

Att: Heidi Duron, David Prusch, SB County Land Use Services

re: AGREEMENTS TO ABIDE BY S.R.247 SCENIC CORRIDOR PROTECTIONS
June 17, 2022

Endorsed by:

Homestead Valley Community Council
www.hvccsite.org

Morongo Basin Historical Society
www.mbhs.org

Flamingo Heights
Community Association
www.fhca.com

Johnson Valley
Improvement Association
see www.johnsonvalley.com

Hammerking Productions
dave@kingofthehammers.com

Landers Association

Yucca Mesa
Improvement Association
www.yuccamesa.org

Western American Railroad Museum
www.barstowrailmuseum.org

Lucerne Valley
Chamber of Commerce

Lucerne Valley
Economic Development Association

Lucerne Valley Market & Hardware

Lucerne Valley Museum

Route 66 Mother Road Museum
www.route66museum.org

Joshua Tree
Gateway Communities
Tourism Committee
www.joshuatreegatewaycommunities.com

Points of Interest Promotions
Lucerne Valley
billlembright@thenewlight.net

Rockhound Field Trip Fanatics!
<http://rockhound-field-trips.ning.com>

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www.mbconservation.org

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Julie Hackbarth-McIntyre
Mayor, City of Barstow

Hello, Heidi and David,

I now have been in contact by e-mail and/or phone with the agencies included in Caltrans' request for agreements to abide by the S.R.247 Corridor Protection Plan.

BLM: Our friend Katrina Symons recently retired but I heard from **Jeffery K. Childers, MPA**

Acting Field Manager, Barstow Field Office
2601 Barstow Road, Barstow, CA 92311

Office:760-252-6020 Cell: 951-807-6737 E-mail: jchilders@blm.gov

"I have not been briefed or received any information on this effort from San Bernardino County. Currently the ACECs (Areas of Critical Environmental Concern) that Katrina previously mentioned contain some of the highest protections available to public lands.

"I have not seen or read the "agreement to abide by the Corridor Protection Program" information and I would need to review that and consult with our leadership as to the ability of the BLM to become a party to that agreement.

"If you have a draft of that agreement, I would be happy to review and discuss internally.

"Please let me know if you need anything else from us."

Most of the S.R.247 route traverses public lands in BLM jurisdiction. Karen Watkins pointed out they have "VRM" Visual Resource Management; I believe they would respond favorably to a letter from LUS and will certainly agree to abide by the many protections we cited in the draft appendix included with the Scenic 247 Committee CPP research.

USMC First a phone call with Ms Erin Adam, G-5 Community Liaison. She said MCAGCC has a great concern over any kind of development affecting traffic on 247 as it is their western access.

She had heard nothing from Land Use Services about Scenic 247. She logged on to the hvcc.org and sounds very gung-ho on Scenic 247!

I believe she will write us an endorsement right away; she feels time is of the essence – MCAGCC has concerns about development on the highway in consideration of deploying military vehicles.

A follow-up phone interview was requested by

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R/S **Michael King**, Encroachment Specialist
MAGTFTC / MCAGCC, Bldg. 1417, Box 788105, Twentynine Palms, CA 92278
(760) 830-3013
E-mail: michael.d.king4@usmc.mil

He needed details on the Scenic 247 campaign to brief Base command; who was involved, what would the establishment of scenic corridor protections entail and what would this mean in relation to future development and/or intrusions.

USFS: On April 7, I received an e-mail reply from Zach Behrens, Public Affairs Officer, San Bernardino National Forest

"I believe most of the views of the San Bernardino Mountains, save for the tippy top, are going to be BLM. The good news is I have a colleague who works for both BLM and the Forest Service in this area. **Jihadda Govan**, CC'd here, is the Sand to Snow National Monument Manager, which I believe covers the area you are looking at.

"This is my last week on the San Bernardino National Forest, so please correspond with her from here on out. I've CC'd **Lisa Cox**, who will be temporarily helping out on public affairs issues beginning Monday."

SLC: A very enlightening conversation with **Sarah Mongano**, Senior Environmental Scientist, Division of Environmental Planning and Management, California State Lands Commission
100 Howe Ave, Suite 100-South, Sacramento, CA 95825-8202
E-mail: sarah.mongano@slc.ca.gov
Office: 916-574-1889 (for faster response please email, as I am working at home due to Covid-19 restrictions)

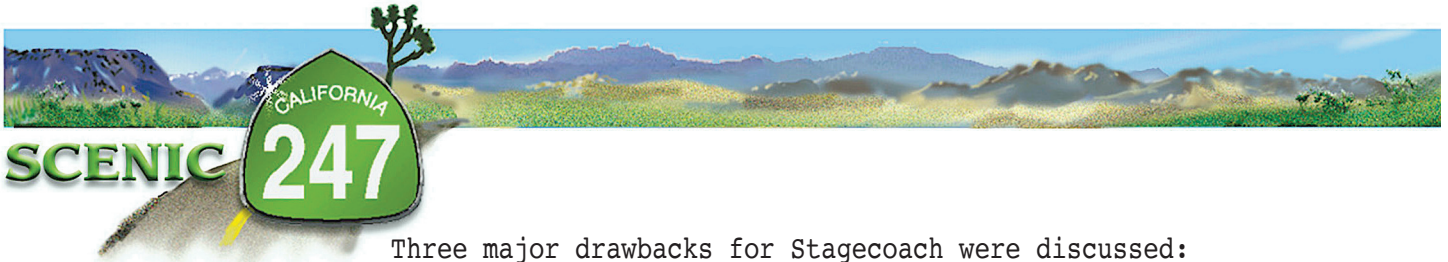
First she said the BLM-State Lands Commission School Lands exchange plan announced in October 2015 never was finalized, and confirmed this last week: "...the BLM/CSLC land swap plans did not result in any actual swaps of parcels. Also the Stagecoach Solar Project EIR is still on hold at the request of the applicant."

This consolidation was touted to "promote continuity of wilderness and wildlife corridors while supporting renewable energy goals," highly unlikely in my opinion, given the Development Focus Areas established in the controversial DRECP.

Since the land exchanges never occurred, very few parcels of School Lands lie in the S.R.247 scenic corridor. I cannot guess SLC response to an agreement document to abide by 247 CPP, but our contact Sarah Mongano is familiar with our campaign.

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Three major drawbacks for Stagecoach were discussed:

- 1) Comments on the Draft EIR pointing out Caltrans protection of corridors eligible for State Scenic Highway status.
- 2) the impossibility of conforming to Caltrans requirements for undergrounding transmission in the limited spaces available.
- 3) SLC lacking jurisdiction over the site.

FYI: The Stagecoach Solar project was planned in largely undeveloped scenery in view for miles, through which the historic Lucerne Valley Cutoff Road travels. Stagecoach transmission would cross S.R.247 to tie into another visually-intrusive project, the Calcite substation.

These eyesores would render ineligible fully one-half of the Scenic 247 Section 4 South, already approved as eligible after in-person comparison with our Visual Assessment by Karen Watkins and Almabeth Anderson, Caltrans Landscape Architect.

We hope Land Use services has made progress getting up to speed with the long history of the Scenic 247 campaign. Although Karen Watkins' assurance of a January or February presentation to the County Board of Supervisors could not be fulfilled, we believe we have touched all the bases so far to make the County Intent for Scenic 247 come to pass. Our Supervisor Dawn Rowe knows about and has supported our efforts.

When we go back to our draft CPP, we will add special requests as Karen advised for establishing turnouts and other traffic safety improvements, special signage, protection of Joshua Trees.

Thank you for your attention,

Betty Munson
Chair

P.S. this message will c/c to contacts at these agencies, to members of the Scenic 247 Committee, to Homestead Valley Community Council, its parent organization, to Caltrans Landscape Architect Almabeth Anderson, to County Supervisor Dawn Rowe

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