

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—June 1, 2009

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**Power Line Fight Continues
Benefit Event Planned to Raise Funds**

The California Desert Coalition has entered its third year in its fight to stop the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power's (LADWP's) Green Path North transmission lines in the desert, and on June 13 CDC will hold its Stop the Towers Hootenanny benefit event to raise funds needed to ensure the strongest and most successful effort possible going forward.

"Who would have thought when CDC formed in March 2007 that the process would become so protracted?" queries Ruth Rieman, CDC Vice Chair. Rieman attributes part of the delay to CDC's successful efforts in garnering community and political support in opposition to the project's preferred route, which runs from Desert Hot Springs, through the Morongo Basin and west to Hesperia.

Recently, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) joined the long list of counties (San Bernardino and Riverside), cities and community organizations who have issued resolutions and letters of opposition. Citizens have added their voices in the many letters they have written to those responsible for the project, including Los Angeles Mayor Villaraigosa.

LADWP filed its Green Path North application with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in December 2006. The application schedule shows that LADWP anticipated a Notice of Intent (NOI) for the project would be issued by the Federal Register in March 2007. Over two years later, that NOI has not been issued. The public review process starts when the NOI is issued and public scoping meetings follow. This is the time when citizens can become fully involved in letting their opinions and rights be known.

"We cannot forget the continuing threat of the transmission lines to our communities and to our desert lands," says April Sall, CDC Chair, with respect to the lull in visibility of the project. Sall emphasizes the threats to desert views and property values, as well as that properties could be seized through eminent domain. She adds that there is no necessity to create a new energy corridor through pristine desert lands when an existing corridor along the I-10 Freeway could be used for Green Path North.

On May 19, the LADWP Board of Commissioners approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the transmission line project. This MOU, also signed by the BLM and the U.S. Forest Service, sets the groundwork for moving ahead with issuance of the NOI. CDC anticipates that the NOI will be issued this summer. Sall emphatically says, "The official process is about to begin, and it will be important for the community to become engaged in making comments during the periods provided."

To raise funds for legal and other expertise that will be needed once the NOI is issued, CDC will host its second annual Stop the Towers Hootenanny benefit event.

The Stop the Towers Hootenanny will be held at Pappy & Harriet's Palace in Pioneertown on June 13 from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. The Hootenanny will feature a buffet dinner, music, no host bar, and the opportunity to bid on silent auction items. Valuable items from local businesses, artists, and individuals have been pledged for the auction.

The silent auction will feature original art works, including "Out on a Limb" by sculptor Steven L. Rieman, gourd art created specifically for the auction by Lupe Molina, and an exquisite print of a palm oasis by Chuck Caplinger. Randy Polumbo, whose work was recently featured in The New York Times, donated a trio of whimsical bronze rabbits inspired by the classic treat "Peeps."

Tickets for the Hootenanny are \$50 per person, of which \$30 is tax deductible and will help CDC to stop LADWP from devastating our communities and desert. Tickets may be purchased online at CaDesertCo.org or purchases may be arranged by calling MJ at (760) 217-2130.

The California Desert Coalition is a nonpartisan advocacy group of The SummerTree Institute, a 501(c)(3) public charity. The CDC has organized to stop the proposed new LADWP Green Path North transmission corridor.

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