

5084 Santa Susana Place
Santa Barbara, CA 93111
December 29, 2000

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

P36

Dear Mr. Williams:

I am writing to comment on the draft supplemental environmental impact statement on the Cadiz Groundwater Storage and Dry-year Supply Program. I am concerned about the possible impacts this project could have on the Mojave National Preserve and several desert Wilderness Areas. I do not believe that this environmental review adequately addresses the potential threats. I am also afraid that the safeguards outlined to protect the environment will not be sufficient.

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I have two main concerns with the project.

First, I am concerned that groundwater in the surrounding areas, including but not limited to Mojave National Preserve and nearby Wilderness Areas, may be drawn down by this project and will cause drying up of springs and death of vegetation, and negative effects on wildlife such as bighorn sheep and desert tortoises.

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Second, I am concerned about the possible air pollution that could result if the water table under the nearby Bristol and Cadiz dry lakes drops even a few feet, causing blowing dust and reduced visibility. Do not repeat the Owens Lake situation.

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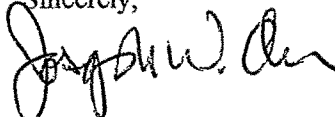
I am also concerned that the plan for monitoring and mitigation is not well defined and offers questionable management for environmental impacts. The plan gives too much authority for decisions affecting the desert ecosystem to Cadiz, Inc. and its customer, Metropolitan Water District, both of which have an economic interest in extracting groundwater.

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Continued industrialization of the California Desert, which I have visited at every opportunity since I was a boy some fifty years ago, threatens to undo the hard-won protection of Mojave National Preserve, Joshua Tree National Park, and the many wonderful Wilderness Areas especially the nearby Old Woman Mountains area. These lands were set aside by Congress to be permanently protected. This project is likely to undo that protection. Please support the public interest and reject this proposal.

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Sincerely,



Joseph W. Olson

✓ cc: Mr. Jack Safely
Metropolitan Water District
Water Resources Management Group
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