



BORREGO SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA

October 17, 2020

Sandy Kerl
General Manager
San Diego County Water Authority

Dale Jones, President
(Borrego Ministers Association:
American Legion, Chaplain)

David Garmon, Vice President
(Tubb Canyon Desert Conservancy,
President)

Jim Wermers, Vice President
(The Mall, The Center, Owner)

Dave Duncan, Treasurer
(Borrego Watermaster Board,
Chair)

Diane Johnson, Secretary
(Borrego Water District,
Director)

Robert Blum, Director
(Borrego Education Foundation,
President)

Betsy Knaak, Director
(Anza-Borrego Desert
Natural History Assoc.,
Executive Director)

Mike McElhatton, Director
(Anza-Borrego Desert
Natural History Assoc.)

Dick Troy, Director
(Anza-Borrego Foundation,
President)

James Dion, Executive Director

Bri Fordem, Ex-Officio
(Anza-Borrego Foundation,
Executive Director)

Terry Gerson, Ex-Officio
(Colorado Desert District,
District Services Manager)

Subject: Proposed Regional Conveyance System (RCS)

Dear Ms. Kerl,

The Borrego Village Association (BVA) is a non-profit corporation, headquartered in Borrego Springs. Our mission is:

“To create and sustain a thriving and attractive community, surrounded by Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, where residents enjoy a quality lifestyle, prosperous businesses meet community needs, and tourism enhances the character and well-being of our village.”

The BVA applies a ‘geotourism’ approach to its work, following a basic principle that authentic, sustainable tourism inspires curious and mindful people to explore the world. This approach:

- benefits residents economically
- supports integrity of place
- brings together local stakeholders
- informs both visitors and hosts
- helps travelers plan great trips

We’ve only recently become aware of the RCS proposal and have various concerns regarding its potential impact on the region and the community’s continuing pursuit of sustainable tourism. Our questions include:

1. Construction Phase – 15 years is a long construction period. How can you ensure that the noise, traffic, dust, scenic blight, and other disruptions associated with drilling and construction, will be minimized during this lengthy period? How can you ensure that tourist appeal and the tourism economy of the community, will not be negatively affected?



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- 2 Light pollution - Borrego is a 'Dark Sky Community'. How will the pumping stations and maintenance facilities respect this important nighttime asset?
- 3 Noise Pollution – 'The quiet is almost deafening' is a common comment by residents and visitors alike. Can you ensure that the 24-7 'hum' emanating from an industrial pumping station will not threaten this key economic asset?
- 4 Scenic resources – How will you ensure that the close proximity of the proposed facilities will not compromise the natural beauty of scenic lands adjacent to the state park? How will the construction of the power lines required to run to these facilities avoid damaging the scenic views in the Borrego Valley?
- 5 Resource protection – How will you ensure that the construction and operation of the proposed facilities will not affect the health and survival of the native plant and animal species that draw visitors to the area?
- 6 Need – By 2040, Borrego will be a 'sustainable' watershed with adequate water to provide for visitors and residents and allow for reasonable economic and population growth. What are your planning assumptions regarding the amount and proposed uses for this extra water?
- 7 Cost - There appears to be an assumption that Borrego will contribute to the cost of construction and will be charged for any subsequent water use. What are the specific costs and how would Borrego pay for the construction and any future water supplies?
- 8 Water Quality – Water currently consumed in Borrego comes from an ancient Pleistocene aquifer and does not require treatment. Colorado River water provided by the RCS would require extensive treatment prior to use in Borrego Springs. How can you ensure the protection of our current level of water quality?

From our first glance at your documents, it appears that the potential benefits RCS might bring to Borrego Springs do not compare well to its potential threat to our tourism economy and quality of life.

Perhaps you can change this view. We are looking forward to discussing these questions with you soon.

Respectfully yours,

Dale Jones