

January 10, 2003

Mr. Clarence Martin
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
300 Mandich Street
Bishop, CA 93514

A MARKS
414 SPALLA
BISHOP, CA, 93514

Dear Mr. Martin,

I am writing to comment on the Lower Owens River Project Draft Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement.

I appreciate the great potential of the LORP. However, the DEIR/EIS fails to describe essential components of the project and presents project alternatives that directly violate the 1991 Long Term Water Agreement and the established project goals. Some of my concerns include:

161-1 1) Size of the pump station and delta flows: A 150 cfs pump station violates the Inyo-LA 1991 Water Agreement. LADWP has not justified using a larger pump station that is three times larger than the water agreement allows. A larger pump station won't allow enough water to reach the Delta and may help LADWP to pump more groundwater from the valley. LADWP should select the 50 cfs pump station and 9 cfs annual average delta baseflows. This option allows the maximum amount of water flow to the delta under the agreements and approaches current flows. This is needed to meet the delta habitat goal of maintaining existing and new delta habitats for waterfowl and to comply with the Water Agreement.

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161-3 3) Recreation plan: There is no recreation plan in the DEIR/EIS, nor is there a description of current and anticipated recreational uses of the LORP area. The document should contain a thorough assessment of current and potential recreational use in the LORP area and a plan to manage that recreation in order to protect natural habitats and cultural resources.

Mr. Martin, the LORP is a valuable project, and I want it to work. I urge LADWP to abide by the terms of the Water Agreement and the goals of the project, thoroughly describe all management plans to the public, choose the least environmentally damaging alternatives, and guarantee adequate funding.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely, Anthony Marks

✓

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JAN 13 2003

AQUEDUCT MANAGER
BISHOP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

January 10, 2003

*Charlotte Martin
817 N. Park Lane
Bishop, CA 93514*

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Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
300 Mandich Street
Bishop, CA 93514

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Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,
Charlotte Martin
Bishop, CA

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JAN 13 2003

REGULATORY MANAGER
BISHOP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

January 10, 2003

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Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
300 Mandich Street
Bishop, CA 93514

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Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

Sylvia Maxey

Stacey Mike
P.O. Box 705
Lone Pine, CA 93545

January 10, 2003

Mr. Clarence Martin
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
300 Mandich Street
Bishop, CA 93514

Subject: Comments on the Lower Owens River Project Draft EIR/EIS

Dear Mr. Martin,

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AQUEDUCT MANAGER
BISHOP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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164-6 **Source of additional water to supply the LORP:** The Draft EIR/EIS fails to disclose whether or not LADWP will attempt to recover the additional 16,000 acre-feet/year of water that the project will require beyond the current releases. Where will the additional 16,000 acre-feet/year of water that the LORP will require come from? Will there be increased groundwater pumping? Will there be new wells drilled? Will it come from existing aqueduct supplies? What will be the impacts of the need for 16,000 acre-feet/year more water? The DEIR/EIS should clearly disclose LADWP's intention to replace or not replace the 16,000 acre-feet/year with groundwater pumping. The document fails to recognize the inadequacy of current pumping management to attain the vegetation protection goals of the Long Term Water Agreement. The Draft EIR/EIS

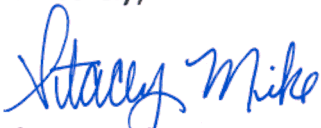
therefore greatly underestimates the likelihood of potential future impacts due to any groundwater pumping associated with the LORP.

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As one of the most significant river habitat restorations in the country, the LORP represents an unprecedented opportunity if the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power properly implements the project. I hope the Final EIR/EIS will reflect a real commitment to make the project live up to its full potential.

Sincerely,



Stacey Mike, Concerned Citizen

Tracey Mike
P.O. Box 855
Lone Pine, CA 93545

January 10, 2003

Mr. Clarence Martin
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
300 Mandich Street
Bishop, CA 93514

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AQUEDUCT MANAGER
BISHOP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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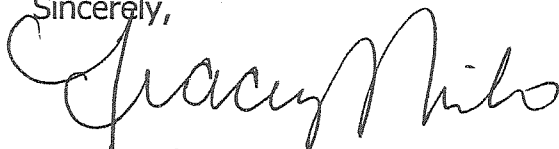
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Sincerely,



Tracey Mike, Concerned Citizen

January 10, 2003

Mr. Clarence Martin
 City of Los Angeles
 Department of Water and Power
 300 Mandich Street
 Bishop, CA 93514-3449

Dear Mr. Martin:

I believe a lot of dedicated individuals have spent thousands of hours putting together a report on the Lower Owens River Project, and while no document ever written is perfect for every person's interests, this document is well-rounded and balanced. I do have a couple of comments I would like you to consider:

- 166-1 1. In the original 1991 agreement between Inyo County and LADWP, the maximum flow was to be ± 50 cfs unless high runoff dictated more water be released to the Owens River. Because the 50 cfs flow was the maximum needed, it was also agreed upon by both parties that a 50 cfs pumpback station would be adequate. Since then, consultants hired by LADWP have recommended that a 200 cfs flushing flow be done to improve the river system. Since the maximum flow was increased from 50 cfs to 200 cfs per the 1997 MOU, it makes the 150 cfs pump station a necessity to prevent the destruction of the Owens Lake delta.
- 166-2 2. Over a 30-year period, the amount of water wasted to the brine pool would cost the LADWP's customers a lot of extra money for replacement water.
- 166-3 3. Flows to the delta during the winter months should not be increased—an increase will cause ice and damage to vegetation and prevent current grazing practices of lessees.
- 166-4 4. The concern of several committees is that if a 150 cfs pumpback station is built, it would open up the door for LADWP to put in deep wells on the east side of the Owens River and pump that water to the Owens River and the LAA channel. This concern is not a viable one. Before any wells could be drilled and water exported, an EIR and CEQA process would have to take place.
- 166-5 5. All parties who are a part of the MOU Parties should share in the costs of this project. Equally, if these parties have a large support group, it should be no problem for them to raise the funds needed.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Miller, Jr.
 233 E. Miller Lane
 Ft. Independence, CA 93526

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10 2003

MANAGER
 OPERATIVE OFFICE

233 E. Miller Lane
Independence, CA 93526
January 12, 2003

Department of Water and Power
300 Mandich Street
Bishop, CA 93514-3449

Dear Mr. Clarence Martin:

I am a sophomore student at Lone Pine High School, and my assignment in my biology class is to write a letter responding to the Draft EIR on the Lower Owens River Project. I will be focusing my response on the pumpback station. In the Draft EIR, it lists two options on the size of the pumpback station. After reading the sections on this topic, I have come up with some suggestions that I would like you to consider.

167-1 First of all, water is a valuable resource that all living things must have in order to survive. My thoughts from the research that I have done are that water should not be wasted, and MOU parties should make a decision that is beneficial. 50cfs or 200cfs flow does not make a difference, but I feel that the pumpback station needs to capture most of the flowing water of the river because too much will wash out the habitat of the delta and end up in the brine pool, being useless. Because the maximum water flow was increased from 50cfs to 200cfs, it is necessary to build a bigger pumpback station in order to save money and water.

I appreciate your time to read my comments. I hope that my thoughts can be of some use to the decision of the pumpback station.

Sincerely,



Haley Miller

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JAN 13 2003

AQUEDUCT MANAGER
BISHOP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

Sally Miller
PO Box 22
Lee Vining, CA 93541

Mr. Clarence Martin
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
300 Mandich Street
Bishop, CA 93514

Subject: Comments on the Lower Owens River Project Draft EIR/EIS

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Sally Miller

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AQUEDUCT MANAGER
BISHOP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

Jacob E. Morgan
127 Olivia Lane
Big Pine, CA 93513

January 7, 2002

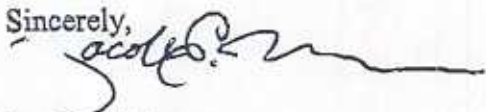
Clarence Martin
LADWP
300 Mandich St.
Bishop, CA 93514

Dear Mr. Martin,

169-1 As a young man growing up in the Owens Valley, I was privileged to hear many stories about the evils committed against our valley by LADWP. I spent many mornings and evenings in those days out in the field, hunting, fishing, hiking and enjoying the outside. This valley became my identity and it is the identity of all of us who have chosen to make it our home. When I left home for college, everything I did was in some way influenced by home, this place, and five years later, when I returned, I stopped my car at 3:00 a.m. on the Highway 6 river bridge and I kissed the ground. Soon thereafter, I made the decision to return home permanently and since that time, both of my children have been born here. They are natives, a privilege I myself do not have. Sadly, however, this valley is no longer the place I grew up in and I fear that I will lose forever the things I grew up with, that my children will never experience them. Over the years I have watched the sage brush grow steadily closer to the river. I have watched the waterfowl that used to be here in massive numbers divert their migration for more water and better food. I have watched the deer herds slowly die off, the quail stop reproducing. I have watched the dust storms grow larger and larger and people grow sick because of them and I have realized that all of the stories I was told about LADWP are true.

The company by which you are employed not only has a legal obligation, but a moral obligation as well. The Lower Owens River Project has been talked about and delayed for years and while it can never hope to fully restore the very delicate environment that LADWP has destroyed, it is certainly a very great step forward toward curbing what eventually will become a catastrophic environmental disaster and the permanent loss of one of the most beautiful places on Earth. The provisions for moving forward with the project, which the Owens Valley Committee are asking for as indicated in Mr. Prather's opinion of January 7, 2003, in the Inyo Register, are hardly unreasonable and as a member of the Owens Valley community, both myself and my children would insist that they be adopted and acted upon without further delay. LADWP is obligated. The time to take responsibility for what has occurred in this valley is now.

Sincerely,


Jacob E. Morgan

cc: Inyo County Board of Supervisors

January 10, 2002

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 300 Mandich Street
 Bishop, CA 93514

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170-4 **Recreation plan:** There is no recreation plan in the DEIR/EIS, nor is there a description of current and anticipated recreational uses of the LORP area. The document should contain a thorough assessment of current and potential recreational use in the LORP area and a plan to manage that recreation in order to protect natural habitats and cultural resources.

170-5 **Impact To Brine Pool Transition Area:** The Class I impact to shorebird habitat in the brine pool transition area, identified in Draft EIR/EIS Table S-1, can and must be avoided. This is an area that is used by thousands of ducks and geese and tens of thousands of shorebirds. It is in an area that has been recognized by the National Audubon Society as a Nationally Significant Important Bird Area and is part of the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan. This is a very important wildlife habitat. The existing flows to this transition area have been released by LADWP for many years. Have they been in violation of the existing court injunction that they say would prohibit mitigation of this impact? If the current flows are allowable, it is inappropriate to argue that maintaining those flows under the project is not feasible. LADWP can and must avoid this impact by maintaining existing flows and by not allowing this area to dry up in late spring and summer as currently happens. Additionally, if LADWP insists that this impact is unavoidable, they have an obligation under CEQA to explore mitigation alternatives that are feasible.

170-6 **Source of additional water to supply the LORP:** The Draft EIR/EIS fails to disclose whether or not LADWP will attempt to recover the additional 16,000 acre-feet/year of water that the project will require beyond the current releases. Where will the additional 16,000 acre-feet/year of water that the LORP will require come from? Will there be increased groundwater pumping? Will there be new wells drilled? Will it come from existing aqueduct supplies? What will be the impacts of the need for 16,000 acre-feet/year more water? The DEIR/EIS should clearly disclose LADWP's intention to replace or not replace the 16,000 acre-feet/year with groundwater pumping. The document fails to recognize the inadequacy of current pumping management to attain the vegetation protection goals of the Long Term Water Agreement. The Draft EIR/EIS therefore greatly underestimates the likelihood of potential future impacts due to any groundwater pumping associated with the LORP.

170-7 **Grazing:** Understory impacts as a result of current grazing are severe in riparian habitats in much of the LORP area. In many places there is no understory and there are no young willows or cottonwoods. Several habitat indicator species such as the yellow-breasted chat are dependent on habitats with trees and a dense understory in the riparian zone. Unless the diversity of habitat provided by understory growth significantly improves, the habitat goals for the river system will not be met. Monitoring for understory development as described on p. 2-78 will not be conducted unless the need for it is determined in some unspecified future time by unspecified means. Whether or not this important monitoring function is needed should not be left to some future decision. There should be a clear commitment to conduct this monitoring, as the need for it is obvious. Protocols for this monitoring data collection and analysis should also be included in the EIR/EIS.

170-8

Additionally, individual grazing lease management plans are not provided in the document and LADWP has denied requests by reviewers to see them. Without these critical documents and with no evaluation of the present lease condition and trend presented in the Draft EIR/EIS there is no way to compare change over time when evaluating whether the goals of the project are being met. There is no way for commenters to evaluate proposed management, monitoring and the need for mitigation. This is inadequate.

As one of the most significant river habitat restorations in the country, the LORP represents an unprecedented opportunity if the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power properly implements the project. I hope the Final EIR/EIS will reflect a real commitment to make the project live up to its full potential.

Sincerely,

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