

Thank you for your comment, John McFarlane.

The comment tracking number that has been assigned to your comment is SolarS50592.

Comment Date: July 15, 2008 16:56:50PM
Solar Energy Development PEIS
Comment ID: SolarS50592

First Name: John
Middle Initial:
Last Name: McFarlane
Organization:
Address: 56939 San Rafael Court
Address 2:
Address 3:
City: Yucca Valley
State: CA
Zip: 92284
Country: USA
Email: captjmac@adelphia.net
Privacy Preference: Don't withhold name or address from public record
Attachment: BLM PEIS (My Comments).doc

Comment Submitted:

My comments for inclusion and consideration during this scoping process are attached. Thank You for this opportunity. [See Attachment.](#)

TO: BLM Public Comments
RE: Programmatic Environmental Impact Study
AT: RIVERSIDE, California, JUNE 16, 2008

I ATTENDED MEETINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA DESERT COALITION, HELD TO ALERT THE PUBLIC ABOUT "GREEN PATH NORTH" BEING PROPOSED FOR CONSTRUCTION RIGHT THROUGH SOME OF THE MOST PRISTINE LANDS IN THE MORONGO BASIN. I LATER ATTENDED MEETINGS OF THE ALLIANCE FOR RESPONSIBLE ENERGY POLICY, WHICH CAME INTO EXISTANCE IN JANUARY 2008 TO STUDY THE IMPACT OF THE 2005 ENERGY POLICY ACT. IT QUICKLY BECAME APPARENT TO ME THAT THAT OUR COMMUNITY MUST LOOK BEYOND SINGLE PROJECTS THAT ADD CENTRALIZED ENERGY GENERATION AND MORE LONG DISTANCE TRANSMISSION LINES. ENERGY POLICY AT THE STATE AND NATIONAL LEVEL NEED THE TIME AND ATTENTION OF ALL AMERICANS IF WE ARE TO INFLUENCE THE FUTURE OF ENERGY PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION. THEREFORE, I WAS GRATEFUL TO LEARN THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT ACKNOWLEDGED THE VERY REAL NEED FOR CUMULATIVE REVIEW OF THE PROJECTS PLANNED AND APPLIED FOR WITHIN CALIFORNIA AND THE OTHER WESTERN STATES. I THANKED YOU, IN RIVERSIDE, FOR OPENING THIS TRANSPARENT PROCESS AND PLACING A MORITORIUM ON APPLICATIONS DURING THE PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW. I WAS UTTERLY DISMAYED TO LEARN THAT THE MORITORIUM HAD BEEN LIFTED. WHAT I FOUND MOST DISTURBING WAS THE STATEMENT THAT THE MORITORIUM HAD BEEN LIFTED DUE TO 'PUBLIC OUTCRY'! THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD WAS ONLY HALF OVER. AT THE FIRST TWO HEARINGS THE "PUBLIC" THAT I HEARD WERE SAYING "UTILITY SCALE PROJECTS AND LONG DISTANCE TRANSMISSION ARE NOT THE RIGHT WAY TO DO THIS". "DO NOT COVER THE CALIFORNIA DESERT WITH MIRRORS". "GENERATE ENERGY AT THE POINT OF USE IN AREAS THAT ARE ALREADY BUILT UP". ONLY A FEW OF THE SPEAKERS WERE FROM THE BIG SOLAR COMPANIES AND IT WAS THOSE *FEW* WHO MADE IT KNOWN THAT THEY MUST HAVE LARGE AREAS OF THE DESERT IN ORDER TO BUILD LARGE MIRROR FARMS. THEY EVEN HAD THE AUDACITY TO STATE THAT THE BLM *MUST* ALLOW THEM TO BUILD ON AND ACROSS ACECs AND OTHER PROTECTED LANDS. I DO NOT FEEL THAT A FEW COMMENTS BY BIG SOLAR, WHEN COMPARED TO OVER AN HOUR OF REPEATED PLEAS TO NOT ALLOW THIS, IS REALLY A PUBLIC OUTCRY. SINCE THE MISSION OF THE BLM IS TO MANAGE *PUBLIC LANDS* I WOULD HOPE THAT THE 'MAJORITY' OF COMMENTS FROM ALL THE SCOPING MEETINGS WILL HOLD THE MOST WEIGHT.

IN THE SMALL TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY WE HAVE SEEN A GREAT DEAL OF DISENT OVER DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. THERE HAS BEEN MORE AND MORE OUTCRY OVER BUILDING HOUSING TRACTS, BUSINESSES, **AND** INFRASTRUCTURE. CITIZENS ARE BECOMING AWARE THAT DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT ALWAYS MEAN GROWTH. SOMETIMES DEVELOPMENT TEARS DOWN MUCH MORE THAN IT BUILDS UP. WHEN I HEAR CITIZENS ARGUING AGAINST GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT, FROM AN EMOTIONAL BASE, I FEEL THEIR PAIN. HOWEVER, I TRY TO LOOK AT THE ISSUES FROM A REALISTIC POINT OF VIEW. I OFTEN THINK THAT STANDING AGAINST DEVELOPMENT FROM THE “NOT IN MY BACK YARD” POSITION WILL NOT RESOLVE ANY OF THE ISSUES. WHEN GOVERNMENT HAS TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO DEVELOP, THE GOOD OF THE MAJORITY HAS LONG BEEN THE RULE IN AMERICA. THAT’S WHY THE ARGUMENT THAT “WE DON’T WANT IT HERE” IS TOO WEAK. I WOULD PREFER THAT CITIZENS ARGUE FROM A MORE SCIENTIFIC OR FACTUAL BASE, SUCH AS “CHAOS THEORY” BY Edward Lorenz! WHILE TRYING TO DESCRIBE SYSTEMS THAT ARE APPARENTLY DISORDERED, THE CHOAS THEORY ACTUALLY ENDED UP FINDING THE UNDERLYING ORDER IN APPARENTLY RANDOM DATA. I WOULD LIKE TO QUOTE A SCIENTIST WHO UNDERSTANDS THE THEORY MORE CLEARLY THAN I DO. *“The flapping of a single butterfly’s wing today produces a tiny change in the state of the atmosphere. Over a period of time, what the atmosphere actually does diverges from what it would have done. So, in a month’s time, a tornado that would have devastated the Indonesian coast doesn’t happen. Or maybe one that wasn’t going to happen, does. (Ian Stewart, The Mathematics of Chaos, pg. 141)* I BELIEVE THAT THE SCIENTIFIC DATA CONTAINED WITHIN THE THEORY OF RELATIVITY, CHAOS THEORY, QUANTUM PHYSICS AND STRING THEORY; WHICH HAVE DEEPENED OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF THE UNIVERSE, POINT OUT THE VERY SERIOUS DEPTH WITH WHICH WE MUST STUDY THE ACTIONS WE TAKE TODAY IN REGARD TO THE EFFECTS THEY MAY CAUSE TOMORROW. IF WE ARE NOT REALLY SURE OF THE LONG TERM EFFECTS OF OUR ACTIONS WE SHOULD NOT PROCEED UNTIL WE ARE CERTAIN.

MOST INVENTIONS AND MEDICINES ON EARTH HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AFTER OBSERVATION AND IMITATION OF NATURE AND NATURAL PROCESSES. IF WE CLEAR GRADE AND BUILD-OUT SOLAR FIELDS ACROSS THE MOJAVE DESERT IN THE RUSH THAT WE APPEAR TO BE IN, WHAT WILL THE IMPACT BE ON AN EXTREMELY VULNERABLE ECOSYSTEM? SOME REPORTS INDICATE THAT IN EXCESS OF 1 MILLION ACRES WILL BE SCRAPED CLEAN AND COVERED WITH MIRRORS, WINDMILLS, SUPPORT ROADS, ETC., IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. THERE HAS NEVER BEEN SUCH A RAPID BUILD-OUT OF ANY ECOSYSTEM THAT SIZE! CLEARLY THERE ARE LEGITIMATE REASONS THAT DESERTS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE OVERALL BALANCED

ECOSYSTEM WE CALL EARTH. I DO NOT THINK WE HAVE TAKEN THE PROPER TIME AND EFFORT TO STUDY THE ISSUES. I WOULD HATE TO SEE SO MUCH DESTRUCTION OF A VITAL ECOSYSTEM WHICH "MIGHT" BE THE LABORATORY WHERE WE DEVELOP MUCH NEEDED HEAT AND DROUGHT RESISTANT SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES. IT SEEMS SO MUCH LESS DRASTIC TO BUILD SOLAR GROVES OVER PARKING LOTS AND FREEWAYS.

FOR THE PAST THREE OR FOUR YEARS -- ABOUT THIS TIME OF YEAR -- WE BEGIN TO HEAR THAT CALIFORNIA IS ENTERING ONE OF ITS WORST FIRE SEASONS EVER. BECAUSE OF GROWTH AND POLLUTION IN CALIFORNIA, WHEN NATIVE PLANT LIFE IS DESTROYED -- BY ANY MEANS -- IT IS USUALLY REPLACED BY NON-NATIVE GRASSES WHICH ARE FED BY THE INCREASED CHEMICALS IN OUR AIR. THESE NON-NATIVE GRASSES BURN HOTTER AND FASTER THAN MOST OF OUR NATIVE VEGETATION - HENCE - MORE FIERCE WILDFIRES EVERY YEAR.

I FIRMLY BELIEVE THE CALIFORNIA DESERT COALITION AND THE ALLIANCE FOR RESPONSIBLE ENERGY POLICY ARE BOTH GROUPS WHICH ARE COMPRISED OF CONCERNED CITIZENS. HAVING ATTENDED MEETINGS OF BOTH GROUPS, AND HAVING STUDIED THE DATA ON THEIR THREE WEBSITES, I FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO BELIEVE THAT EITHER GROUP INTENDS TO IMPEDE RESPONSIBLE PROGRESS. HOWEVER, FROM STUDY OF A GREAT DEAL OF THEIR RESEARCH I FIND MYSELF CONVINCED THAT MORE CENTRALIZED GENERATION AND LONG DISTANCE TRANSMISSION OF ENERGY, BASED ON OUTDATED TECHNOLOGIES, IS LESS RESPONSIBLE THAN DISTRIBUTED ENERGY, GENERATED AT POINT OF USE, THROUGH MODERN TECHNOLOGIES WHICH ARE BECOMING MORE AVAILABLE EVERY DAY! IT IS MY SINCERE HOPE AND PRAYER THAT THE Department Of Energy AND Bureau Of Land Management WILL SOON REACH THE SAME CONCLUSIONS.

These comments are not in all caps because I wanted to YELL at you. My comments were originally prepared and read at the Riverside hearing. I do not know how to click once to change this all back into regular type.

Submitted with all Sincerity by:

John C McFarlane

**Concerned Citizen
Yucca Valley, California**