



To: Scott Haggerty, Richard Valle, Wilma Chan, Nate Miley, Keith Carson, Scott Beyer, Frank Imhof, Derek Eddy, Sonia Urza, Andrew Young Damien Curry, Bruce Jensen, Albert Lopez, David Haubert
From: Friends of Springtown Preserve
Subject: Opposition to Aramis Solar Energy Project

The **Friends of Springtown Preserve** (a rare saline-alkali wetlands preserve in North Livermore) respectfully submit the following out of significant concerns about and opposition to the industrial-scale solar facility, the Aramis Project, in the North Livermore Valley. Since many other non-profit and community groups, government agencies, environmental/biological specialists, landowners and other individuals have effectively addressed so many egregious elements of this project, we will limit our comments to a few we feel are most critical.

1. **County Utility Solar Policy:** Alameda County first needs a completed, approved county solar facility policy before approving individual projects. It is inexcusable to move forward on approving these types of projects without a policy and, additionally, ignoring all requests for such a policy.
2. **Measure D:** County residents voted for implementing Measure D with the understanding that this action would protect the county's vanishing agricultural heritage, precious open space (including associated plants and animals), and apply the brakes to large-scale development that has scarred so much of other areas within the county. This several-hundred-acres project is not compatible with the intent of Measure D.
3. **Unique Ecosystem of the North Livermore Valley:** Quote from Stephen W. Edwards, who was the Director, Regional Parks Botanic Gardens at Tilden Regional Park for 30 years: "Livermore Valley with its unique floral remnants is one of the most threatened and rapidly disappearing natural regions in California." (The Four Seasons journal, December 2008)

The dry agriculture that has been in place for generations here is congruent with the special environmental needs related to sustaining what's left of the rare alkali sink wetlands. Looking beyond the requisite North Livermore Valley's soils, hydrology and climate, specific plants and animals perform an on-going tenuous dance to survive here. One significant example of this project's potentially negative impact on the unique ecosystem here involves pollinators. The Palmate Salty Bird's-Beak (*Chloropyron palmatum*), a Federal and California state endangered plant species, relies heavily on bumble bees (including the Western Bumble Bee, *Bombus occidentalis*, noted in the CDFW draft EIR response) for pollination. In the dry-ag fields of North Livermore, these bees find the necessary habitat for nesting underground, hibernating and having access to the plants they pollinate. There are many other listed plants and animals associated with the unique ecosystem found in North Livermore, including the Livermore Tarplant (*Deinandra bacigalupii*), an endangered species found only in North Livermore.

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Even though the solar panels do not leave a concrete footprint like a building would, the 'invasion' of thousands of these panels hovering above the ground will have some impact on ground-nesting and grassland-foraging animals, and the associated plants found here. This project has ignored California Department of Fish & Wildlife comments related to the lack of addressing permanent and temporary impacts to insects, birds and other wildlife here.

All the region's plants and animals of concern, mentioned previously by various ecologists, botanists, government agencies and so on, are specially interconnected, struggling to ensure the future of this ecologically unique area.

In conclusion, we implore the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to not approve this project.

Thank you.



Patti Cole
Friends of Springtown Preserve
Steering Committee
Livermore