Joyce Manley
15401 Painted Hills Rd.
Whitewater, CA 92282
760-251-9907 **E-mail: mothermanley@cs.com**

California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth St.
Sacramento, CA 95814
{docket@energy.state.ca.us]

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Dear Commission Members,

We, the property owners and residents of the San Gorgonio Pass area of southern California are pleased that you are finally addressing the problem of the rapid disappearance of our predator birds and bats by trying to set guidelines for wind development. We used to see red-tailed hawks, kestrel hawks, golden eagles and an occasional bald eagle hunting in the area of Whitewater Hill. We had burrowing owls, barn owls and regular appearances of flocks of bats in the summertime. Snakes were abundant.

Since the installation of giant windmills on the top and sides of Whitewater Hill in the past 6-8 years we have lost most of our predators. As a consequence we have been overrun by rats and rabbits the past couple of years. I, personally, have trapped over 100 rats in and around my house.

If you ask the wind developers, they will tell you that they do not see any dead birds.....so they believe that the windmills do not kill birds. There are coyotes, bobcats and occasionally bears that roam the hills in the area who would quickly dispose of any birds that might drop during the night.

If the windmills are not killing the birds (they definitely do up in Altamont Pass) then have the developers just paid the birds enough to move to a nicer neighborhood?

The Riverside County Board of Supervisors seems to be more interested in the property tax revenue from the windmills than the ecological damage they are causing. Our repeated appeals for some positive action.....or some realistic environmental studies seem to fall on deaf ears. Only now is the WMP money being used to begin an evaluation of the damage done. We wonder.....is this a case of closing the barn door after the horse has escaped?????? There has been no monitoring done since these huge turbines were installed. They were carried up the hill on roads that were not approved, creating a dust problem that had the neighbors calling the AQMD on a regular basis. When proposals for new ones are submitted, there are repeated requests for variances and special mitigation measures which usually just means throwing money in someone's direction. At the present time there are 105 more proposed for this area.

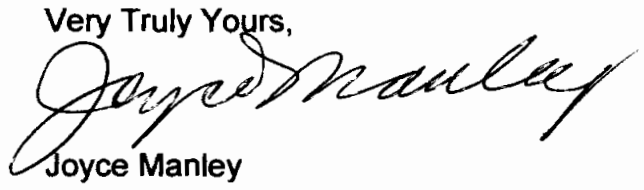
As a state agency, you should be working for all the residents of the state to ensure that guidelines are definite, firm (not subject to variances and special circumstances), apply to all developers equally, provide the maximum protection for wildlife and protect the health and well-being of those who must live by the windmills.

In a time when California real estate values have skyrocketed, ours have barely moved. We must listen to the old turbines squeak and moan and groan because their life has been extended an additional 20 years beyond their original time. No one is taking down the old ones that leak oils and greases on the ground .....pollution for our groundwater.

The developers will admit that the turbines only turn 25 - 35% of the time. This past weekend, when temperatures in this area reached 120 degrees, I looked out at Whitewater Hill and none of the BIG turbines was turning. Why?.....because the wind was not blowing. We were threatened with blackouts while the windmills sat idle. THIS IS NOT ENERGY EFFICIENCY!!!!!

We implore you to consider our plight as you work to develop these guidelines. Do not listen to just those in the wind industry. Consider the people and all the critters who are most affected by the proliferation of windmills on the landscape.

Very Truly Yours,



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