

[DATE]

Mr. Eric Sklar  
President  
California Fish and Wildlife Commission  
P.O. Box 944209  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Via EMAIL to: [fgc@fgc.ca.gov](mailto:fgc@fgc.ca.gov) w/ Petition to List the Western Joshua Tree in the subject line

**Re: Petition to List the Western Joshua Tree**

Dear President Sklar,

I write in strong opposition to the petition submitted by the Center for Biological Diversity to list the western Joshua tree as a threatened species under the California Endangered Species Act. The Joshua tree already receives protections at the federal, state, and local levels. Listing the tree would add redundant protections that place a significant financial burden on private land owners while doing little to address the long-term threat to the species.

The California desert is comprised of rural, underserved communities that face economic challenges unlike other areas of our state. Listing the Joshua tree would effectively halt future development at a time when California is grappling with housing shortages and rising homelessness.

Even more troubling is the fact that the petition submitted by the Center for Biological Diversity fails to provide scientific evidence to substantiate a decline of the Joshua tree population. Instead, the petition predicts a future decline due to global climate change. Further, the proposed action conflicts with other public policy directives such as affordable housing mandates and wastewater discharge prohibitions. As you know, much of the western Joshua tree population resides on federally protected lands and state preserves, giving them the highest level of protection. Outside those jurisdictions, they are protected under state law through the California Desert Native Plants Act, which requires permitting for removal.

I urge you to consider the significant impacts this will have on rural desert communities and respectfully ask that you deny this petition.

Thank you,

NAME  
ADDRESS