

MBCA News  
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

**MBCA receives 501c3 non-profit status!**

In January we received news that the IRS accepted our application for MBCA to become a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. It is a big step in our organizational development and promises to open new doors to connect and serve the Morongo Basin. New opportunities will be available for the Board of Directors to pursue funding in support of our efforts to communicate and educate on the issues that further our mission.

Donations to MBCA, including your membership dues are now tax deductible. Which leads me to remind those of you who haven't renewed or become members that this is a fabulous time to do so! Easy as pie online [here!](#)

To current members – thanks for your support. A large membership expands our ability to educate residents and decision-makers, so invite your friends to join! This is a great time for MBCA to grow!

**SPARC Forum reminder – last Listening Session this Thursday!**

When: Thursday, March 5, 2015, 2pm – 4pm

Where (live): Co. Govt. Center, 1<sup>st</sup> Fl., 385 N. Arrowhead Ave., San Bernardino

Where (videoconferencing): County Government Center, 63665 Hwy 62, JT

This will be our last opportunity to weigh in on during the SPARC process for the future of Renewable Energy in San Bernardino County. This Listening Session will begin with an outline of plans for the County General Plan renewable energy element by County Planning Director Terri Rahhal. After the presentation, the public will be invited to make 3-minute comments. The meeting will also be webcast and can be viewed [online](#).

The County's Framework Document is available at [SPARCforum.org](http://SPARCforum.org). There is still time to register your position and comments online at the SPARC website.

**Lights Off/Dark Skies: Earth Hour**

When: Saturday, March 28th, 8:30 pm local time.

Earth Hour started in 2007 as a lights-off event to raise awareness about climate change. It has grown to engage more than 162

countries and territories worldwide. Let's make the Morongo Basin part of the darkness!

Find out more [here](#).

### **WEMO (Western Mojave) Meeting and Workshop: Reminder**

When: Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, noon - 3:00pm

Where: Community United Methodist Church, 6213 East Parkway, Joshua Tree

Sponsored by: Community ORV Watch ([www.orvwatch.com](http://www.orvwatch.com))

This meeting and workshop will provide:

- Full Briefing by the Center for Biological Diversity
- Comment on the *WEMO* Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
- Protect the Desert from Off-Road Vehicles (ORV) trespass and damage

Note: MBCA joined other organizations in support for the Yucca Valley Police Department's Grant Application to The State of California Off Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division. The letter reads, in part: *We are writing to express our strong support for the Yucca Valley Police Department's application for a significant increase in funds to address the rise in off-road vehicle (ORV) abuse of our private and public lands. Our local Sheriff's Department is overwhelmed by complaints by residents due to ORV trespass on County Service Area (CSA) roads, private property trespass, excessive noise and dust, and trespass on public lands off-limits to motorized recreation.*

### **Save Landers - Landers for Responsible Solar**

Update: The appeal challenging the Bowman/SPower has been delayed until "no sooner than May 5<sup>th</sup>."

### **MBCA Website ([www.mbconservation.org](http://www.mbconservation.org)): Enhancements**

You will find preliminary information for MBCA's **5<sup>th</sup> Annual 2015 Landscape Tour** and the ability to register online. This not-to-be-missed event is scheduled for Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup> – mark your calendars! After you register, you will receive additional details and online access to the Tour Guide in April. In-person registration will be available at Earth Day in Yucca Valley on Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>.

Thanks to all of you who took your time to express your concerns to decision-makers about the DRECP over the previous months and years. The DRECP received over 12,000 letters as the comment period drew

to a close on Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>. Lucerne Valley and the Morongo Basin residents mobilized, organized, educated, and spoke loud and clear. San Bernardino County Supervisors, particularly the two Supervisors representing the desert – our 3<sup>rd</sup> district Supervisor, James Ramos and the 1<sup>st</sup> district's Robert Lovingood have shown that they heard, understand, and support the concerns of their constituents regarding renewable energy development in our communities. This is evidenced in the County Framework Document ([SPARCforum.org](http://SPARCforum.org)) that incorporates much of what individuals and groups such as MBCA have advocated. There is obviously still much work ahead for us with the County and other decision makers. The SPARC Listening Session on Thursday will be the next important venue for us to continue our vigilance – see you there!

Sincerely,  
Sarah Kennington, President

Your 2015 MBCA Board

Sarah Kennington, President  
Steve Bardwell, Treasurer  
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[www.mbconservation.org](http://www.mbconservation.org)

*MBCA advocates for a healthy desert*

*environment*

*that nurtures our rural character, cultural wealth,  
and economic well-being.*