

Which Way to the Sun? Lone Valley Solar Does Not Know

EXISTING SOLAR FARMS MISMANAGED

It is disheartening for many Lucerne Valley residents to see the two solar plants in operation on Camp Rock Road, mismanaged. As we drive by them on Camp Rock Road we see solar panels pointed in all directions.



PHOTO BY TONY MALONE ARROWS ADDED

The photo above shows the latest failure in a growing number of desert disasters. Spawned by the gold rush for subsidies and loan guarantees for industrial-scale renewable energy development, they burden the taxpayer and the ratepayer. The damage done cannot be undone.

Tony Malone took the photo as he documented the two solar fields that became Lone Valley Solar. A former instructor in solar energy at Victor Valley College who lives off the grid himself, he brought his slide presentation of the history of Lone Valley Solar to the June HVCC meeting.

The sloping site The County okayed development near the upper reaches of Camp Rock Road below the intersection with Hwy 18 in the Cushenbury Creek

flood zone, to the surprise of Lucerne Valley residents.

Reviewing the contractor's plans, they suggested changes that might counteract flash flood effects on residents' roads, homes and water supply. These amended plans were ditched when the project was sold to another developer.

Construction nightmares Neighbors suffered through weeks of heavy equipment traffic, dust storms and piledriver noise. Many postholes had to be drilled because of massive boulders hiding in the alluvial fan. Tons of rock were removed during grading.

SC Edison customers suffered planned power outages as workers replaced power lines on Camp Rock in summer heat. Edison called it "upgrading."

Cumulative effects This upgrading added enough extra capacity to allow applications for two more projects on Camp Rock, ignoring the same problems of siting and construction that plague Lone Valley.

One idea is that these projects were already on the drawing board, unknown to the protesting public, known to SCE.

Alternative site Lucerne Valley offered another location for solar construction. Level acreage unsuitable for any other purpose, hidden from view by tamarisks, already traversed by transmission lines, easily accessed by road. No takers.

The red arrows added to Tony's photo show the final outrage; the solar tracking fails. The panels may point to Jupiter and Mars, but they produce very little energy.

An HVCC resolution urges the reinstatement of the County Solar Moratorium to defend residents from more failures!