



California Energy Commission

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Representative Mr. Paul Cook
Eighth Congressional District
C/O Mr. Tim Itnyre, Legislative Assistant

March 31, 2015

Dear Mr. Cook,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of Black Lava Butte and Flat Top Mesa as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). This area is located in the USGS Rimrock Quadrangle area of San Bernardino County, California.

I have written several reports ^{1,2} describing my biological surveys of Black Lava Butte and Flat Top Mesa for the federally-listed threatened species of desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizi*). These reports document the importance of protecting the unique biological diversity of this area. In addition to desert tortoises there are other sensitive, threatened and endangered species present in the area and its zone of influence.

The communities in the Morongo Basin very much appreciate your efforts regarding the BLM's updated West Mojave Plan (WEMO), and the Desert Renewable Energy and Conservation Plan (DRECP). **Please help designate Black Lava Butte and Flat Top Mesa as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).**

Respectfully submitted,

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Report References:

1. Delaney, P. M. 2012. Biological surveys of Flat Top Mesa and Black Lava Butte in Pioneertown, California on April 22 and April 28, 2012. Report submitted on behalf of the Wildlands Conservancy, Whitewater, California 92282.
2. Delaney, P.M. 2012. Records of the occurrence of desert tortoises (*Gopherus agassizi*) in Pioneertown, California from 1988-2012. Report submitted to the Wildlands Conservancy, Whitewater, California 92282.