

Bennett, Jim

From: TJH <tjhlaw@eschelon.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 21, 2019 2:51 PM
To: LUEG, GroundWater, PDS
Cc: carylowe@cox.net; Bill Carpenter; marya88w@gmail.com; eddifordem@gmail.com
Subject: Borrego Water Crisis

Mr. Bennet: I own 6 vacant and unbuilt lots in Borrego Springs.

It distresses me that I may never be able to use or sell my lots. The water shortage is a de facto and permanent moratorium for me and many others.

The real problem, as you know, is the wasteful and excessive agricultural use of our finite and valuable water resource from the very limited and slowly replenishing aquifer.

The use by the citrus and agricultural users has depleted the water resource and prevented its use to and by higher priority uses, such as municipal, quasi-municipal and domestic uses.

The time has come to eliminate all citrus and agricultural uses from within the Borrego Groundwater Basin.

The 75% reduction on ag diversions will go part of the way, but a 100% reduction would free up the limited water supply to be devoted to higher priority uses, as mentioned.

Furthermore, the citrus and agricultural water users and landowners should be required to pay for the permanent following of all disturbed lands.

To let the citrus and palm trees die off without water and then to strip the land of all vegetation actually will be a disaster as well.

These owners should be held to the same standard as other users who extract a resource, cause damage and leave the mess for others to clean up.

If a miner dug a pit or mine, extracted minerals, he would be required to environmentally restore the site.

If a polluter spilled toxins on the ground, they would be held to clean it up.

If a farmer spilled chemicals on the ground, they would be compelled to clean it up.

If a farmer sells his farm with dead or dying trees on it, as "pollution", he should be held to clean up the "pollution" at his cost, not at that the community's public cost and expense.

"To pollute is to corrupt or defile, especially to contaminate the soil, air or water with noxious substances." Black's Law Dictionary (2004).

The real search should be for the proper following protocol, and costs, to determine how much the citrus and agricultural land owners and operators owe and should pay, to clean up their lands.

Not a search for \$20,000,000 to buy their lands, as someone has mentioned.

Another thought is to prohibit the export of water or the products of water out of the Borrego Water Basin.

Exporting all fruit, plants and trees, which have consumed our limited water, should be prohibited.

Are these radical thoughts? I do not think so.

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