

December 20, 2000

Mr. James Williams
Bureau of Land Management
California Desert District
6221 Box Springs Boulevard
Riverside, CA 92507-0714

P25

Mr. Williams:

Having visited the Mojave several times and partaken of its natural beauty, I am particularly concerned about the effects that the Cadiz Groundwater Storage and Dry-year Supply Program Project could have on the Mojave ecosystem and the plants and animals that the groundwater nourishes.

P25-1

I have read the draft supplemental environmental impact statement and believe that too much self-policing authority has been granted to Cadiz, Inc. and the Metropolitan Water District in this plan. Both these organizations have an obvious vested interest in the outcome of any regulatory decisions that are rendered and can therefore not be expected to give adequate consideration to larger environmental concerns. The plan as it exists now does not define clearly enough the monitoring and mitigation that will be required.

P25-2

More emphasis needs to be placed on water conservation measures and other alternatives that are sustainable over the long run. This sort of short-term focus will not solve any long-term problems; it will only make them worse. Southern California's continued population growth will have to entail solutions other than depleting the limited groundwater supply in the region if such growth is to be sustained.

P25-3

Depleting the water table will also cause a potential problem with air pollution that will result if the water table beneath dry lakes in the region drop by even a few feet. The effects of this have already been observed with Owens Lake.

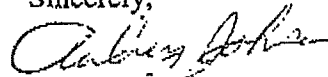
P25-4

In summary, this is not the kind of policy that Congress intended to see carried out when it set aside the Mojave National Preserve and nearby wilderness areas as functioning ecosystems and pristine desert landscapes. The policy this proposed project represents goes directly against wilderness values and will destroy the viability of the areas that Congress was attempting to protect.

P25-5

I strongly encourage you to support the public interest and reject the Cadiz/Metropolitan Water District proposal. Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely,



Aubrey Johnson
90 West Shrewsbury Place
Princeton, NJ 08540