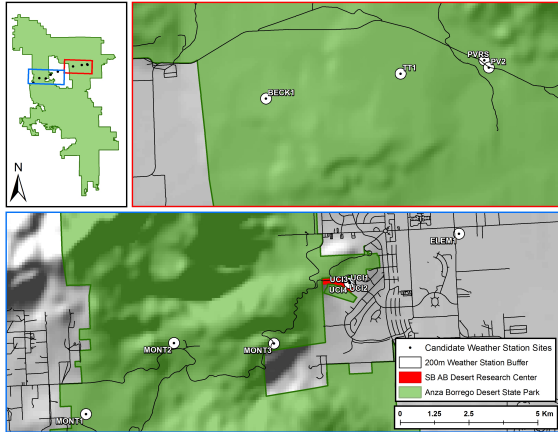


**Comment Request – Positive and Negative Impacts of Research Project on the Community**

**“An Ecohydrology Monitoring Array for Water Sustainability, Biological Diversity and Education at the Steele/Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center” – Travis E. Huxman, UC-Irvine**

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is evaluating a project to develop the research, education, and outreach capacity of the Steele/Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center (SBABDRC) administered by UC-Irvine. The funding of this project would establish seven remote automated weather stations (Fig. 1) to measure environmental characteristics over the diverse ecohydrology and landforms within the Borrego Springs Basin, including within Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, a cooperating partner in administering SBABDRC. These weather stations would document the physical environment within the major vegetation classifications associated with a rapid elevation change over a short distance in the basin (Fig. 2; Table 1) and UCI intends to place them with minimal local impact.

**Figure 1**



**Figure 1** – Candidate locations of the weather stations for the weather stations within the greater Borrego region. The sites have been selected to avoid historic and culturally sensitive locations.

**Figure 2**



**Figure 2** – An example weather station. The towers are less than 3.5 meters in height, contain equipment on side-arms, and can be painted to avoid contrasts with the landscape and reduce their view-shed impact.

**Table 1** – Abbreviations of candidate sites, including UTM coordinates and elevation.

Site	Abbrv	N83_UTME	N83_UTMN	Elevation
Palo Verde #2	PV2	577515.5907	3683592.436	901
Thimble Trail	TT1	574309.0272	3683474.985	1088
Beckman Wash Road	BECK1	569399.6928	3682730.312	949
Borrego Springs Elementary School	ELEM1	560882.1061	3679716.63	554
SBAB DRC	UCI1	556828.7736	3678152.235	771
SBAB DRC	UCI2	556854.8322	3678121.59	700
SBAB DRC	UCI3	556881.0707	3678060.148	690
SBAB DRC	UCI4	556855.1918	3678059.997	680
Jasper Trail	MONT1	547146.0425	3673604.19	4154
Pena Spring Road	MONT2	550421.3906	3676084.332	3393
Dry Canyon	MONT3	554046.0068	3675949.784	2003

These towers would provide an environmental sensing backbone to compliment research, education, and engagement, including: (1) research on climate change and the water-cycle, (2) citizen science focused on monitoring biodiversity, (3) undergraduate field courses focused on ecological processes influencing biological diversity, and (4) programs in teacher training / K-12 outreach and integrated learning.

UCI is working collaboratively with State Park Resource Managers, along with US / CA Fish & Wildlife to best place the stations to support resource management. NSF must complete an environmental review prior to making a funding decision. Both UCI and NSF are considering appropriate placement on these important landscapes and would appreciate feedback on potentially positive and negative impacts of their placement. We seek input from our community partners on candidate sites to understand this project’s impact. By July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014, please visit:

<http://ceb.bio.uci.edu/partners/borrego-stewardship-council/> and follow the link to a google form (or access it directly: [https://docs.google.com/a/uci.edu/forms/d/1qTZrdFSihXrpqrES5JMqqupfnDfCpQOTjOQq\\_-DtSrW/viewform](https://docs.google.com/a/uci.edu/forms/d/1qTZrdFSihXrpqrES5JMqqupfnDfCpQOTjOQq_-DtSrW/viewform)).

If you have additional questions or comments, please contact Travis Huxman - [thuxman@uci.edu](mailto:thuxman@uci.edu)