



First page of the original Scenic 247 presentation to the County

The Homestead Valley Community Council met in Landers in May, and the Scenic 247 Committee showed the original presentation for the adoption of State Scenic Highway status for 247.

It presented the benefits for the local communities and the County. It spelled what Caltrans requires from the County as the governing body of the area.

Over the years many obstacles to progress occurred. The county estimated the Visual Assessment of the scenic corridor and a corridor management plan would cost \$500,000. The Committee finally got the nod last year to do this ourselves, but – we also had to hire a Landscape Architect ourselves.

We lost more time attempting this, but just as Sarah Kennington reopened conversation with the County and we found out we did *not* have to hire a Landscape Architect, Sarah met Sara Fairchild, a licensed Landscape Architect, and

recruited her for the Scenic 247 campaign. We have her expertise on our side now at no cost.

The Committee reported on a “ride-along” on March 29th with Rose Bishop, Supervisor of the Landscape Architects Department in Caltrans, and a colleague. A caravan of vehicles carried Sarah and Sara, Chuck Bell and Betty Munson to survey the Barstow Road section and the Old Woman Springs Road section to Johnson Valley.

Rose clarified the standards for rating man-made visual intrusions on the natural landscape in the scenic corridor. She also advised us to get a Letter of Intent from the County to Caltrans proposing Scenic Highway Status.

After showing the presentation, the meeting participated in a lively discussion. Several volunteered to go to the Planning Commission hearing on the Renewable Energy Element of the County Plan to

preserve protections against industrial-scale solar in our communities (which now includes over 5,000 acres north of Lucerne Valley).

The June HVCC meeting in Johnson Valley continued this discussion and heard about the hearing, how our grass roots defenders had won over the Planning Commission. The Board of Supervisors must OK it, then we must fight applications that came in while the Element protections were delayed and “reviewed.”

The HVCC remains focused on the developments in their Scenic 247 Committee’s work.

Yucca Mesa, Johnson Valley, Flamingo Heights, and Landers, as well as Lucerne Valley, have a vested interest in our success, as do Barstow, Yucca Valley, and desert and mountain tourism destinations linked by 247.

Visit www.scenichighway247.com to see what it’s all about.



June 23 – This morning we lost our president, Joanna Wright, 62, dedicated volunteer, charter member of the Scenic 247 Committee. We credit Joanna with the continued effectiveness of the HVCC; she recognized the value of its mission for us all, and would not let it fade..