



July 28, 2021

Governor Gavin Newsom
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Dear Governor Newsom,

For over 50 years Morongo Basin Conservation Association (MBCA) has worked diligently to protect and preserve the California deserts. The CA deserts are now, more than ever, under serious attack from the onslaught of illegal cannabis cultivation. This illegal cultivation has become a plague on our desert environment and our aquifers, now more precious than ever under the severity of the drought. (<https://daily.jstor.org/the-environmental-downside-of-cannabis-cultivation/>)

Like most Californians we anticipated that Prop 64 would meet its intent and purpose to rid our communities of illegal black-market production and sale of marijuana when in fact it has made the problem exponentially worse by downgrading felony penalties and fines to a misdemeanor. Prop 64 promised millions of dollars in tax revenue and environmental protections through regulations, but the illegal cannabis farms generate no tax dollars and are destroying the environment through illegal grading, use of dangerous pesticides, rodenticides and water theft. The deserts' aquifers cannot continue to support the millions of gallons of water stolen annually to support this illegal cannabis cultivation. This illegal and menacing activity is growing rapidly throughout the state without any significant penalty.

We need your Help Governor! All Californians need your help! As I'm sure you're aware this scourge is negatively impacting not just the deserts but all of the rural areas up and down the state. **Governor Newsom please call a special session of the state legislation to address Prop 64 and its failure to fulfill its purpose and intent to eliminate the influence of the underground black market and violent drug cartels have on this industry.**

As citizens of California, we trust in your leadership and we are confident you will give this matter your immediate attention.

Sincerely,

Steve Bardwell, President
For Morongo Basin Conservation Association

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MBCA is a 501(c)3 non-profit, community based, all volunteer organization