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California Energy Commission
Dockets Office, MS-4
Docket No. 09-RENEW EO-01
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***This Never made it on the
View Comments***

RE: Stakeholder Committee,

To DRECP,

Our organization is the California Desert District Mining Coalition (“CDDMC”) representing mining organizations, mining clubs, mineral organizations, current mining companies not listed in DRECP Appendices E, individual miners and the public who are interested in mining availability and mining rights. This represents thousands of mining claims in the California Desert District.

In regards to the DRECP, the CDDMC considers itself a “Stake Holder” in the development of the conservation plans for the proposed future renewable energy projects. The CDDMC would like a category for mining and minerals and be listed as a Stake Holder. The CDDMC has an equal share of interest and responsibility as to how the planning and affects are developed by the DRECP. CDDMC offers substantial benefits, knowledge and expertise to our local communities, state and nation with the ability to extract viable and vital minerals, rare earths and metals from public lands.

Mining can be accomplished in a safe, green and environmentally friendly manner and will create the badly needed NEW long-term and high-paying jobs which contribute to the local, state, and national economy with new long-term tax dollars and revenues. (“Mining permits are usually anywhere from 20-50 years”.) Currently there are many investment groups and companies ready to invest into the mining industry in California and immediately ready to invest into Kern County.

Our “Public Lands” are considered “Multiple Use Areas” defined in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. As stated in the DRECP documents Title 1, Section 102, -12 “that the Public Lands be managed in a manner which recognizes the nations need for domestic sources of Minerals, food timber, etc.” The CDDMC’s intentions is to continue to fulfill that need. There are thousands of mineral claims just in the California Desert District mentioned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) State District office, some of which that are in the proposed, “Development Focus Areas” considered by the DRECP.

For decades the mining community has worked closely with the BLM (And by extension the Department of Interior) to remain good stewards of our public lands. Just recently there has been more participation, due to education of late, with the BLM regarding planning of the DRECP. It is the vision of the CDDMC that mining will be more adequately represented by the BLM and the DRECP, as the mining interests are very much affected in the future.

ES.1.1 Contents:

Under the alternatives, the mining industry in Kern County votes for “NO ACTION”. Under the comparisons that are currently provided for the following Environmental Resource Categories: Minerals and Mining. The Randsburg, Freemont areas of Kern County, should not be considered, as the area is under an, “ Arial Supersonic Highway” between Edwards Air Force Base and China Lakes Naval Weapons Center not excluding the area is already under so many cross contaminate Area of Critical Environmental Concerns (“ACEC”). East Kern County is in a n “Economically Depressed Area” (“EDA”) of which mining can provide the badly needed NEW long-term, High paying jobs for the local communities. (“Usually 20-50 years”) Unfortunately the renewable energy industry and projects are short term jobs initially with lower pay than mining and very few long term jobs.

Conclusion and Recommendation #1:

CDDMC recommends to leave the Kern County area out of the DRECP.

Appendices E:

CDDMC does not agree that only the currently listed mines are the only ones to be excluded from the DRECP. There are many more mining operations that have spent thousands to millions of dollars to date, and still investing substantially into the area and mining operations. These mines have filed of lately to years ago, for their permits and waiting for Surface Mines and Reclamation Administration (“SMARA”) to approve their Plans of Operations “(POO)” The mining community assumes because there are so many new rues, regulations and laws that the process just takes longer now. As part of the permitting process, mining companies have invested into the Biotic studies ahead of their applications. These mines should also be included.

Conclusion and Recommendation #2:

The DRECP recognizes and adds all mining companies, projects and operations that have been patiently waiting for there applications to go through for the permitting process, and through that whole time still substantially investing in good faith, shall be added to the list of mines being excluded from the DRECP areas.

Current mines requesting this are: Sleepy Bear Mining, LLC 420 Acres G&G Mining 320 acres

Please add immediately the Sleepy Bear Mining operation, (Have worked closely with BLM) specifically the Bowstring Project, into the mine category as the others listed in the High priority operation exclusions which are referenced by name with their respective footprint (acreage) in the Appendices E, Page 98 Existing High Priority Mineral/Energy Operations. The Bowstring Project area is historic for great placer gold, silver and rare earths. This operation focuses on 10 acres or less at a time until land reclamation has occurred. Modification permits have been started, but have been stalled because agencies and counties are overwhelmed with what-to-do's.

Final Summary

1. We are placer miners and we restore the land into pristine condition allowing for a quick full eco-system recovery. Sleepy Bear Mining (SBM) is the epitome of environmentally friendly and green mining able to reclaim the land in a matter of hours. Re-graded, re-contoured, no pooling or ponding, landscaped back to as original as possible with boulders and rocks, re-planting of flora from genetic seedlings from the local area, reseeding with proper seed mixtures for the area and within months insects and fauna come back do to the ease of digging burrows leaving the rest to Mother Nature. The green and environmental committee from Washington DC, The EmeraldPlanet®©, flew out to view the project and bless it as an environmentally friendly and green project wanting SBM to teach these environmentally friendly mining practices and mine land reclamation techniques to nationally and international mining communities as part of, best practices in land reclamation and mining. Mining and land reclamation has changed in the placer mining industry. *Example: The Washington DC environmental committee and local biologists from the Randsburg area have observed and recorded that tortoise colonies seem to thrive on reclaimed tailings areas on mining land.*
2. Many placer miners are now very green and cognizant of the environment. Most placer miners in the latter part of the 20th century have always mined environmentally friendly not because they were afraid of the public, but that it was the right thing to do and in doing that it has helped to educate the public that responsible mining can be done.
3. The mining community has lately been working to "coordinate" with all parties so there can be a definable vector or map for all to follow since 99.9% of the mining community and the area public have not properly been informed or know about DRECP.
4. Economy - many people have invested their life's savings into their mines since the price of precious metals and rare earths have greatly increased in value. These natural resources are needed and are at a price for everyone to receive a MULTIPLE on their investment, figuring that one day their hard work and toil would pay for a retirement. People need this faith, and hope in their toil and in their country, especially at this time in the economy and world standings. The mom and pop mining companies hire and contribute back to the economy an average more than the big companies if they are backed by local, state and federal agencies. Taking these mining jobs away kills chances for a real recovery.
5. Mining is considerate of the needs for biodiversity and sustainability and continues to support the recreation and outdoor multiple use industry. However, Mining, would enjoy some reciprocity with these affiliate groups instead of being left out of the "Stake Holder" groups, needing it's own category.

Anyway you look at it. If it's not grown, it's mined.

Signed

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