

## Power plant plans good for valley's energy, water supply

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A half-billion-dollar power plant planned near Desert Hot Springs will help prevent blackouts during the hottest days, meet the need of population growth, pump money into the local economy and meet environmental standards.

The plant will provide electricity under a contract for Southern California Edison during peak summer times. It will be located next to another plant on 37 acres of out-of-the-way unincorporated land north of Interstate 10.

The company, CPV Sentinel LLC, has impressive plans and appears to be environmentally sensitive. The plant, working under a 2010 deadline, seems to be a good project for the valley because it will do the following:

Stabilize the regional power grid.

Supply power to the entire Coachella Valley during summer peaks.

Protect against costly, dangerous power outages.

Add \$3 million in net sales tax to Desert Hot Springs.

Pay \$5 million annually in county property tax.

Create 350 new construction jobs and 14 permanent ones.

Protect and preserve the region's water supply.

The latter point is important because water is the best option to cool this plant and minimize air emissions. Company officials recognize that our water supply is a public concern and have decided to spend millions more than is required to ensure that there is no question about the plant using too much water.

The plant will need about as much water as a nine-hole golf course, and CPV Sentinel has pledged not only to pay replenishment fees for any underground water it takes from the aquifer, but also to pay to bring in water from elsewhere in the state for the plant and for water conservation projects. The company could wind up contributing three times as much water as the plant actually consumes.

CPV reached an agreement with Desert Water Agency and will pay DWA \$10 million over the life of the project.

CPV is pursuing the new water plan because after 12 months, it has been unable to reach an agreement with the Mission Springs Water District. The plan does bypass the MSWD, which is the source for Desert Hot Springs water, and the district is taking issue with that plan, but the inability to agree on a deal should not derail the project. CPV Sentinel is certainly doing more than is required to keep our water supply intact.

The plan safeguards groundwater supplies, promotes more conservation and creates needed jobs and tax revenues for Desert Hot Springs without further delay, and we believe it is a project that should move forward and make its deadlines, which are looming.

The project also is supported by a number of local officials, including Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley; Sen. Jim Battin, R-La Quinta; and Assemblyman John Benoit, R-Bermuda Dunes.

In terms of emissions, company officials say they will actually improve the air quality in the valley because their mitigation efforts will remove more particles from the air than the plant produces.

The clean-burning natural gas plant will emit only 2.5 parts per million of nitrous oxide, which meets tough California standards guidelines and is very low when you consider the standard for vehicle emissions is about 150 ppm.

A standby plant such as this will only operate during peak demand periods. This plant will be state-of-the-art. As older plants are targeted for retirement by Edison, this technically more advanced plant will serve the valley and the region well for decades to come.

We support the CPV Sentinel Plant. We feel the company is solid and is taking reasonable measures to ensure efficiency and fairness in complying with local taxing and water districts, as well as protecting natural resources and complying with emissions standards.