

January 03, 2001

Bureau of Land Management
California Desert District
6221 Box Springs Boulevard
Riverside, CA 92507-0714
Attn: Mr. James Williams
james_williams@blm.gov

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CALIF. DESERT DISTRICT
RIVERSIDE, CA

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Dear Mr. Williams,

We are writing to comment on the draft supplemental environmental impact statement on the Cadiz Groundwater Storage and Dry-year Supply Program.

We are concerned about the impacts the project will have on the Mojave National Preserve and several desert Wilderness Areas. The environmental review does not adequately address potential threats.

We are 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 have solely an economic interest in extracting groundwater. To allow profit-focused decision-makers to be in charge of the protection of our public resources does not protect the public interest!

The document needs to examine alternatives that are actually sustainable, safer and less environmentally destructive, including water conservation measures. The review of viable alternatives is a legal requirement.

Far more progress should be made in water conservation before parks and natural areas are further threatened by projects such as this.

Alternatives that should be considered include other existing, planned or feasible water storage projects and easily adopted water conservation measures that have successfully reduced water demand in other areas. For example: Why not make it illegal to have a lawn requiring watering?! That would save billions of gallons per year. People need to take showers. No one needs to grow a lawn.

We are concerned about air pollution that could result if the water table under the nearby "dry" lakes drops even a few feet. For example: Owens Lake.

In addition to nearby inhabitants, this threatens public lands which include two national parks and five wilderness areas managed by the BLM. This land was set aside by Congress to be permanently protected for its nationally significant natural and cultural resource values. This project is likely to undo that protection for future generations.

Please support the public interest and reject this proposal.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lisanne Freese and John Hinkle
Chicago, IL
fax 773-792-1225 lisfreese@aol.com

cc:
Mr. Jack Safely
Metropolitan Water District
Water Resources Management Group
P.O. Box 54153
Los Angeles, CA 90054-0153
(fax 213/217-6119)

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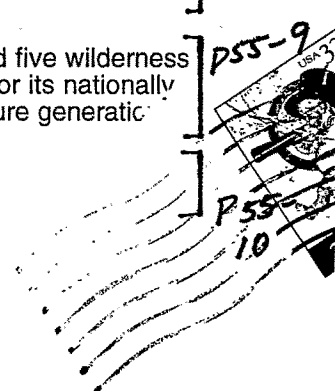
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