

Thank you for your comment, Terry Erwin.

The comment tracking number that has been assigned to your comment is SolarS50256.

Comment Date: July 13, 2008 19:52:37PM
Solar Energy Development PEIS
Comment ID: SolarS50256

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Attachment:

Comment Submitted:

It is being proposed by the Solar Energy Industry to install solar panels on Knight Ranch road in the Jean/Roach/Primm NV area. The proposal would shutdown approx. 10,000+ acres in this valley. This will completely close down OHV use in this area. The Jean area is probably the most popular OHV recreation area in the Las Vegas District. This also is the area the BLM directs organized "SRP" OHV events to be operated. The BLM has paid hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars to have this area surveyed to document all the existing OHV trails. The BLM has installed fences and graded trail heads/pit areas for OHV use during the last couple years in this area. What a great misappropriation of federal funds if the BLM approves this proposal. It should also be noted that the BLM requires a no new disturbance policy for OHV's in the proposed areas, however the Solar Energy Industry would be allowed disturb thousands of acres without penalties. OHV organizations have been made to restore vegetation in these areas during the past 5 years for minimal disturbance (less than 1 acre) and forced to pay thousands of dollars in fines. I fail to see the consistency in the BLM management techniques or the equality of treatment between groups. Why can the Solar Energy Industry completely destroy thousands of acres without penalty and the OHV community must pay fines and restore disturbed areas?

This entire area needs to be designated an open use OHV recreation area and protected for future OHV use by congressional action. It should be noted that in addition to this proposal the Solar Energy Industry are proposing to close off approx. 280,000 acres with additional applications on file at the BLM website. If the BLM can consider 280,000 acres of public land for destruction to accommodate the Solar Energy Industry than surely they can consider designating an equal amount of land "open use" for the OHV community to recreate on. If you want to see how much destruction the Solar Energy Industry does to the land just drive out to Searchlight, NV and observe how the panels are installed.

The BLM must be required to replace/reestablish an OHV recreation area of equal size and quality with the same miles of trails as the areas they are going remove from the OHV community. Anything less will severely disable OHV recreation on public lands in Clark County. This will also displace OHV recreationalists and leave them with nowhere to ride. You must remember that due to dust abatement policies, Desert Tortoise policies and environmental groups forcing closures, The Jean, NV area and Nellis Dunes (9000 acres) are the only two place within close proximity of the Las Vegas Valley that OHV's can legally recreate. Nellis dunes cannot handle the additional riders if Jean is to be closed. Nellis Dunes area is a very dangerous place to ride due to having more riders than land. Nellis dunes could be made safe if the BLM would extend the boundaries to meet the needs of the people (use I-15, Valley of Fire State Park and Lake Mead National Park as the Boundries to increase the acreage).

The OHV industry is a multi-billion dollar industry and has created thousands of jobs in this country. The OHV industry and community deserves to be allowed to exist.

I am strongly suggesting all OHV users from Jeeps to Motorcycles, casual users to competitive users submit comments objecting to this proposal and request that if areas are closed the BLM be required to reestablish an equal size area with the same miles of trails in another area in their district. These new areas would be in addition to any remaining OHV areas. The OHV community needs to demand a remove and replace policy be enacted before it is too late.

The BLM has closed millions of acres to OHV use over the last 15 years. The OHV community is the endangered species especially if we continue lose riding areas to private industry and environmental closures. The OHV community in Nevada and in

this country needs your help if it is to exist into the future. Every BLM district consists of millions of acres of public lands and there is no reason that a reasonable amount of acreage should not be designate "open use" in each district for OHV recreation and protected by law.