



Mojave Desert News

Since 1938



Main News Section

- TRAIN OF THOUGHT
- THIS WEEK'S NEWS
- LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
- GREAT WORLD
- HATS OFF
- SPORTS
- TRAVELS WITH TRACY
- AS THE PROP TURNS
- CALENDER
- CLASSIFIED
- CROSSROADS
- KIDS & SCHOOLS
- OBITUARIES
- CONTACT INFO

Kern demands role in A.V. water management plan

Doesn't want to be outvoted

QUOTE: "How can they buy property without seeing an EIR?" — Rosamond resident Matthew White

BY BILL DEAVER

ROSAMOND — A proposed plan to manage dwindling water supplies in the Antelope Valley and East Kern is fine, but Kern County residents and officials don't want their views ignored, a county official and Rosamond resident said here last week. Lorelei Oviatt, a top official with the Kern County Planning Department, emphasized Kern's interest in being treated as a full partner in the plan during a meeting to brief residents on the proposed Antelope Valley "Integrated Regional Water Management Plan."

Oviatt's comments followed concerns expressed by Matthew White, who lives near 60th St. West where the Antelope Valley/East Kern Water Agency plans to develop a water banking site.

Noting that AVEK board members voted last week to buy the land before receiving a draft environmental impact report (EIR), White wanted to know how the plan would be managed.

"How can they buy property without seeing an EIR?" he asked, noting that "Nobody has told us (residents of the area near the planned water banking project) anything." Melinda Barrett, an employee of the Los Angeles County Waterworks Districts, said members of the group developing the plan will begin addressing that issue at meetings this week.

Barrett emphasized that the planning



WATER PLAN — Melinda Barrett, an employee of the Los Angeles County Waterworks Districts, hold copies of the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan proposed for East Kern and the Antelope Valley. BILL DEAVER/Desert News

California City Real Estate
"YOUR HOME AND LAND SPECIALISTS"

ROSAMOND PROPERTIES
Antelope Valley
"HOME AND LAND SPECIALISTS"

Tierra del Sol Villages
20936 Village Parkway, California City Inc.
760.373.7800 * 866.453.3444

Tehachapi Area Real Estate
Land of 4 Seasons, freeway close to the Antelope Valley
Carol Miller
Directors Realty
861-972-6044

process has been based on hearing all views and achieving consensus.

“So far we have been successful in bringing the plan to achievement,” Barrett told White and the handful of people attending the briefing in the Rosamond Community Service District board room.

“We can’t have a complete plan without governance,” she said.

Helping water agencies and companies eligible for state and federal grants and loans is a major goal of those working on the plan, Barrett emphasized.

“The state prefers to work on a regional basis,” she explained.

It is also aimed at ensuring that enough water is available to handle the one million people expected to make the region their home by 2035.

“We need to double the water supply by then,” she said.

White said he is concerned that homes are being built in the Los Angeles County part of the region and using water that may not be available.

Kern concerns

Noting that Kern County representatives have been attending the IRWMP planning meetings, Oviatt said she and other Kern officials and residents could be outvoted on issues if voting was done strictly on population.

“We don’t want to be ‘outpopulated’ by other entities,” she said. “We need to be listened to. If voting is parceled-out based on population we will never have the population to have a voice!”

Oviatt said that while Kern has been represented at meetings planning the IRWMP it has not taken an active role because the county is in litigation with Los Angeles County over the sewage sludge it dumps in Kern.

Kern County Supervisor Don Maben said he supports Oviatt’s comments and will work with her to ensure that Kern County’s rights are protected.

Barrett said the public may comment on the plan before August 1. Another public meeting will be held in October after comments have been received, and the goal is to complete the plan and send it to state officials in December.

Claud Seal, engineer and assistant manager of the Rosamond Community Service District, said “We will bring additional water to the Antelope Valley.”

