

The American Lands Access Association

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California Energy Commission  
Dockets Office, MS-4  
Docket No. 09-RENEW EO-01  
1516 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512



Re: DRECP NEPA/CEQA  
To Whom It May Concern:

I support the Preferred Alternate of DRECP with the changes listed below:

I am commenting on DRECP as a concerned citizen who spends many hours recreating in public lands, including the California desert. I collect minerals for my personal use. I am interested in geology, mining history, and minerals, and through mineral collecting I have learned a great deal about all of these subjects. I donate much of my material to local universities or museums, including San Francisco State University. This material is used in coursework taught by a friend of mine there. Thus, this collecting served a greater role than my personal recreation and education.

On all of the sites below we ask that rockhounding areas and their motorized access routes become a part of the Special Recreation Management Area and protected from having it listed in the Development Focus areas and taken out of National Conservation Lands and ACECs. We have already given up, for the good of other special interests, many rockhounding areas in the desert beginning with the Desert Protection Act of the 1970s. We believed at that time, the Desert Protection Act would be the final decision of how the desert would be managed, but it was again evaluated in the 1980s-1990s and the areas rockhounds could recreate in was decreased again.

Finally, this last time we would like to have the voice of the rockhounds heard as to those few places that are left and ask that they be protected, just as other areas are protected. If this isn't recognized, rockhounds will become extinct and there will be an impact on those small towns throughout the desert that will lose revenue from those rockhounds.

I appreciate that the Bureau of Land Management, along with the CEC and other agencies, has issued the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan, to attempt to identify areas where energy development in our deserts may be less harmful to plants, wildlife, scenery, recreation and other values. Areas that should not be developed will also be identified.

However, there are many special places in our deserts that the DRECP does not adequately protect from renewable energy development. Specifically, there are several rock collecting sites that are within Development Focus Areas, and some very special collecting places that are not within Special Recreation Management Areas, but that should be.

The following are two locations I have enjoyed collecting at.

**Randsburg/Red Mountain** (Kern/San Bernardino County). Silver and tungsten minerals are found here.

**Otto Mountain** (near Baker, San Bernardino County). Very special locality for mineral collectors and geologists. Rare tellurium minerals and easy access from road.

I would like to add: In establishing the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) within the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 Congress found that:

‘the California desert contains historical, scenic, archeological, environmental, biological, cultural, scientific, educational, recreational, and economic resources that are uniquely located adjacent to an area of large population.’ I would like to request that ‘recreation’ be added to the array of values to be emphasized in the future travel management planning. If recreation is not added to this language in the Final EIR/EIS, it will go contrary to the agency assurance to recreation stakeholders that designated motorized routes would not be closed by DRECP.

Because of the ‘more restrictive shall apply’ clause regarding NLCA CMA’s, the protections for recreational routes of travel in this SRMA’s mean nothing.

I support plans to increase lands managed for recreational emphasis and exclude them from renewable energy development through designation of Special and Extended Recreational Management Areas. We ask that these proposed designations from the Preferred Alternative be carried over to the Final EIR/EIS.

I do not support any additional land for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) or National Conservation Land (NCL) designations. The Bureau of Land Management must carefully consider whether land qualifies for the above designations because of significant criteria of relevance or importance. We believe the hard work exhibited in the Draft DRECP document show that in-depth investigation has been undertaken to find those special areas that warrant increased protection. In our careful examination we do not find any other or additional areas that warrant inclusion to ACEC or NCL designations.

Thank you for your time and interest in the future of rockhounds in the desert.

Kyle Beucke

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