

Thank you for your comment, Johanna Wald.

The comment tracking number that has been assigned to your comment is SolarM60005.

Comment Date: July 2, 2009 18:26:04PM
Solar Energy Development PEIS
Comment ID: SolarM60005

First Name: Johanna
Middle Initial: H
Last Name: Wald
Organization: Natural Resources Defense Council
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City: San Francisco
State: CA
Zip: 94104
Country: USA
Email:
Privacy Preference: Don't withhold name or address from public record
Attachment: desert working group extension request.doc

Comment Submitted:

DESERT WORKING GROUP

July 2, 2009

Via Solar PEIS comment form and electronic mail

Linda Resseguie
Bureau of Land Management Washington Office

Dear Ms. Resseguie:

As you may know, we are an informal working group recently formed to examine ways to balance the need for timely development of utility-scale solar energy sources with the need to protect desert ecosystems, landscapes and species. Our group, which is currently focused on desert ecosystems and potential solar energy projects in California, includes representatives of solar energy companies, the electric utility sector, desert conservation groups, environmental groups and philanthropies. As we have told the Administration, including officials at the Interior Department, we are very supportive of the Bureau of Land Management's focus on potential study zones for the solar programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS) and appreciate the opportunity, as part of this process, to identify solutions to renewable energy siting issues that can meet the Administration's climate goals while safeguarding the nation's valuable natural and cultural resources.

We write now to request an extension of 45 days to the comment period established for review of the Administration's plans for its solar program. Several of our participating organizations have interests in more than one state and need the additional time in order to prepare comments which reflect all of their respective interests. Even more significantly, we believe that with more time we will be able to prepare joint comments of this working group which will provide significant assistance on both substance and process to the BLM and the Interior Department as you move forward with this PEIS.

The members of our group fully recognize the urgent need to move forward to find appropriate areas for solar development. At the same time, we are agreed that we must take the time necessary to plan carefully and comprehensively and to select the right places that are both protective of desert ecosystems, landscapes, and species and are practical for solar energy development. Affording us the requested additional time at the beginning of this process will benefit all concerned in the long run and will further the Administration's climate change, natural resource protection and renewable energy goals.

Thank you in advance for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Ilene Anderson
Center for Biological Diversity

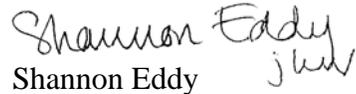


Rainer Aringhoff
Solar Millenium

Linda Resseguie
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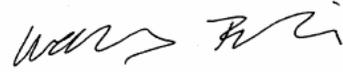
Kim Delfino
Defenders of Wildlife



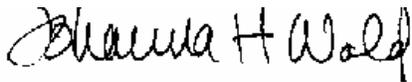
Shannon Eddy
Large-scale Solar Association



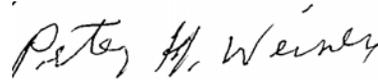
Arthur Haubenstock
BrightSource Energy



Wendy Pulling
Pacific Gas & Electric



Johanna Wald
Natural Resources Defense Council



Peter Weiner
Paul Hastings



V. John White
Center for Renewable Energy Efficiency
and Renewable Technology



Carl Zichella
Sierra Club

cc: Mike Pool, Acting BLM Director
Ashley Conrad-Saydah, Renewable Energy Project Manager, CA BLM