April 15, 2015

Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20240
Submitted via email

Dear Secretary Jewell:

We the undersigned petitioners, who are comprised of individuals, businesses, artists, communities, former employees of the Department of the Interior and organizations, support the nomination for a Soda Mountains Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) as this designation would protect the significant natural and cultural resources found at this site from current and future inappropriate industrialization proposals. This petition was assembled by the National Parks Conservation Association in response to the widespread requests from local and regional groups to share their concerns about the impacts of the Soda Mountain Solar project on public resources, local communities, and renewable energy policy in the California desert.

The proposed Soda Mountains ACEC would span both north and south of Interstate 15 in California and protect the following important trust resources:

• Crucial bighorn sheep habitat and migration corridors.

• Groundwater resources that feed desert springs that are necessary for rare fish, migratory birds, bighorn sheep, and a wide variety of other wildlife.

• Scenic and recreational values of the adjacent Soda Mountains Wilderness Study Area and the Mojave National Preserve.

• Habitat for high densities of kit fox, burrowing owl, and desert tortoise.

Until the time of the ACEC designation, we urge the Department of the Interior to select “Alternative G” in its environmental review of the Soda Mountain Solar project. Specifically, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) should not authorize a right-of-way grant for the project. Subsequently, we request that the BLM amend the California Desert Conservation Area Plan to identify the site as an ACEC unsuitable for future energy generation, and to institute a disturbance cap to significantly limit destruction of the intact bighorn sheep habitat and intermountain sheep dispersal opportunities.

As evidenced by this letter, there is widespread, broad based support for the protection of this unique area and its resources. Please act immediately and designate the Soda Mountains as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern.
Sincerely,

{Signatories listed below}

Cc:
Michael Connor, Deputy Secretary, Department of the Interior  
Tommy Beaudreau, Chief of Staff, Department of the Interior  
Jon Jarvis, Director, National Park Service  
Neil Kornze, Director, Bureau of Land Management  
Jim Kenna, California State Director, Bureau of Land Management

ACEC SIGNATORIES

ORGANIZATIONS

Brenda Burnett, President  
Kerncrest Audubon Society  
Ridgecrest, CA

Bob Burke, Vice President  
Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep  
Pasadena, CA

Terry Frewin, Chair  
Sierra Club  
California/Nevada Desert Committee  
Santa Barbara, CA

Patrick Donnelly, Executive Director  
Amargosa Conservancy  
Shoshone, CA

Monica Argandona,  
Southern California Conservation Director  
California Wilderness Coalition  
Oakland, CA

Sarah Kennington, President  
Morongo Basin Conservation Association  
Joshua Tree, CA

Paul Smith, Chair  
Tourism Economics Commission  
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Maureen Finnerty, Chair  
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Robin Kobaly, Executive Director  
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Former botanist for the California Desert Conservation Area Plan Staff and BLM California Desert District Botanist)

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Desert Tortoise Council  
Palmdale, CA

Frazier Haney, Conservation Director  
Mojave Desert Land Trust  
Joshua Tree, CA

Drew Feldmann, Conservation Committee Chair  
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San Bernardino, CA

Ruth Musser Lopez, Principal Archaeological Heritage Association  
Needles, CA

Michael Gordon, Director Board of Directors  
Mojave National Preserve Conservancy  
Barstow, CA

Rich Ravana, President Alliance for Desert Preservation  
Apple Valley, CA
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Role</th>
<th>Organization/Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lorrie Steely</td>
<td>Lead Organizer, Mojave Communities</td>
<td>Apple Valley, CA</td>
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<td>Sarah K. Friedman</td>
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<td>Ileene Anderson</td>
<td>Senior Scientist, Center for Biological Diversity</td>
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<td>Victoria Fuller</td>
<td>Chair, Joshua Tree Community Association</td>
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<td>Steve Brown</td>
<td>Publisher and Executive Producer, The Real</td>
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<td>Susan Sorrells</td>
<td>President, Shoshone Museum Association</td>
<td>Shoshone, CA</td>
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<td>Eva Soltes</td>
<td>Founder/Director, Harrison House Music and Arts</td>
<td>Joshua Tree, CA</td>
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<td>Ted Quinn</td>
<td>Director, Radio Free Joshua Tree</td>
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<td>Tom O’Key</td>
<td>Founder, Southern California Desert Video</td>
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<td>Catherine Svehla</td>
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<td>Ruth Rieman</td>
<td>Vice Chair, California Desert Coalition</td>
<td>Yucca Valley, CA</td>
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<td>Bernard Leibov</td>
<td>Director, Boxo Projects</td>
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<td>Gerald Freeman</td>
<td>Owner/Proprietor, Town of Nipton</td>
<td>Nipton, CA</td>
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<td>Le Hayes</td>
<td>Newberry Springs Community Services District</td>
<td>Newberry Springs, CA</td>
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<td>Jacob Overson</td>
<td>General Manager, Baker Community Services</td>
<td>Baker, CA</td>
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<td>Owner, Shoshone Village</td>
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<td>Curt Sauer</td>
<td>Former Superintendent, Joshua Tree National</td>
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<td>Ernie Quintana</td>
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<td>Former Deputy Regional Director, Pacific West</td>
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<td>Bill Blake</td>
<td>Former Chief Ranger, Mojave National Preserve</td>
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<td>Bettie Blake</td>
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<td>Former Superintendent, Mojave National Preserve</td>
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- Gerald Freeman, Owner/Proprietor, Town of Nipton, Nipton, CA
- Le Hayes, Newberry Springs Community Services District, Newberry Springs, CA
- Jacob Overson, General Manager, Baker Community Services District, Baker, CA
- Susan Sorrells, Owner, Shoshone Village, Shoshone, CA

**FORMER DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR**

- Mary Martin, Former Superintendent, Mojave National Preserve and Lassen National Park
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