



March 29, 2019

Honorable Senator Henry Stern, Chair
 Senate Natural Resources Committee
 State Capitol, Room 5046
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support – SB 307 (Roth) California Desert Protection

Dear Chair Stern,

On behalf of the following organizations, we write to express our support for SB 307 (Roth), which provides a state review process for potential groundwater extraction projects in the California desert that will use a conveyance facility, to ensure the desert's natural and cultural resources are protected.

The California desert is home to unique scenic, historical, archeological, ecological, wildlife, cultural, scientific, educational, and recreational values used and enjoyed by millions of Americans for hiking and camping, scientific study, and scenic appreciation. Through acts of Congress and designations by past Presidents, the California desert is home to national parks, preserves, monuments and wilderness areas that protect the unique values and history of the California desert including but not limited to: Mojave National Preserve, Mojave Trails National Monument, Joshua Tree National Park, Sheephole Valley Wilderness, and Clipper Mountains Wilderness.

These protected lands and the California desert at large face numerous threats, most notably climate change, that could disrupt the desert's ecological balance. In addition to the increasing threats from climate change, the Trump administration has instituted a series of actions that could undermine the future of California's desert by paving the way for an environmentally disastrous project that proposes to export groundwater from an ancient desert aquifer at an alarming rate of overdraft.

This project is proposed by Cadiz Inc. (Cadiz) and is known as the "Cadiz Valley Water Conservation, Recovery & Storage Project" which aims to pump 50,000 acre/ft. or 16 billion gallons of water annually for 50 years from an aquifer that the United States Geological Survey (USGS) concluded only recharges at an annual average of between 2,000-10,000 acre feet. Cadiz borrows its name from the unincorporated California town where the project is proposed and is located in the middle of the Mojave Desert and surrounded by the Mojave Trails National Monument, which the Trump administration is considering to rescind.

It is critical that California continues to protect its natural resources despite any attempt from the Trump administration to roll back environmental protection.

We urge your support for SB 307 (Roth).

Sincerely,

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