

I-189 Maryrite Hillengas and David Paul

Comment Letter I-189

RE: NEWLAND SIERRA DRAFT EIR

Dear Ms. Smith and others:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Newland Sierra Development.

We have been to **Hidden Valley Zen Center** on Sarver Lane many times over the past 20 years. The peace and tranquility of this beautiful rural setting is a welcome respite from the noise and rush of traffic and perfect for our meditation services there. We have a list of questions and concerns outlined below which would most certainly negatively impact our spiritual practices:

- CONCERNS (See list of outstanding issues below.)

Finally, after 10 years of meetings between County residents and staff, not to mention the millions of the dollars spent on the development of General Plan, the County Board of Supervisors approved the County's General Plan. When the plan was approved, the Supervisors not only agreed to protect this area from over-development, but they agreed to downzone the entire property to 99 units from 200 units. In an effort to support and respect the integrity provisions of the General Plan, I urge you to recommend against the Newland Development and continue to safeguard this sensitive rural corridor.

Thank you for your consideration,

Maryrita Hillengas and David Paul

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ISSUE AREAS:

Wildlife Connectivity

- The project is proposed in a sensitive area; if developed, critical north/south and east/west **wildlife corridors would be severed.**

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- Newland Sierra has sought special treatment, or a “**carve out**” of the **regional biological mitigation plan**, before the plan has even been adopted by the County and federal and state wildlife agencies.

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Cultural Resources

- The project would impact significant cultural resources, particularly by expanding Deer Springs Road – including a site with **Native American human remains.**

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Traffic

- Newland Sierra would generate **28,000 new trips per day** to our local roads.

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- Newland Sierra brings **I-15 traffic to level “F”** since no new freeway lands and no new transit infrastructure is proposed.

- Newland Sierra proposes to widen Deer Springs Road to six lanes **and build a new I-15 interchange**, drawing thousands of cut-through commuters. Yet, Newland plans to start building before CALTRANS finishes its analysis and approval of a re-designed interchange at Deer Springs Road and I-15.

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Water

- The Vallecitos Water District projects a **water supply deficit for the next 20 years**.
- The District's Water Supply Assessment **requires a 36% water supply cut** to existing customers in order to serve the Newland Sierra development.

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Fire

- Newland Sierra is proposed in a **"Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone."**
- Newland Sierra does not provide **enough emergency access routes** in the event of a fire. Gridlock during an evacuation would compromise the safety of the entire region.

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Planning/Smart Growth

- The County Board of Supervisors spent millions of dollars and **10 years developing a General Plan** that protected, in fact downzoned, this area. A few years ago the Board of Supervisors voted to approve the plan and protect this area from development.

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GHG

- The **County has not completed its Climate Action Plan**, therefore the County should not consider Newland Sierra until it's done.
- The Golden Door and Sierra Club recently won a trial court decision invalidating the County's threshold for measuring greenhouse gas "GHG" impacts.

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