

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504

<http://feinstein.senate.gov>

October 30, 2001

The Honorable Gale Norton
Secretary of the Interior
Department of the Interior
1849 C St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240-0001

Dear Secretary Norton:

I appreciate your response to the August 1 letter that Congressman Calvert, Congressman Lewis and I sent you asking about the Cadiz water project. You helped to clarify some important issues of concern.

I would like to take the opportunity to ask some additional questions about the monitoring plan that I hope you can also provide clarification on. I would also like to request an extension of the protest period that is set to expire on November 5 so that I and other interested parties have sufficient time to respond to any new information that you may be able to provide about the project.

1. It was not clear to me how much native groundwater the proponents of this project seek to take out over the 50-year life of the project. The Final EIS does not seem to indicate the target or projected quantity of native groundwater to be extracted. Can the BLM and the general public determine whether the project will make economic sense and the likelihood of environmental impacts without that information?
2. What are the proposed mitigation measures for the project's potential environmental impact? Is this consistent with what is required by NEPA?
3. At least one geologist that I have heard from claims that the recharge rate is a necessary piece of information to truly assess the likelihood and severity of impacts from this project on the aquifer and overlying lands. What leads you to believe that such information is not vital before

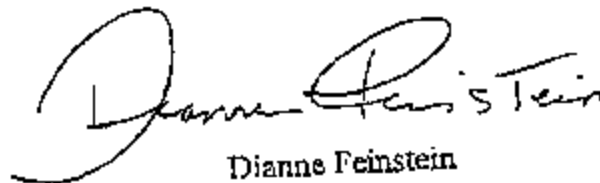
Senator Feinstein

beginning the project?

4. Given the scientific and public criticism of the monitoring system and the preponderance of evidence that the recharge rate is no more than 5,000 acre-feet/year, why doesn't BLM simply limit the project to Colorado River water storage and no more than 5,000 acre-feet/year of groundwater mining?

I appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dianne Feinstein". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator