

Bennett, Jim

From: Mike Himmerich <borrego.it@att.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 21, 2019 12:28 PM
To: LUEG, GroundWater, PDS
Cc: Mike Himmerich
Subject: Borrego Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan - GSP

County of San Diego Planning & Development Services.
C/O: Jim Bennett
5510 Overland Avenue Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123

Mr Jim Bennett,

I would like to add my review and comments on the proposed Borrego Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan - GSP

I am a full time, year round resident of the Borrego Valley at the Borrego Air Ranch. My family first visited Borrego Valley in the 1940's and has resided here for the past quarter century.

I attended most of the public planing sessions for the GSP. As well as many of its predecessor, the borrego water coalition.

This is our first real opportunity to comment on the GSP. I don't believe all of the residents, property owners and tax payers were directly contacted via personal letter, phone call or notation on our property tax bills and informed of the plan and their potential impacts.

The Borrego Air Ranch is a planned residential airpark community started in 1945 at about the time electric was first brought into Borrego. It is one of the oldest residential airpark in the nation.

One of the many considerations for moving across the country to the Air Ranch was the availability of water. Water is supplied by our long-established Borrego Air Ranch Mutual Water and Improvement Company. Water is Life in the desert. Its' availability and the construction of water infrastructure to all properties in our long planned residential community is the difference between open desert land that is worth about \$200 an acre and our land values of up to around \$75,000 an acre.

Attempts to reduce our already frugal water usage by 75% is would make the current and future homes on the ranch unlivable and uninhabitable. Resulting in a defacto regulatory taking.

We also have some lots that do not currently have homes constructed on them, the owners have been working hard toward retirement and then building their dream home. That will be impossible without the access to water they always believed was secure by purchasing in a planed community with its own private water system.

In the published GSP, Appendix D2 Figures 2A and 2B the groundwater flows shown in the USGS Hydrogeology, Hydrologic Effects models - show our water source is separate from the parts of the valley that overdrafts the water in their areas. Our groundwater flow runs to the north and west away from us, toward the Borrego sink area.

Our water use has no effect on the other areas of Borrego Valley.

There is no other source of water for the Air Ranch other than our wells. We are outside the Borrego Water District, as such they provide no beneficial use or service to the Air Ranch.

The Borrego Air Ranch property owners and its Mutual Water Company have always been a good stewards of its overlying and beneficial water rights since 1945. Our community water well levels have always had stable water levels.

We will continue to be a good steward as there is no feasible alternative source of water.

I would like consideration of a permanent exclusion to the Borrego Valley GSP in the Borrego Air Ranch and our mutual water company.

1. We are outside the Borrego Water District service area, they can not and do not provide a beneficial use or service to us. They are unaccountable to the residents of the Air Ranch as we are not part of their voting district. They provide no representation for us.

2. The USGS hydrological models show we have no effect on the rest of the Borrego Valley Basin.

Comments on the full plan.

The expense of establishing and maintaining a new multi-million dollar agency in a small economic disadvantaged community to monitor water levels and manage, study and adjust the plan and endlessly sustain it, is prohibitively expensive. Residents will be forced out and leave Borrego. The new agency is unaccountable to all residents of Borrego.

The economic impacts have not been considered. As residents leave costs and taxes on water will continuously and exponentially rise on individual residents. Land and property values will fall, wiping out peoples life saving. As the schools close, businesses fail Borrego will become a ghost town.

Much of the residential use is already tailored to desert living, domestic water usage and evaporative coolers to withstand the desert heat. For most of us further reductions are impractical and impossible.

Thank you for your consideration and opportunity to comment.

Mike Himmerich
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