

MBCA News
Wednesday, May 13, 2015

The 5th annual MBCA Desert-Wise Landscape Tour: A great success!

Thanks to the Tour Committee who scouted the over 20 sites on the Tour and organized the infinite details that made it go so smoothly. Special thanks to the twenty-nine Site Docents and nineteen Hosts that so graciously welcomed us upon arrival at each site. Holding up to the wind that interrupted an otherwise gorgeous spring day, nearly two hundred intrepid visitors had the opportunity to visit some of the Basin's finest examples of Desert-Wise Living & frugal water use in our landscapes.

2015 Essay Contest: Reminder from Landscape Tour Committee

You are invited to submit a written commentary that reflects your Landscape Tour experience. There are three great gift certificate prizes:

- 1st place = \$200 at Unique Nursery in Yucca Valley
- 2nd place = \$150 at Cactus Mart in Morongo Valley
- 3rd place = \$100 at Wind Walkers in Joshua Tree

Please write a page or two, approximately 150-300 words, to describe your experience on the Landscape Tour and/or how it inspired you. Tell us the details! Winning essays will be published on our website, with your permission. Send us a Word document at events@mbconservation.org.

The deadline is 6 PM on Tuesday, May 19th. MBCA will inform and announce the winners by Tuesday, May 26th. Good luck!

To see some photos from the 2015 Tour, go to the MBCA [Home page](#). You may also want to check out our Resource tab and see other pages for recently added content. Please check in regularly to see our progress in efforts to strengthen mbconservation.org with content reflecting current issues and archives of past campaigns.

Save Landers - Landers for Responsible: VICTORY!

Landers residents mobilized as Save Landers to challenge the Bowman Solar project proposed by developer sPower. **They have won their Appeal!** The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors voted on May 5th to overturn the Planning Commission approval for the Bowman Solar project. Their challenge included issues around appropriate siting, inadequate notification, deterioration of the economy, misrepresentation of community support by sPower, and lack of compliance with the County's general plan's renewable energy element.

This is a great and significant victory for Landers and the entire Basin's efforts to locate commercial renewable projects appropriately – NOT in rural residential zones! Save Landers' leadership was intelligently directed in their opposition. Residents packed the San Bernardino Supervisors' chambers, as well as the JT County telecommunication facility. They spoke substantively and with passion. This effort was a model in grass-roots activism and the power of communities to fight back! The Landers Association has requested us to send letters of thanks to the three supervisors who voted in favor of the Appeal. Note that 4th district Supervisor Hagman joined the two desert Supervisors in

approving the Appeal.

Robert A. Lovingood (Vice Chair) – First District Supervisor

Email: SupervisorLovingood@sbcounty.gov

Email comment form: <http://www.sbcounty.gov/bosd1/contact/email.aspx>

James Ramos (Chair) – Third District Supervisor

Email: SupervisorRamos@sbcounty.gov

Email comment form: <http://www.sbcounty.gov/bosd3/contact/ContactUs.aspx>

Phil Paule, Ramos' Chief of Staff Email: philip.paule@bos.sbcounty.gov

Curt Hagman – Fourth District Supervisor

Email: SupervisorHagman@sbcounty.gov

Email comment form: <http://www.sbcounty.gov/bosd4/contact/ContactUs.aspx>

SAVE THE DATE:

Black Rock Lecture: Putting It All Together – Achievable Action Items

Panelists: David Smith, Superintendent, JTNP, April Sall, Wildlands Conservancy, and Dr. William McDonald, UC Riverside

When: May 15th, 7:00-8:30pm

Where: Copper Mountain College, Bell Center

This symposium is Free, but pre-registration is required: www.joshuatree.org

REMINDERS TO ACT:

BLM Draft Environmental Impact Statement: WEMO (Western Mojave) Route Network Project Plan: Voice your Concerns!

See the MBCA [webpage](#) with WEMO background that includes a link to MBCA Director Pat Flanagan's detailed and extensively illustrated analysis of the plan alternatives and their likely problematic consequences. Stay tuned also for an updated "WEMO Briefing" position paper in coming days – we'll alert you in an E-Blast when it has been posted on the MBCA website. We recommend that you review the analysis and present your own comments by writing or emailing the BLM. **Comments due by June 4, 2015:**

e-mail: cawemopa@blm.gov; or

snail mail: Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District, Attn: WMRNP Plan Amendment

22835 Calle San Juan de Los Lagos, Moreno Valley, CA 92253

California Desert Conservation and Recreation Act: Voice your Support!

As reported in previous E-Blasts, Senator Diane Feinstein introduced the CDCRA bill to Congress proposing the long anticipated creation of:

- Mojave Trails National Monument
- Sand to Snow National Monument
- as well as providing additional protections to threatened areas in the California desert, including ACEC status for Black Lava & Flat Top Butte in Pipes Canyon.

If this bill is to receive bipartisan support in Congress, it is critical to let Congressman Cook know that you support his full support of the CDCRA in its entirety. MBCA joins Save Our Desert (SOD) in urging you to send a personal letter to Paul Cook's office: Congressman Col. Paul Cook (Ret.)

14955 Dale Evans Parkway, Apple Valley, CA 92307-9804

SOD's "talking points" for consideration in composing a letter to Congressman Cook in support CDCRA, will be posted on the MBCA website in coming days. The next E-Blast will notify you the information been posted online and will provide the link.

In Conclusion

There is no let-up now in our need to respond with comment to decision makers. Take heart though in the success of Save Landers' victory to overturn the approval for a solar development in their community. Their speedy & just-in-time response to the threat and continued efforts brought them a well-deserved outcome. It wouldn't have happened without the passion and organized opposition they harnessed. It gives hope for our on-going efforts to maintain our rural quality of life and protect the natural resources that surround and sustain us!

Sincerely,
Sarah Kennington, President

Your 2015 MBCA Board

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www.mbconservation.org

*MBCA advocates for a healthy desert environment
that nurtures our rural character, cultural wealth,
and economic well-being.*