Highways.

For more information see the Landscape Architecture website:

http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/scenic_hwy.htm"

Committee Chair
760-364-2646

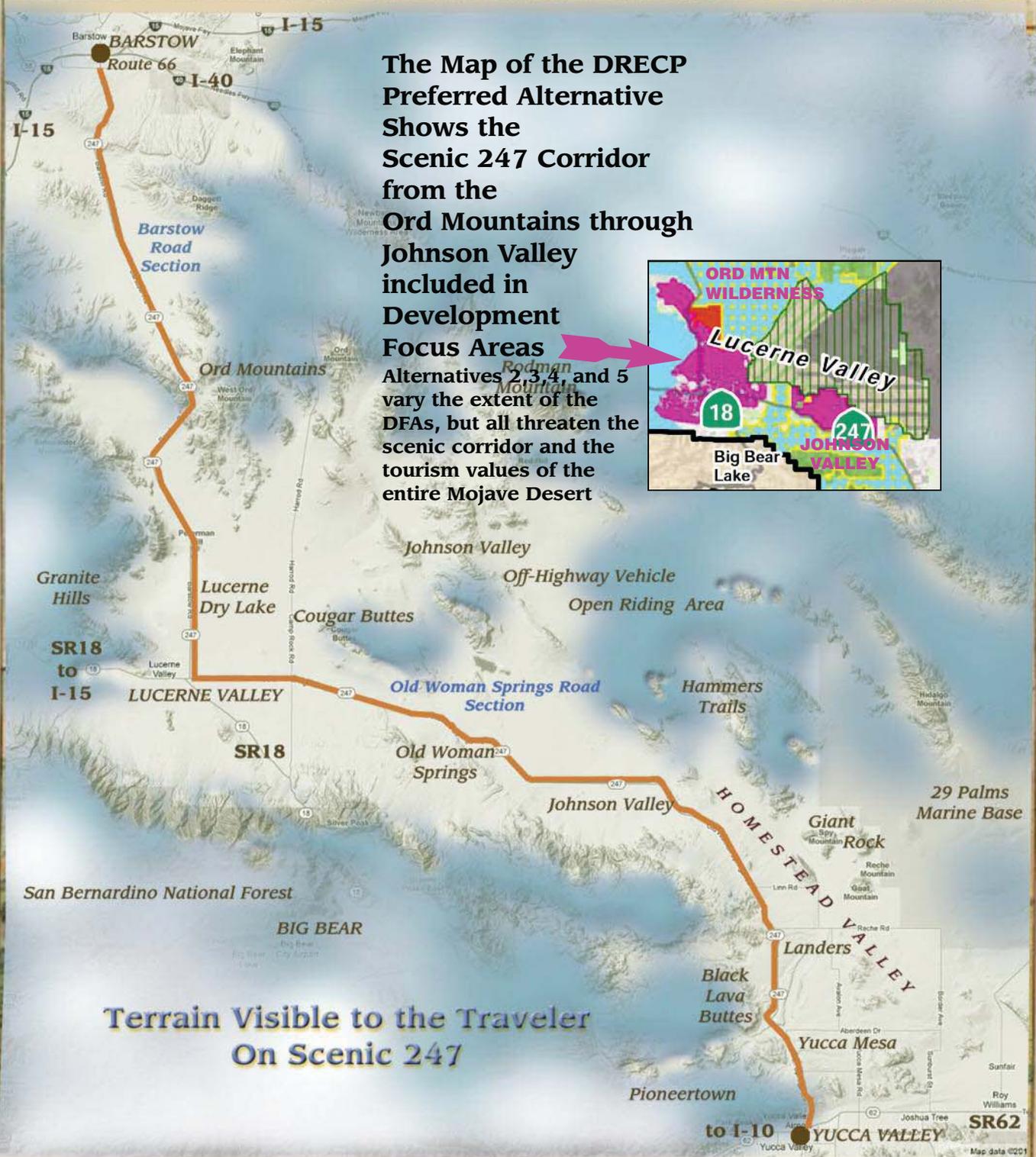
Our Mission Statement is:

- We will achieve State Scenic Highway designation for Highway 247 traversing the communities of the Town of Yucca Valley, Flamingo Heights, Yucca Mesa, Landers, Johnson Valley, Lucerne Valley and the City of Barstow.
- We will identify the heightened visual experience in our Mojave Desert through official acknowledgment of our distinct natural, historical and recreational qualities.
- An officially recognized scenic corridor will attract tourism, enhance business and generate community pride.

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State Route 247 and Nearby Points of Interest



The Map of the DRECP Preferred Alternative Shows the Scenic 247 Corridor from the Ord Mountains through Johnson Valley included in Development Focus Areas Alternatives 2, 3, 4, and 5 vary the extent of the DFAs, but all threaten the scenic corridor and the tourism values of the entire Mojave Desert

Terrain Visible to the Traveler On Scenic 247

The High Desert Link for Joshua Tree National Park, San Bernardino National Forest and Mountain Recreation, Desert Off-Road Recreation, Route 66 Mother Road, Interstate 15, and Interstate 10 in the Low Desert