

January 8, 2003

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 write this letter of concern about the above subject. I shall attempt to be as brief and concise as possible.

- 91-1 | You agreed previously to a 50cfs pump station at the Owens River delta. Please stand by your agreement and also maintain a 9cfs baseflow at the delta.
- 91-2 | Funding must be guaranteed for noxious weed control. As a former farm boy and a graduate of Iowa State University in Agricultural Management I know firsthand what importance weed control is to newly re-watered soil.
- 91-3 | There must be a recreational plan added to the DEIR/EIS. Without such a plan there will only be confusion and uncertainty about the steps to be taken in implementing the project.
- 91-4 | Grazing of livestock is an important and critical element that needs monitoring. Not enough attention has been given to this matter in the DEIR/EIS.

In closing I trust that the above matters will be given attention and action. Thank You.

Sincerely,



John Burnstrom  
224 Shepard Lane  
Bishop, Ca. 93514

Cc: Inyo County Board of Supervisors

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JAN 10 2003

CONDUCT MANAGER  
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

## FACSIMILE COVER PAGE

Date: 01/08/03  
Time: 16:09:44  
Page: 1

To: Clarence Martin  
Company: LADWP  
Fax #: 873-0266

From: David Carle  
Address: PO Box 3234  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93541  
USA  
Fax #: 760 924-8204 call first  
Voice #: 760 924-8204

Message:

Regarding the DEIR/EIS for restoration of the lower Owens River:

92-1 Enhancing and creating new habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife and improving the warm water fishery, while restoring 62 miles of flows to the lower Owens River, are laudable goals. The DEIR/EIS is faulty, however, in not holding to the agreed upon 50 cfs pumpback station to return groundwater to the aqueduct. That level will be sufficient to deal with groundwater return at present levels, without the threat of increased groundwater extraction that a larger capacity station represents. The plan should also allow 9cfs of baseflows to move out onto the Owens River delta to maintain existing habitat for migratory birds. This total effort requires full funding for monitoring and adaptive management, plus saltcedar eradication. The funding commitment should not be left vague.

Thank you very much.

David Carle

January 10, 2003

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

*Marvin Center  
435 South Barlow  
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:

93-1

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.

93-2

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.

93-3

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,

*Marvin B. Center*

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JAN 13 2003

AQUEDUCT MANAGER  
SHOP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

January 7, 2003  
Lone Pine, California

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

Dear Mr. Martin,  
Let the following serve as my comment on the Lower Owens River Project LORP.

As a long time resident of the Owens Valley, I first came to Crowley Lake with my dad fishing in 1946. Now as a tax payer since 1985, I have observed the results of man's work at supplying his needs in this valley for obtaining water, minerals, chemicals, building materials, and food. Unfortunately, in the past a wild west ethic of "there it is boys, take it" has too often prevailed over a more conservation oriented mindset. As a consequence, the wreckage of past policies litters the valley from one end to the other.

94-1 The twenty-first century brings with it a new awareness and responsibility. The era of grab the resources, get rich, and move to San Francisco's Nob Hill or L.A.'s Beverly Hills has passed forever.

It is incumbent on all of us to clean up the wreckage of the past and get on with the business of living. By working together toward sustainable yields and managed resources, we can do great works. Although some contentious issues remain to be resolved, namely the pump station, saltcedar removal, recreational uses, and future projects. I feel that by working together with less litigation and more cooperation we can all be part of a truly worthy project.

94-2 One of the most under utilized resources in the valley is volunteerism. In Lone Pine we have a Streamside Cleanup Program sponsored by the Lions Club that has attracted widespread support. It is possible that this type of program could be applied to saltcedar removal.

We live in a world of speed of light communications and access to information. Whether we like it or not the whole world is watching what we do. This is our chance to make our mark in history as being part of a truly noble effort. The American philosopher William James stated "happiness is the progressive realization of a worthy goal". The LORP has the potential to be "one of the most significant river habitat restorations ever undertaken in the United States." And that indeed is a worthy goal.

Sincerely,

*Richard Cervantes*

Richard Cervantes

*1044 Hunter Rd.  
Lone Pine, CA 93545-9756*

Phone: 760-8768613  
qtheart@yahoo.com

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JAN 10 2003

CONDUCT MANAGER  
CHOC ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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:

95-1 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.

95-2 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.

95-3 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,



Laurie Chamberlin  
Lnchamberlin@hotmail.com

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JAN 13 2003

AQUEDUCT MANAGER  
BISHOP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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:

**96-1 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.

**96-2 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.

**96-3 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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AQUEDUCT MANAGER  
 BISHOP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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

96-4 **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.

96-5 **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.

96-6 **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.

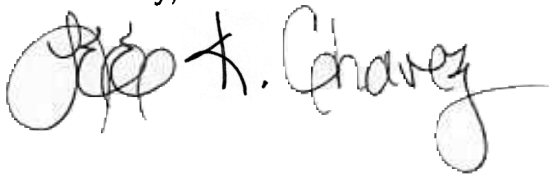
96-7 **Grazing:** Understory impacts as a result of current grazing are severe in riparian habitats in much of the LORP area. In many places there is no understory and there are no young willows or cottonwoods. Several habitat indicator species such as the yellow-breasted chat are dependent on habitats 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.

96-8

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roberto A. Chavez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "R".

949 N. Barlow Ln.  
Bishop. California  
93514



January 9, 2003

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

Dear Mr. Martin,

I am very happy to see the LORP EIS/EIR has been issued and think it has the potential to be a nationally significant project. However, I have several concerns I wish to express.

97-1 I am very concerned about the size of the proposed pump station. The 150 cfs option leads one to believe that LADWP is building in extra capacity to export Owens River water. This size pump is against the MOU which was carefully crafted and agreed to more than 10 years ago. Why change now? "Delay, delay, delay, has been the city's method, the nearest approach to a settled policy it has shown." These words, written by W. A. Chalfant in the 1930's, seem to be true to this very day, and it is very disheartening to know the City of Los Angeles is employing the same tactics as it has for all these years.

97-2 It is unclear where the water for the project is coming from. On page 10-14 it states "Water for the LORP will be derived from river diversions. ...At this time, LAWDP has no future plans to use groundwater to supply water to the LORP project elements." Yet, on page 10-17, it indicates that "the LORP, including the construction of a pump station, could cause LADWP to seek to increase its groundwater pumping in the Owens Valley and/or decrease the amount of water it currently supplies for water uses in the Owens Valley." Page 10-17 states that "it is possible for LADWP to pump groundwater from new wells along the river below the River Intake and to release the groundwater to the river." Yet on 10-18 "...the idea of building a larger pump station to accommodate increased groundwater pumping is without merit." Again, the source of the water for this project cannot be determined by the language in the LORP. **Which will it be?** Given the nature of this mitigation project, additional groundwater pumping is an unacceptable alternative. **Please explain.**

97-3 The lack of funding for adequate monitoring to implement the adaptive management concept is also a disappointment. This plan cannot be successful without necessary management actions taken to control saltcedar, beaver ponds, and emergent vegetation. If the City spent less money on the glossy brochures sent to every resident of Owens Valley and other such public relations actions, more would be available for things that are really needed. **Please explain your reasoning for this.**

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WATER TREATMENT PLANT  
SHOP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

97-4

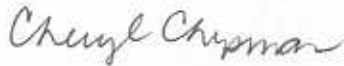
It appears that there is no recreation plan to go along with the increased recreational opportunities. We don't want to restore an area just to have it destroyed by too much unmanaged visitation. **Please explain** how LADWP plans to manage the increased use of the waterfowl areas that are expected to attract more hikers, hunters, bird watchers, and off-road vehicle enthusiasts.

97-5

Lastly, I am concerned about the proposed reduction in flows to the Delta. Decreases in the water flow to the Delta will impair brine pool habitat and also affect wetlands in the area. Is it not a Public Trust issue not to further degrade public waterways? LADWP considers current flow to be "infeasible", but surely the intent of the MOU was not to decrease habitat on the lakebed. **Please explain.**

Thank you for addressing my concerns. It would be refreshing if there really was a feeling of "turning the page on a new chapter" in relations with the City of Los Angeles. Attention to these concerns would go a long way in demonstrating that.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Chipman  
2420 Apache Dr.  
Bishop, CA 93514

DATE JAN 7, 2003

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

Comment Letter No. 98

Dear Mr. Martin:

We applaud the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) for taking the necessary steps to restore the Lower Owens River by returning a steady flow of water from the Los Angeles Aqueduct to the Owens River as well as spreading additional water into basins to create wetlands habitat.

As delineated in the November 2002 draft Environmental Impact Report, the Lower Owens River Project (LORP) restoration approaches are scientifically sound, and will significantly enhance and restore the river's ecosystem.

However, one issue that remains outstanding is the size of the pump-back station. We strongly support the 150 cubic-feet-per-second pump station as proposed by the LADWP in the draft EIR.

Inyo County and the Environmental Protection Agency advocate installing a smaller (50 cfs) pump station, Option 2 in the EIR. This option would allow higher seasonal habitat flows to flow past the pump station to the Owens Lake Delta and beyond. However, scientific evidence presented in the EIR shows that most of the higher habitat flows would quickly pass through the Delta and end up in the brine pool in the middle of Owens Lake, providing little benefit to the project or public.

A larger pump station (150 cfs), described as Option 1, which is preferred by the LADWP, would capture excess flows before they pass to the brine pool and deliver the water onto Owens Lake for dust mitigation, or to Los Angeles for much-needed public use. LADWP has identified its first priority for this excess water as the dust control project, with flows above capacity to be diverted to the Los Angeles Aqueduct. Scientific evidence shows that the Delta habitats will flourish through conservative water allocations and advanced water management techniques. The proposal provides water to the Delta during key periods for wetland needs and wildlife. The 150 cfs pump station would simply recover water that is not necessary to achieve environmental goals in the LORP Delta habitat area.

In the arid west, we must realize the necessity of wisely using water resources to balance the needs of the environment with water demands of a growing population. The LORP, as proposed with the 150 cfs pump station option, will achieve this balance and provide for a restored ecosystem that will offer tremendous recreational opportunities to the general public, while continuing to maintain a reliable water supply to Los Angeles residents and businesses.

Sincerely,  
SIGNATURE

*Charles Church*  
21834 RODAX ST  
CANOGA PARK, CA 91304  
(818) 347 8531

I AM A DWP RATE PAYER AND  
ON THE WATER STEERING  
COMMITTEE OF LA'S INTEGRATED  
RESOURCES PLAN.  
I AM THE BOARD PRESIDENT OF  
WEST VALLEY ALLIANCE AND THE  
CHAIRMAN OF THE W V GRAFFITEE ASSOCIATION.

98-1

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AQUEDUCT MANAGER  
BISHOP ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER

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:

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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,  
*Michelle M. Cobers*

*452 TROCK LN. BISHOP CA*

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AQUEDUCT MANAGER  
BISHOP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

Koralee Cole  
 P.O. Box 5  
 Independence, CA  
 93526

Mr. Martin

We are writing to comment on LORP + DEIR statements.

100-1 First WWP should be allowed the 150 cfs pump back station. The seasonal flushing flow is greater than the 50 cfs station so good water would be going to the lake. WWP can not take more water than allowed with out the approval of numerous committees so we do not see the possibility of them getting more.

100-2 WWP should make a yearly allotment for tule + tamarac control if this project is to work. If not all the lakes + ponds will fill up in a very short time. Coyote + Grass Lakes have already grown over with tules + Upper + Lower + twin lakes are only about half their previous size. Billy Lake has already lost about 1/3 of its size. If these lakes + the ponds also are not tule controlled there will a detriment for not only fish but our birds also. These lakes also need a flushing flow as the alkalinity is increasing + will kill the fish + birds also.

100-3 During the initial rewatering study from Magourka Canyon Road to the Delta (especially at Lone Pine) significant amounts of Hydrogen sulfate,

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WATER RESOURCES ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

100-3

Ammonia + methane gasses were detected. The flowing flush should continue for these gasses until the water quality improves enough to sustain good water quality no matter how long it takes. A monitoring program for these gasses + water quality should be very seriously considered.

100-4

We believe you should re-establish all the previous dikes between the Intake + Alabama Gates to make deeper ponds.

100-5

We believe there should be NO closure of any kind along the river. Historically any time the chub + pup fish get established this happens and it should not.

100-6

In the areas where there is fencing there should be gates or cattle guards at every road to the river.

100-7

DW + P has already capped the road on the West side of Mazyurka Canyon Road + they should continue north to Black Rock + maintain program established.

Thank You.

Don + Lorelei Cole  
Concerned Citizens of  
the Owens Valley

NEW  
1981  
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DIAL  
MAY 10 1981  
LIBRARY  
OF THE  
OWENS VALLEY  
MUSEUM