

## **Intro or cover email to SCDC letter to SC Board**

Energy issues were discussed at length at the Sierra Club's Desert Committee (SCDC) meeting held on 8/9 and 8/10 at Grandview Campground in the White Mountains. On 8/9 Terry Frewin (SCDC Chair) read Carl Pope's brief reply to a letter prepared by SCDC's Energy Subcommittee. Consensus was reached on three points:

1. Mr. Pope's letter was dismissive and did not adequately address the concerns the letter raised.
2. The time had come to engage SC's National Board regarding Mr. Pope's misrepresentation of his personal opinion as Club position supporting remote, utility-scale alternative energy and new transmission lines.
3. Perhaps personal meetings with National Board members were also in order.

Discussion closed with the suggestion the matter needed to be further addressed by the Energy Subcommittee. A specific action plan was not spelled out thus the matter was reopened on 8/10. SC/AREP (Alliance for Responsible Energy Policy) members were directed to talk with Energy Subcommittee members who were present to plan further action. Brian Brown, John Hiatt, Jeffrey Morgan, Stan Smith and D'Anne Albers supported AREP/SC members drafting a letter to SC National Board members for the Energy Subcommittee's consideration.

## **Content of Letter to SC National Board**

August 17, 2008

Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_, Member  
Sierra Club National Board  
Residence or Business Address  
Town, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_:

For more than a century the Sierra Club has protected our wilderness. The Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization setting the standard for others to follow. Our Club is the Nation's leader in grassroots environmental litigation prosecuting the entire range of environmental issues, from local fights to national cases. Our influence and effectiveness is dependent upon the continued support of our members, activists, donors, and benefactors. A Sierra Club endorsement of development projects becomes a veritable green light for industrial expansion into undisturbed lands.

In past three years, especially since the passage of the 2005 Energy Policy Act, our climate has changed; big energy now enjoys a fast-tracking, greenwashing "Gold Rush" approach to desecrate millions of acres of undisturbed lands in the name of renewable energy. Laws that protect our environment are being

compromised, plans are a foot to blast, scrape and destroy critical habitats and squander precious water resources. Hundreds of utility-scale energy generation projects are proposed in remote regions without consideration to all viable alternatives as required by state and federal laws. Recent EIS findings note construction and maintenance of utility-scale projects emit more green house gasses than saved by so-called clean energy projects over 40 years. There is much more to share about the affects of what is being planned by big energy corporations. Hopefully this brief summary begs the question in your mind: What action is the Sierra Club taking to stop this unnecessary destruction.

Mr. Carl Pope, our Executive Director has become a cheerleader for the development of 20<sup>th</sup> century solar plants and wind farms and the building of 19<sup>th</sup> century power lines to bring so called clean energy to distant load centers. He has endorsed these ill-conceived policies in the name of our Club as if he is speaking for our 1.3 million members. Mr. Pope's posture with regard to national energy policy misrepresents our Club and is contrary to our mission to preserve intact ecosystems. Under Mr. Pope's direction the Sierra Club appears to be something other than a protector of our environment; as staff are endorsing superfluous energy policies that are unjustifiably disastrous to undisturbed open spaces so big energy companies maintain their strangle hold on consumers for profit. A simple look across the Atlantic Ocean enables Club members and activists to see the viability of locally generated energy that Mr. Pope's policy endorsements in our Club's name endeavors to prevent.

The members and activists of the California and Nevada Desert Committee of the Club believe it is time for our National Board to act. Mr. Pope must not be allowed to continue to set policy for our Club. Mr. Pope must not be allowed to continue to misrepresent and betray our Club's mission. Mr. Pope needs to be called to task and reminded of our mission. John Muir struggled with the question why do we have to fight our government to protect our lands? The Desert Committee's earnest wish is that our National Board will take the necessary action so our members and activists do not have to fight our staff to protect our mission. Thank you for your consideration and action is this critically important concern.

Respectfully requested,

SC member, title