

January 10, 2002

Mr. Clarence Martin  
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power  
300 Mandich Street  
Bishop, CA 93514

Subject: Comments on the Lower Owens River Project Draft EIR/EIS

Dear Mr. Martin,

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this very important project. The LORP has enormous potential benefits. However, there are many statements in the Draft EIR/EIS which call into question the successful implementation of the project and which could result in significant project impacts that would not be mitigated. Please consider my comments on the following issues:

101-1 **Pump station and Delta flows:** A 150 cfs pump station violates the Inyo-LA 1991 Water Agreement. A larger pump station won't allow enough water to reach the Delta and may help LADWP to pump more groundwater from the valley. LADWP should select the 50 cfs pump station and 9 cfs annual average delta baseflows. This option allows the maximum amount of water flow to the delta under the agreements and approaches current flows. This is needed to meet the delta habitat goal of maintaining existing and new delta habitats for waterfowl and to comply with the Water Agreement.

101-2 **Lack of commitment to monitoring, adaptive management and mitigation measures:** Monitoring and adaptive management are absolutely essential to the success of the LORP, but the DEIR/EIS repeatedly states that funding limitations may prevent their full implementation. To meet its obligations, LADWP should select funding option 2, which is the only option that adequately funds the LORP. However, option 2 should be restated to say LADWP would fund all of Inyo County's shortfall not "*some or all of Inyo County's shortfall,*" as it does in the draft document (p.2-8). Additionally, option 2 lacks funding for mitigation measures PS-2 and V-2. A commitment to fully fund these measures should also be included in funding option 2. In light of LADWP's tremendous financial resources, the project should not be compromised by lack of funding.

101-3 **Lack of funding for noxious weed control:** All of the LORP areas and habitat goals are at risk if saltcedar and other noxious weeds are not controlled. The spread of saltcedar presents a serious problem in the Owens Valley and the LORP Draft EIR/EIS must realistically address this problem. The document states that new saltcedar growth resulting from the LORP would be a significant Class I impact, but defers control of this problem to the separate pre-existing Inyo County saltcedar control program that has unsecured funding (mitigation measure V-2). If the LORP is truly to be "one of the most environmentally significant river habitat restorations ever undertaken in the United States," as Mark Hill, LADWP consultant, states it is, then it must include provisions for guaranteed funding for

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control of saltcedar and other noxious weeds in order to avoid significant impacts and meet the project goals.

101-4 **Recreation plan:** There is no recreation plan in the DEIR/EIS, nor is there a description of current and anticipated recreational uses of the LORP area. The document should contain a thorough assessment of current and potential recreational use in the LORP area and a plan to manage that recreation in order to protect natural habitats and cultural resources.

101-5 **Impact To Brine Pool Transition Area:** The Class I impact to shorebird habitat in the brine pool transition area, identified in Draft EIR/EIS Table S-1, can and must be avoided. This is an area that is used by thousands of ducks and geese and tens of thousands of shorebirds. It is in an area that has been recognized by the National Audubon Society as a Nationally Significant Important Bird Area and is part of the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan. This is a very important wildlife habitat. The existing flows to this transition area have been released by LADWP for many years. Have they been in violation of the existing court injunction that they say would prohibit mitigation of this impact? If the current flows are allowable, it is inappropriate to argue that maintaining those flows under the project is not feasible. LADWP can and must avoid this impact by maintaining existing flows and by not allowing this area to dry up in late spring and summer as currently happens. Additionally, if LADWP insists that this impact is unavoidable, they have an obligation under CEQA to explore mitigation alternatives that are feasible.

101-6 **Source of additional water to supply the LORP:** The Draft EIR/EIS fails to disclose whether or not LADWP will attempt to recover the additional 16,000 acre-feet/year of water that the project will require beyond the current releases. Where will the additional 16,000 acre-feet/year of water that the LORP will require come from? Will there be increased groundwater pumping? Will there be new wells drilled? Will it come from existing aqueduct supplies? What will be the impacts of the need for 16,000 acre-feet/year more water? The DEIR/EIS should clearly disclose LADWP's intention to replace or not replace the 16,000 acre-feet/year with groundwater pumping. The document fails to recognize the inadequacy of current pumping management to attain the vegetation protection goals of the Long Term Water Agreement. The Draft EIR/EIS therefore greatly underestimates the likelihood of potential future impacts due to any groundwater pumping associated with the LORP.

101-7 **Grazing:** Understory impacts as a result of current grazing are severe in riparian habitats in much of the LORP area. In many places there is no understory and there are no young willows or cottonwoods. Several habitat indicator species such as the yellow-breasted chat are dependent on habitats with trees and a dense understory in the riparian zone. Unless the diversity of habitat provided by understory growth significantly improves, the habitat goals for the river system will not be met. Monitoring for understory development as described on p. 2-78 will not be conducted unless the need for it is determined in some unspecified future time by unspecified means. Whether or not this important monitoring function is needed should not be left to some future decision. There should be a clear commitment to conduct this monitoring, as the need for it is obvious. Protocols for this monitoring data collection and analysis should also be included in the EIR/EIS.

101-8

Additionally, individual grazing lease management plans are not provided in the document and LADWP has denied requests by reviewers to see them. Without these critical documents and with no evaluation of the present lease condition and trend presented in the Draft EIR/EIS there is no way to compare change over time when evaluating whether the goals of the project are being met. There is no way for commenters to evaluate proposed management, monitoring and the need for mitigation. This is inadequate.

As one of the most significant river habitat restorations in the country, the LORP represents an unprecedented opportunity if the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power properly implements the project. I hope the Final EIR/EIS will reflect a real commitment to make the project live up to its full potential.

Sincerely,

*Charlene Collins*

*Big Pine Pointe Lake-owners Valley Indian Water  
Commissioner.*

January 10, 2003

Mr. Clarence Martin  
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power  
300 Mandich Street  
Bishop, CA 93514

Dear Mr. Martin,

I am writing to comment on the Lower Owens River Project Draft Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement.

I appreciate the great potential of the LORP. However, the DEIR/EIS fails to describe essential components of the project and presents project alternatives that directly violate the 1991 Long Term Water Agreement and the established project goals. Some of my concerns include:

102-1 1) Size of the pump station and delta flows: A 150 cfs pump station violates the Inyo-LA 1991 Water Agreement. LADWP has not justified using a larger pump station that is three times larger than the water agreement allows. A larger pump station won't allow enough water to reach the Delta and may help LADWP to pump more groundwater from the valley. LADWP should select the 50 cfs pump station and 9 cfs annual average delta baseflows. This option allows the maximum amount of water flow to the delta under the agreements and approaches current flows. This is needed to meet the delta habitat goal of maintaining existing and new delta habitats for waterfowl and to comply with the Water Agreement.

102-2 2) Funding: Monitoring and adaptive management are absolutely essential to the success of the LORP, but the DEIR/EIS repeatedly states that funding limitations may prevent their full implementation. To meet its obligations, LADWP should select funding option 2, which is the only option that adequately funds the LORP.

102-3 3) Recreation plan: There is no recreation plan in the DEIR/EIS, nor is there a description of current and anticipated recreational uses of the LORP area. The document should contain a thorough assessment of current and potential recreational use in the LORP area and a plan to manage that recreation in order to protect natural habitats and cultural resources.

Mr. Martin, the LORP is a valuable project, and I want it to work. I urge LADWP to abide by the terms of the Water Agreement and the goals of the project, thoroughly describe all management plans to the public, choose the least environmentally damaging alternatives, and guarantee adequate funding.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

*Beverly Coons*  
P.O. Box 182  
Big Pine, CA 93513-0182

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BISHOP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

Jan 11, 03

Mr. Morton,

THANKS FOR SALT GRASS ON OWENS LAKE. BIRDS ARE INCREASING THERE.

HOPE THERE'S SOMETHING YOU CAN DO IN DERAILING THE OVER SIZE PUMP BACK STATION.

THANKS FOR YOUR WORK, IT'S A TOUGH JOB.

Tom Coontz

P.O. Box 785

Big Pine, CA 93513

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SHOP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

Thursday, January 9, 2003

Mr. Clarence Martin, LADWP  
300 Mandich St.  
Bishop, CA 93514

Ms. Gail Louis, EPA  
U.S. EPA  
75 Hawthorne St.  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Mr. Martin, LADWP, and Ms. Gail Louis, EPA,

104-1 I am writing in response to the Environmental Impact Report regarding LORP. I was hoping to find information about how you are going to deal with the beaver. I did not find information on how or when these animals were to be removed as a part of this project. I have heard from ecologists and people involved in the project that beaver are non-native and therefore nothing more than a pest and problem. Yet the entire project is predicated (economically) on the introduction of non-native fish into the 'restored' river. I am very concerned about how the project plans to remove the beaver which have become a part of this landscape, creating their own kind of wetland ecosystem. I am not in disagreement that the beaver population creates problems in regards to the rewatering of the Lower Owens River. I question two things: 1) whether or not the argument that they are non-native is a legitimate rationale for removing them; and, 2) whether or not beaver were in the Lower Owens River before the introduced sub-species arrived. The only thing everyone seems to agree on is that the sub-species living here now was introduced.

Introduced or not, given the nature of this 'restoration,' I oppose the removal of the beaver.

That said, I realize that they will be removed because of the impact they have on free water flow and the re-establishment of the native willow. I am strongly opposed to any means of removal that harms the beaver in any way. I would like a reply as soon as possible telling me exactly how the project plans to remove these animals safely and humanely, what time of year they plan to do this removal, who will be doing the 'removal', exactly where they plan to relocate the removed animals, who will monitor the success of the relocated animals, and how they plan to control the population that remains. Thank you for listening to my concerns and taking my comments into account.

I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



Diana Cunningham, M.A. Biology  
8819 Starlite Dr.  
Bishop, CA 93514

cc: The Inyo Register

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Mr. Clarence Martin  
 Los Angeles Dept. of Water + Power  
 300 Mandich St.  
 Bishop, CA. 93514

Danielson  
 328 W. Gardenia Dr.  
 Phoenix, AZ 85021-  
 8719

Dear Mr. Martin,

I am writing to comment on the Lower Owens River  
 Project Draft Environmental Impact Report + E.I.S.

The DEIR/EIS fails to describe essential components of  
 the project and presents project alternatives that directly  
 violate the 1991 Long Term Water Agreement and the established  
 project goals. Some of my concerns include:

105-1

1) a 150 cfs pumping station violates the Long LA 1991 Water  
 Agreement. LADWP should select the 50 cfs pump  
 station and the 9 cfs (annual) average delta baseflows.

105-2

2) Funding that will allow for full implementation  
 in order to meet its obligations (DEIR/EIS) Option  
 2 is the only option that adequately funds LORP.

105-3

3) Recreation is essential. The document should contain a  
 thorough assessment of current + potential recreational  
 use in the LORP area and plan to manage that  
 area in order to protect + create natural habitats +  
 cultural resources.

Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely,

Barbara + Tom Danielson  
 Concerned citizens

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Mr. Clarence Martin  
 Los Angeles Department of Water and Power  
 300 Mandich Street  
 Bishop, CA 93514

Dear Mr. Martin,

I am writing to comment on the Lower Owens River Project Draft Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement.

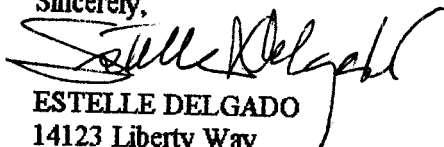
I appreciate the great potential of the LORP. However, the DEIR/EIS fails to describe essential components of the project and presents project alternatives that directly violate the 1991 Long Term Water Agreement and the established project goals. Some of my concerns include:

- 106-1 1) Size of the pump station and delta flows: A 150 cfs pump station violates the Inyo-LA 1991 Water Agreement. LADWP has not justified using a pump station that is three times larger than the water agreement allows. A larger pump station won't allow enough water to reach the delta and may help LADWP to pump more groundwater from the valley. LADWP should select the 50 cfs pump station and 9 cfs annual average delta baseflows. This option allows the maximum amount of water flow to the delta under the agreements and approaches current flows. This is needed to meet the delta habitat goal of maintaining existing and new delta habitats for waterfowl and to comply with the water agreement.
- 106-2 2) Funding: Monitoring and adaptive management are absolutely essential to the success of the LORP, but the DEIR/EIS repeatedly states that funding limitations may prevent their full implementation. To meet its obligations, LADWP should select funding option 2, which is the only option that adequately funds the LORP.
- 106-3 3) Recreation plan: There is no recreation plan in the DEIR/EIS, nor is there a description of current and anticipated recreational uses of the LORP area. The document should contain a thorough assessment of current and potential recreational use in the LORP area and a plan to manage that recreation in order to protect natural habitats and cultural resources.
- 106-4 4) The Los Angeles basin residents largely ignore water conservation. Irrigation waste is everywhere and way too much rain-forest type shrubs are used. DWP sacrifices other parts of the country to get LA's lushness!

Mr. Martin, the LORP is a valuable project, and I want it to work. I urge LADWP to abide by the terms of the water agreement and the goals of the project, thoroughly describe all management plans to the public, choose the least environmentally damaging alternatives, and guarantee adequate funding.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

  
 ESTELLE DELGADO  
 14123 Liberty Way  
 Victorville, CA 92392

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 BISHOP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE



January 10, 2003

Mr. Clarence Martin  
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power  
300 Mandich Street  
Bishop, CA 93514

Kelly Denver  
P.O. Box 731  
Bishop CA 93515

Dear Mr. Martin,

I am writing to comment on the Lower Owens River Project Draft Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement.

I appreciate the great potential of the LORP. However, the DEIR/EIS fails to describe essential components of the project and presents project alternatives that directly violate the 1991 Long Term Water Agreement and the established project goals. Some of my concerns include:

107-1 1) Size of the pump station and delta flows: A 150 cfs pump station violates the Inyo-LA 1991 Water Agreement. LADWP has not justified using a larger pump station that is three times larger than the water agreement allows. A larger pump station won't allow enough water to reach the Delta and may help LADWP to pump more groundwater from the valley. LADWP should select the 50 cfs pump station and 9 cfs annual average delta baseflows. This option allows the maximum amount of water flow to the delta under the agreements and approaches current flows. This is needed to meet the delta habitat goal of maintaining existing and new delta habitats for waterfowl and to comply with the Water Agreement.

107-2 2) Funding: Monitoring and adaptive management are absolutely essential to the success of the LORP, but the DEIR/EIS repeatedly states that funding limitations may prevent their full implementation. To meet its obligations, LADWP should select funding option 2, which is the only option that adequately funds the LORP.

107-3 3) Recreation plan: There is no recreation plan in the DEIR/EIS, nor is there a description of current and anticipated recreational uses of the LORP area. The document should contain a thorough assessment of current and potential recreational use in the LORP area and a plan to manage that recreation in order to protect natural habitats and cultural resources.

Mr. Martin, the LORP is a valuable project, and I want it to work. I urge LADWP to abide by the terms of the Water Agreement and the goals of the project, thoroughly describe all management plans to the public, choose the least environmentally damaging alternatives, and guarantee adequate funding.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

Kelly Denver

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Mr. Clarence Martin  
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power  
300 Mandich Street  
Bishop, CA 93514

Dear Mr. Martin,

This letter is short and to the point, as I'm sure you will not read it anyway!

I am writing to comment on the Lower Owens River Project Draft Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement.

The DEIR/EIS fails to describe essential components of the project and presents project alternatives that directly violate the 1991 Long Term Water Agreement and the established project goals.

108-1 | The size of the pump station and delta flows: A 150 cfs pump station violates the Inyo-LA 1991 Water Agreement. LADWP has not justified using a pump station that is three times larger than the water agreement allows.

108-2 | Funding, Monitoring and adaptive management are absolutely essential to the success of the LORP, but the DEIR/EIS repeatedly states that funding limitations may prevent their full implementation. To meet its obligations.

108-3 | There is no recreation plan in the DEIR/EIS, nor is there a description of current and anticipated recreational uses of the LORP area.

I urge LADWP to abide by the terms of the water agreement and the goals of the project, thoroughly describe all management plans to the public.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Don Dillinger".

cc: Inyo County Board of Supervisors

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Mr. Clarence Martin  
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power  
300 Mandich Street  
Bishop, CA 93514

Don & Paula Dillinger  
2743 Carol Lane  
Bishop, CA 93514

Dear Mr. Martin,

I am writing to comment on the Lower Owens River Project Draft Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement.

The DEIR/EIS fails to describe essential components of the project and presents project alternatives that directly violate the 1991 Long Term Water Agreement and the established project goals. My main concerns are:

**109-1**

1) Size of the pump station and delta flows: A 150 cfs pump station violates the Inyo-LA 1991 Water Agreement. LADWP has not justified using a pump station that is three times larger than the water agreement allows. A larger pump station won't allow enough water to reach the delta and may help LADWP to pump more groundwater from the valley. LADWP should select the 50 cfs pump station and 9 cfs annual average delta baseflows.

**109-2**

2) Funding: Monitoring and adaptive management are absolutely essential to the success of the LORP, but the DEIR/EIS repeatedly states that funding limitations may prevent their full implementation. To meet its obligations, LADWP MUST select funding option 2, which is the only option that adequately funds the LORP.

**109-3**

3) Recreation plan: There is no recreation plan in the DEIR/EIS, nor is there a description of current and anticipated recreational uses of the LORP area. The document MUST contain a thorough assessment of current and potential recreational use in the LORP area.

Mr. Martin, the LORP is a valuable project, and I want it to work. I urge LADWP to abide by the terms of the water agreement and the goals of the project, thoroughly describe all management plans to the public.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,



cc: Inyo County Board of Supervisors

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Los Angeles Department of Water and Power  
300 Mandich Street  
Bishop, CA 93514

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- 110-1 1) Size of the pump station and delta flows: A 150 cfs pump station violates the Inyo-LA 1991 Water Agreement. LADWP has not justified using a larger pump station that is three times larger than the water agreement allows. A larger pump station won't allow enough water to reach the Delta and may help LADWP to pump more groundwater from the valley. LADWP should select the 50 cfs pump station and 9 cfs annual average delta baseflows. This option allows the maximum amount of water flow to the delta under the agreements and approaches current flows. This is needed to meet the delta habitat goal of maintaining existing and new delta habitats for waterfowl and to comply with the Water Agreement.
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Mr. Martin, the LORP is a valuable project, and I want it to work. I urge LADWP to abide by the terms of the Water Agreement and the goals of the project, thoroughly describe all management plans to the public, choose the least environmentally damaging alternatives, and guarantee adequate funding.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely, *Nicole Wondero*  
*465 Piper St*  
*Big Pine Ca*  
*93513*

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