

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Joshua Tree Village Neighbors File Lawsuit to Halt Controversial Lovemore Ranch Development



Image courtesy of JTVN

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**JOSHUA TREE, CA** — On May 9, 2025, *Joshua Tree Village Neighbors* (JTVN), with guidance from the *Morongo Basin Conservation Association* (MBCA), filed a lawsuit against the County of San Bernardino, LoveMore Investments LLC, and developer Axel Cramer. The lawsuit challenges the County's recent approval of *Lovemore Ranch*, a 64 unit gated development planned for **61650 Alta Loma Drive** in the heart of Joshua Tree Village.

The lawsuit argues that the approval of the Lovemore Ranch Subdivision violates the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), particularly by failing to provide a complete and consistent description of the development. —most notably a proposed wastewater treatment facility with no design plans, environmental analysis, or required permits. A critical hydrology report identifying flood risks was released only after public hearings, and its recommendations were not included in the approved plans.

In addition, local residents were denied proper notice and participation, key infrastructure was approved without the necessary Conditional Use Permits, and the County of San Bernardino failed to perform a legally required Traffic Impact Study, disregarding the County's own Transportation Guidelines. The project also threatens to destroy native habitat and eliminate nearly all natural open space on the site. Rather than conducting a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR), San Bernardino County officials approved the project through a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), despite substantial evidence of potential harm brought before the San Bernardino County Supervisors appeal hearing on April 8, 2025.

The lawsuit also notes that throughout the approval process San Bernardino County failed to alert residents of the Planning Commission's meetings and did not require the developer to notify surrounding residents, effectively silencing community input on the project.

JTVN is asking the San Bernardino Superior Court to set aside the County's approval of Lovemore Ranch, order compliance with CEQA and County development codes, and block construction until proper review and permitting occur.

"This project tears at the fabric of Joshua Tree Village. Lovemore Ranch flouts environmental protection, goes against the General Plan, circumvents and ignores the voices of the community, and puts the town at risk" - *Joshua Tree Village Neighbors*

## **Core Legal and Environmental Concerns**

1. The project violates the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) by failing to provide a complete and consistent description of the development—particularly regarding a planned wastewater treatment facility that lacks design details, impact analysis, or required permits. CEQA requires that significant environmental impacts be properly studied and mitigated before approval. Instead, the County approved the project using a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) rather than conducting a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR).
2. Missing and Inaccurate Information:  
A critical hydrology report, identifying increased stormwater discharge, was released *after* public hearings. Its recommended flood mitigation features were never incorporated into approved plans.
3. Public Notice and Participation Failures:  
Local residents were not properly notified of hearings. Promised public comment venues were not made accessible, and several written comments were omitted from the record.
4. Improper Permit Approval:  
The County treated tract map approval as sufficient to greenlight the entire development, including infrastructure that requires separate Conditional Use Permits under the County Code.
5. Traffic Study Violations:  
Despite the scale of the development, the County refused to perform a required Traffic Impact Study, contradicting evidence from the ITE Trip Generation Manual.
6. Destruction of Native Habitat:  
The project would clear native vegetation and eliminate nearly all natural open space, undermining local conservation priorities.

## **About Joshua Tree Village Neighbors**

Joshua Tree Village Neighbors (JTVN) is a grassroots coalition of Joshua Tree residents dedicated to preserving the integrity of the high desert and protecting the rural character of their community. JTVN believes that informed, organized local voices must shape the region's future. The group advocates for planning decisions that uphold environmental law, address the realities of a fragile desert ecosystem, and reflect the will of the people. Through community gatherings, public education, and vigilant oversight of local government actions, JTVN works to strengthen civic participation and ensure that Joshua Tree remains a place where nature and community thrive in harmony.

## Join the Effort

Joshua Tree Village Neighbors (JTVN) is seeking financial and volunteer support to continue this legal fight and is working with an established 501c3. All donations are now tax deductible. They are a grassroots organization fighting big development and need your help.

- Donate: [GoFundMe link](#)
- Volunteer, sign up for the newsletter: [www.stoplovemoreranch.com](http://www.stoplovemoreranch.com)

## Press Inquiries

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A copy of the legal filing is available [HERE](#) or by searching the Superior Court of California, County of San Bernardino website [HERE](#) using case number **CIVSB2513295**. Drone footage and renderings of the proposed project, along with JTVN's appeal presentation, are available upon request.



Joshua Tree Village Neighbors (JTVN) is a fiscally sponsored project of MarinArts, a California nonprofit corporation exempt from federal tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service #47-2571336.

**JOSHUA TREE VILLAGE NEIGHBORS - [INFO@STOPLOVEMOREREANCH.COM](mailto:info@stoplovemoreranch.com)**