

From: Brendan Hughes <jesusthedude@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 29, 2011 8:31 PM
To: catulewind@blm.gov
Subject: Comments on the Proposed Tule Wind Project

To whom it may concern:

My name is Brendan Hughes and I would like to comment on the DEIS for the proposed Tule Wind, ECO Substation, and ESJ Gen-Tie project. I urge BLM to choose the No Project Alternative 1. This project has many flaws that warrant rejection. First, it will severely impact biological, cultural, and visual resources. Also, the placement of the project is amongst many sensitive areas. For these reasons BLM should not allow this project to move forward.

The Tule Wind project will have negative impacts on biological resources. The federally-endangered Quino checkerspot butterfly occurs on the project site, and the endangered peninsular bighorn sheep is likely to use the area for foraging or to migrate to seek a mate. Among some of the other sensitive species that inhabit or forage on the project site are golden eagles, rosy boas, and spadefoot toads, in addition to many others. Placing 400-foot tall wind turbines and their associated access roads in this sensitive area will lead to habitat degradation, fragmentation, and direct mortality due to construction and maintenance activity. Also, the turbine blades themselves and power poles will kill a variety of birds and bats. This project would also cut off wildlife corridors between Anza-Borrego State Park, BLM Wilderness Areas, and the Cleveland National Forest. In light of Climate Change, wildlife linkages are all the more important for northern and upward habitat shifts. Additionally, cultural resources will be disturbed beyond repair and will lose their significance. Finally, the visual impact of these roads and turbines will ruin the scenic quality of this part of eastern San Diego county. The siting of this project in such a rich and diverse habitat is unconscionable.

The placement of this project is also terrible due to its proximity to several sensitive, protected areas. Adjacent to this project are Anza-Borrego State Park and Wilderness, Sawtooth Mountains Wilderness, Carrizo Gorge Wilderness, In-Ko-Pah Mountains ACEC, and the Cleveland National Forest. This project will also be visible from the Jacumba Mountains Wilderness and the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. This project will render the McCain Valley National Cooperative Land and Wildlife Management Area meaningless because the wind turbines and roads will fill up the remaining portion of it. With much of the surrounding area in private hands, BLM should retain the land this project would consume in its current, natural state. The placement of this project could scarcely be worse. BLM should recognize this and reject this ill-conceived proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.

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