



DESERT AND MOUNTAIN CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
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September 29, 2011

BR RTP–Forest Service/BLM/LADWP
c/o POWER Engineers, Inc.
731 Ball Road, Suite 100
Anaheim, California 92805

**Barren Ridge Renewable Transmission Project (SCH #2008041038)
Notice of Availability of Draft Environmental Impact Statement/
Environmental Impact Report**

To Concerned Agencies:

The Desert and Mountain Conservation Authority (DMCA) concurs with the Draft EIR/EIS conclusion that Alternative 2 on mostly Federal lands is the environmentally superior alternative. However, the Final EIR/EIS should include additional voluntary mitigation to ensure habitat quality within a broad region. The sum of the project area is within the jurisdictional area of the DMCA.

In many cases the contiguous rights-of-ways of public utility transmission corridors, including power lines, represent the only habitat linkages through various areas of southern California. Those contiguous corridors of undeveloped land are a vital tool in the creation of regional and sub-regional wildlife movement corridors. They also can form the core of recreational corridors. The proposed project and its alternatives will unquestionably result in a variety of substantial ecological impacts. The DMCA suggests that the Final EIR/EIS include mitigation measure(s) that provide for the fee simple and conservation easement protection of additional land along the subject rights-of-ways located outside of the Angeles National Forest or other larger Federal ownerships where wider swaths of protected lands are needed ecologically.

That land protection mitigation should be in the form of creating an approximately \$2 million acquisition fund to be expended by a public agency with the blessing of at least one other public agency that has biological staff expertise. The Final EIR/EIS should lay out the parameters of where the money can be spent and when and how it shall be provided as part of mitigation measure implementation.

The land acquisition funding source created by the Final EIR/EIS should also include a required funding source for permanent monitoring of the quality of all the acquired

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mitigation parcels and easements. The DMCA is interested in participating in this type of third party mitigation program to counter both the direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of the proposed project and its alternatives.

This suggested mitigation should be in addition to the Draft EIR/EIS mitigation required for habitat degradation along 3.7 miles of BLM land and by the Pacific Coast Trail which will require an Angeles National Forest LMP Amendment.

Please direct any correspondence and questions to Paul Edelman, Chief of Natural Resources and Planning, at the above address and by phone at 310-589-3200 ext. 128.

Sincerely,

JIM DODSON
Chair