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THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

GALIF. CALIF. HERITAGE
RIVERSIDE, CA Nevada Regional Office

Eastern Sierra Field Office
P.O. Box 442
Lee Vining, CA 93541
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TO	INITIALS
EM	
ADM	
DSR	
EA	
ADMIN	
F&O	
LM & RP	
ECMs	

November 1, 2000

Tim Salt
Desert District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
5221 Box Springs Boulevard
Riverside, CA 92507

G21

Re: Extension of Comment Period for Cadiz Water Project

Dear Mr. Salt:

I am writing on behalf of The Wilderness Society to request an extension of time to comment on the Supplement Environmental Impact Report/Statement (SEIR/EIS) for the "Cadiz Groundwater Storage and Dry-Year Supply Program."

The Wilderness Society previously submitted comments, with the National Parks Conservation Association on the Draft EIR/EIS for this project. We remain deeply concerned about the potential for this project to irreversibly impact both Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service lands. Potentially impacted resources include:

- Plants and wildlife, including the Desert bighorn sheep;
- Critical habitat for the threatened Desert tortoise;
- Groundwater and surface water supply and quality;
- Air quality;
- Mojave National Preserve and four Bureau of Land Management Wilderness areas.

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The issues that the public must review, analyze, and comment upon include complex aspects of geology and hydrogeology, the adequacy of the proposed monitoring and mitigation plan, potential impacts to wildlife, plants, air quality, water resources and specially protected federal lands, the range of reasonable and preferable alternatives to the proposed project, and secondary impacts on population growth and commercial development.

Note: This letter was also sent to the Metropolitan Water District

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Because of the length and complexity of the document, and the serious significance of its potential impacts to federally protected resources, we respectfully request a 45-day extension of time on the existing comment period, so that the comment period totals 90 days, the minimum required under the Federal Land Policy Management Act for an action that mandates a change in the protection status of Bureau of Land Management lands required by this project.

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Thank you for your consideration of our request. We look forward to your prompt response. Please address correspondence to our Eastern Sierra Field Office, Attn. Sally Miller, P.O. Box 442, Lee Vining, CA 93541.

Sincerely,



Sally Miller
Regional Conservation Representative