19th KZGN News Talking Points Editorial

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By: Tom Wiknich

What’s up with this draft environmental impact report everyone is receiving?

It appears the water situation in the Indian Wells Valley is getting some movement by county government. Just last week, Al Huey and Robert Eierman interviewed Kern County Supervisor Mick Gleason on Ridgecrest Talk. During the interview, Mick discussed the current water situation, and he mentioned that the county is going to address the issue. I encourage all of you, if you missed the interview, to go KZGN TV Ridgecrest Talk on YouTube to watch it. So now many people in the valley are now getting letters about an environmental impact report with this topic.

The project is described: The plan is a proposal to address growing reductions of groundwater availability and ongoing military air navigation operations in the area. The plan is to answer 2 issues:

1. Balancing land uses to reduce future water consumption.
2. Implement compatible land uses for noise and safety for military air operations in the valley.

Well the actual environmental analysis report is a huge document that I have not had a chance to read and evaluate yet. The purpose of this editorial is to help get the word out about it to the residents of Ridgecrest and the Indian Wells Valley. This plan, if approved, may have a serious impact to the residents and businesses of the valley. There are potentially real questions concerning even the core belief of the constitutionality of some of recommendations.

I have to laugh about the actual letters sent out. To date, I have received six letters: five white copies and one blue copy. I guess they really want me to know about this. I should note that the letter does say, “If you get a blue copy, that the kern county staff has actually proposed changes to your properties land use. If you get a white copy, your property is not subject to land use changes….but….you may still be impacted by the impacts of this policy.”

At last night’s council meeting, several people spoke during public comment urging the council to take up this issue quickly for possible discussion, and maybe even the city taking an official position concerning the proposed new policy. The comment period right now states that comments must be received by the county within 45 days. The council was encouraged to put this on their next agenda to gather public input. As I watched the council meeting discussion, I think they will be putting this on their next agenda. There was also discussion about how the Kern County Planning Director wanted to address the council about it. But it was pointed out by the audience that her proposed date for presentation to the council is after the 45-day comment period. I believe the council will ask for an extension of the 45-day comment period, but still have it on the next council agenda.

Mayor Pro Tem also added that he would have this as a topic of discussion at the next city sponsored ad hoc water conservation committee meeting. The date for that should be February 19th, 5:00pm at city hall, this new water conservation proposal is very important.

Everyone in the valley needs to read it and get involved.

Your public officials, both city and county, need to know your thoughts about this issue. Don’t sit back and let everyone else decide the future of how you live. Again, this plan could affect every single one of us in the valley.

Read the plan, and provide your comments. Attend the upcoming city meetings to learn and discuss the plan.

In conclusion, as it stands now, I have not read the plan and cannot offer an intelligent opinion about it yet, but I will soon. I have already heard from some people that the proposed plan even has constitutional issues. I encourage everyone to attend the upcoming meetings: the next city council meeting is February 18th, 6pm at City Hall. Feb 19 city Water Committee meeting at 5pm at City Hall

But I do have one opinion I’d like to tell you. A while back I was getting gas at the triangle gas station. There was another man pumping gas and while the pump was running, he was trying to chat with another person in his car, but was getting interrupted by the landing of jets going over the station. He finally expressed his displeasure of the interruptions to the person in the car. When I heard this, I couldn’t resist saying, “Isn’t the sound of freedom a wonderful sound?” I love hearing the sounds of those jets going over. Don’t you? He just looked at me and shut up. Finally, again, I encourage everyone to get involved in this proposed water conservation plan.

And that’s today editorial. Tell me what you think! Whether you agree with me or not, I’d like to read your comments. I encourage your email comments. Please email them to info@kzgn.net.

This has been a KZGN Talking Points Editorial seen right here on KZGN TV. Join me next Tuesday for my next editorial. I’m Tom Wiknich, and that’s what I think!