

**REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF SCOPING MEETING  
RE: SDG&E'S PROPOSED SUNRISE POWERLINK PROJECT  
CPUC/BLM SECOND ROUND OF SCOPING MEETINGS  
FOR PREPARATION OF DRAFT EIR/EIS**

Held 2:30 p.m. February 8, 2007  
At Borrego Springs, California

Reported by:  
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**STAFF PRESENTATION**

Lewis Michaelson - Katz & Associates, Public Facilitator  
Billie Blanchard - California Public Utilities Commission  
Susan Lee - Aspen Environmental Group  
Lynda Kastoll - Bureau of Land Management

Presentation: pages 3 to 15  
Public Comments begin on page 15

**PUBLIC COMMENTS, BY SPEAKER**

Mr. Hussey.....	14
Ms. Lindsay.....	15
Mr. Mouton.....	16
Mr. Bahar.....	16
Ms. Devoe.....	17
Mr. Criss.....	17
Mr. Collins.....	18
Mr. Garmon.....	18
Ms. Paul.....	19
Dr. Rickard.....	20-21
Mr. Tam.....	22
Mr. Price.....	22
Mr. Sharman.....	23
Ms. Backus.....	23
Mr. Pustinger.....	24
Ms. Withers.....	25
Mr. Stokes.....	25
Mr. Barelmann.....	26
Mr. Hogue.....	27
Ms. Matson.....	27
Ms. Browne.....	28
Ms. Wosk.....	29
Mr. Caragozian.....	29
Ms. Feathers.....	30
Ms. Fuller.....	31
Mr. S. Webb.....	31
Mr. C. Webb.....	32
Mr. Vogel.....	33-34
Ms. Morrow.....	34
Mr. McGregor.....	35
Ms. Rubin.....	36
Ms. Feldman.....	36
Mr. Hogan.....	37
Mr. Maxwell.....	38
Mr. Trafecanty.....	38

## STAFF PRESENTATION

MR. MICHAELSON: Good afternoon. We're ready to get started. My name is Lewis Michaelson, and I work for a firm called Katz & Associates. We're part of the team, and, specifically, we were asked to help put on and support all of the scoping meetings. I was the moderator for the first round of scoping that we had in October when we were here and have been for this series.

As you probably know, we went to five locations and held seven meetings back in October, and now we have eight meetings over five days this time around, and we've gone to a few places this time that we didn't last time, including Boulevard and Alpine and also up to Temecula.

Largely that's because, as you see on this chart here — and if you have difficulty seeing it for whatever reason, hopefully you got a copy of it when you came in. If it's easier for you to follow along on the charts with that, please feel free to do that.

This is the second round, and this is actually a very different round from the first round. I recognize many of your faces from October. During the first round, we were really focused on looking at the proposed project and your input and your feedback on those, and we got a lot of really great feedback, primarily in two areas, one, concerns about potential environmental impacts from the proposed action but also a lot of suggestions through the scoping process on potential alternatives to the proposed project.

In fact, those suggestions were so robust, and there was such an evolution of potential alternatives that occurred since October that it was requested by some of the stakeholders and agreed to by the California Public Utilities Commission/Bureau of Land Management that — although, it's not required, and it's kind of unusual — it made sense to go out and do a second round of scoping, which is why we're out this week doing that.

But because of that, this scoping process has a different focus. Again, all of the types of environmental impacts that were raised during the first round, from fire concerns to the Anza-Borrego State Park and the wilderness and all of the different species that were mentioned, from butterflies to lizards to big horn sheep — that has all already been taken into account. In fact, those were used to guide looking for alternatives that might lessen the impacts to those kinds of things.

So as we're here now — I saw a lot of you at the boards asking a lot of good questions. You also should have a second document that was either mailed to you, because you're already on our mailing list, or handed to you when you came in which goes through all of the different alternatives that are being recommended for additions and for inclusion in the analysis.

So that's really the purpose of coming out again this week, because the two agencies would love to get your input on those alternatives. So I just wanted to make that clear, that there really is a very different focus from this set to the last set.

We've already done six of these meetings. A few of the things that probably deserve clarification, because people tended to get this a little bit confused — many people asked questions about “What have you concluded about this impact?” or “What have you concluded about that impact?”

That would presume that they had already done the analysis and the document, which they haven't. This is another round of scoping, which means we're still proceeding the development of the

Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement when that kind of deeper analysis and conclusions will be made, so that's a stage yet to come.

With that, let's go on. I'm going to speak just briefly about what we'd like to get from you today. Then Billie Blanchard, representing the California Public Utilities Commission seated at the far end of this table from me, is going to talk about the process that they go through as well as the schedule because that's changed a little bit since you were here in October.

Lynda Kastoll will then talk about BLM's piece of the review that's taking place of the application of SDG&E.

Then Susan Lee represents the Aspen Environmental Group, and they're the group that was hired to help these two agencies prepare the Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement. She's going to focus — although we have in your handout about all of the potential impacts that are looked at for all of the links throughout, she is going to focus primarily on the ones she thinks would be of interest to this community.

Then Billie will come back briefly just to explain the process used to add or subtract alternatives to this point in the process, and, finally, Susan will talk about specifically which ones have been eliminated or retained.

Now, it will be important to pay attention to that because you may have concerns, and it's good to know that, but you may also be relieved to know the ones you were concerned about are being recommended for elimination. So that would be important information to have.

Then we get to the most important part, which is your opportunity to comment orally, and I have a very thick stack of speaker slips here, so we want to make sure we get there and have plenty of time to do that.

So the purpose is to inform you and the responsible agencies about the alternatives that are proposed for full analysis in the draft of the EIS/EIR that is yet to be prepared, update you on the schedule, and then solicit your input regarding, particularly, the new alternatives, and then there will be a second alternatives scoping report prepared since we've done this second round of scoping.

One other point that seems to get lost no matter how many times I say it is that San Diego Gas & Electric is not seated up here, and they are not an official part of this proceeding. I know that may sound really simple, but we end up, invariably, with people talking to the panel as if they're San Diego Gas & Electric and asking them questions and telling them things.

So I just want to be clear who's at the table right now, which is California Public Utilities Commission, the Bureau of Land Management, and their consultant for the EIR/EIS.

Also I had a number of questions before we started about which commissioners are here. This is not a commission-level meeting. These are not commissioners. These are staff people who are charged with this part of the process, which is the preparation of EIR/EIS, so I just wanted to make that clear as well.

With that, I'm going to hand it over to Billie to talk about the CPUC process and schedule.

MS. BLANCHARD: There are two review processes for the SDG&E application. One is the general proceeding and the environmental review, and those are both in a parallel process at this time.

The general proceeding for the CPCN is being led by the assigned commissioner Dian Grueneich and the administrative law judge Steve Weissman.

The scope of the general proceeding for the CPCN is defined by the Public Utilities Code, and there's three major things determining, at first, the need for the project, also considering community values, recreational, historic, esthetic values, and the review of the environmental impacts.

Just a few highlights on the CPUC general proceeding, the process, and the milestones. We've already had a couple of prehearing conferences that took place this past fall. The judge has prepared the scoping memo for the proceeding outlining the issues and the schedule. In January of 2007, there were some slight changes to that schedule.

Testimony has begun to be exchanged, beginning in January of 2007, and that will continue on down into the summer time frame. Evidentiary hearings are going to begin in July of 2007 for the Phase 1 and Phase 2 process. ALJ's proposed decision is scheduled to be out in December of 2007 with a CPUC decision in January of 2008.

The last time that we were out here, we did not have a real defined schedule for the EIR/EIS at that time. Now we do. We had a first round of scoping in the fall. We had a scoping report that was made available to the public at that time. We are now into a second round of scoping, specifically for alternatives, and the scoping period is from January 23rd to February 24th.

Again, we'll have a second scoping report on this, which will be in March of 2007. The draft EIR/EIS is proposed to be released July 13th, 2007. There will be a 90-day comment period on the draft EIR/EIS starting in July to October 2007. The final is scheduled to be out by November 20th, 2007.

Now I'll turn this over to Lynda Kastoll of BLM.

MS. KASTOLL: Good afternoon. Can you hear me all right?

BLM's involvement in this project began in November 2005 when SDG&E submitted a right-of-way application to us to cross BLM for the Sunrise Powerlink Project.

If you look at your Figure 1 in the notices that you received, you can see that you can't get out of Imperial Valley without crossing BLM lands regardless of which direction you go.

The proposed action is going to cross approximately 31 miles of BLM lands in Imperial County, and way over in the Ramona area, it will cross about a 1.3-mile section.

In addition, that portion, that right-of-way, that 69-kV line that runs through Anza-Borrego, is actually contained in the federal reserve, a 100-foot linear reserve that BLM has managed since 1955. That right-of-way has recently expired, and BLM is reviewing our continued responsibility on that right-of-way.

BLM, in Imperial County, will also be considering a plan amendment to our Desert Plan since the proposed action deviates from any of our existing utility corridors.

BLM is also responsible for the coordination with all other federal agencies — interested federal agencies, such as the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Defense, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Cleveland National Forest, and any interested Native American tribes that maybe have an interest in this project.

The EIS/EIR will be used by BLM to make our decisions as to whether or not to amend our plan and whether or not to issue a right-of-way to San Diego Gas & Electric, and that decision is expected to be issued in January of 2008.

Susan?

MS. LEE: Thank you.

I'm going to briefly describe the proposed project itself because it is in comparison to the proposed project that we define alternatives. So if you will look, again, at Figure 1, which is the map that Lynda referred you to — and this is in the back of the notice package — you'll see on this figure that there is a long line starting in the lower right-hand corner that is blue for about the right-hand half of the page and red on the left-hand half of the page.

The right-hand portion that is blue is the 500-kilovolt portion, the high-voltage line from Imperial Valley Substation up through Imperial County and entering Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.

At the point just west of the San Felipe Substation, which is marked on this map, the 500-kV portion follows through the park generally parallel to the existing 69-kV wood pole line that you've seen if you've driven down Highway 78.

The line continues through Anza-Borrego up Grapevine Canyon, again, following that wood pole line out of Anza-Borrego, up into northern San Diego County at which point there would be a major substation called the Central East Substation, at which point the 230-kV line would be converted from the 500 that enters from the east. So the red line going all the way from the Central East Substation out to the coast is a 230-kilovolt line, a double-circuit line.

The other components of this project besides the transmission line include the substation, which I just mentioned, which would be a very large substation. Again, once it's all graded and built out, we're talking about 40 acres, but there's about 100 acres of grading required in order to get there.

In addition, there are a couple of other system upgrades. The dark blue line that you can see over towards San Diego right below the Sycamore Canyon Substation is a segment of line that would need to be reconducted, which means you put new wires on existing poles. There are a couple of substations that would be modified over toward the coast.

In addition to that, there's a new component of the project that we're now adding to the EIR/EIS analysis called "Future Phases." This is based on information we've gotten from SDG&E about what could be built and what would be reasonably foreseeable to be built out of a major substation like the Central East Substation.

This is not the kind of substation where you would build just one line. There would much more likely be two additional double-circuit 230-kV lines going to the west outside of that substation, so we're trying to identify the most likely routes for that.

These are not part of the action that would be approved at this time. Any action would have to be evaluated in a separate environmental document and a separate application by SDG&E, but we want to include the information, again, because it's foreseeable, and it's a disclosure issue that we want to make sure the public and the decision makers are aware of.

I'm going to quickly talk through the major impacts of the proposed project. This is, again, because the impacts of the project is how we decide where to look for alternatives. I'll skip over pretty quickly Imperial Valley. The major issues, just so you know, in Imperial Valley are impacts on agricultural land, some endangered species issues related to the flat-tailed horned lizard. Given where we are today, really the main thing we wanted to talk about is the impacts in Anza-Borrego, and these are things that I think we heard from every one of you when we were here in October.

The major issue — and I know this is why many of you are here today — is impacts on state-designated wilderness. The project itself would, in fact, be located, in one place, on wilderness land, and it would require an expansion of the existing right-of-way into wilderness land in other areas.

The effects on wilderness — those are the direct effects on wilderness. There are, of course, indirect effects on wilderness because if you're in the wilderness, you're going to be seeing this 500-kV line. You'll be hearing it, in terms of corona noise.

So that affects wilderness, recreational impacts, biological impacts because every one of these towers requires a certain amount of disturbance when it's built. There are very valuable cultural resources, as I'm sure you know, up in Grapevine Canyon.

These are major impacts. There are other smaller ones, but these are the ones that we have identified that are driving the way we're looking at alternatives. I'll skip through the other links.

We have also identified substation links and impacts to the central area, which is a very — if you drove out from San Diego today, you probably drove through there — a very highly scenic area with lots of agricultural lands.

Further west of there, the land becomes much more developed, so the impacts are much more heavy on residential land uses in terms of either corona noise or construction impacts.

I will now turn back to Billie to talk about the alternatives process.

MS. BLANCHARD: Thank you.

Just quickly, here again, the EIR/EIS process — where we are in that process is that we're doing now a second round of scoping, and we are very heavily involved, as you all know, in the screening of alternatives.

We utilize the CEQA/NEPA criteria for screening alternatives in developing the reasonable range of alternatives that you have reviewed in the notice. I will just highlight that, but there's more detail on those criteria on Pages 6 through 9 of your notice.

There are basically three main items — three main criteria for screening of alternatives. One is the consistency with most or all of the project objectives. We utilize the three main objectives of liability, access to renewables, and economic benefits.

And then, two, the ability to reduce or avoid significant impacts of the proposed project which can be and are identified through our team analysis, agency consultations that we've done, applicant's PEA, data requests, and scoping comments.

Third is feasibility. Can it be technically built? Is it technically feasible, regulatorily feasible? Can it be permitted? Legal feasibility: Can it be allowed?

The sources of the alternatives that we've included are alternatives suggested during the scoping comments, which we receive many, a reconsideration of SDG&E's PEA alternatives and also reconsideration of alternatives that were eliminated in the SDG&E PEA document, alternatives from the CPUC proceeding filings, and the ISO alternative process.

The types of alternatives that were considered is link-and-route segment alternatives. We looked at substation alternatives, Southwest Powerlink alternatives. We have full route alternatives and system alternatives, also in-basin generation and other non-wires alternatives.

Now I'll turn it back over to Susan, and she's going to go into more details about those alternatives.

MS. LEE: Thank you.

This is a place where you're probably going to want to look at those maps again because it's a little hard to describe these alternatives without having those maps right in front of you.

If you will first look at Figure 2, I'm not going to talk much about the Imperial Valley Alternative, but I want to point out one thing that's especially clear on this map.

The bright yellow lines that you see on Figure 2 — and this carries through all of the maps that we have here. The yellow lines show alternatives that we have recommended be eliminated from EIR/EIS for detailed analysis. So every time on these maps you see a yellow line, that's a line that we don't believe should be carried forward, generally based on the fact that it would have more impacts on the proposed project or wouldn't successfully eliminate a significant impact to the proposed project.

So let's talk about Anza-Borrego. If you look at Figure 3 — and this is one that's a little confusing, I know, because we looked at many, many options of following through either the proposed route of Highway 78 through Anza-Borrego — so we ended up with lots and lots of lines next to each other.

Let me first describe the lower part of this slide, which is the alternatives that were eliminated. Again, on this map, the yellow lines are the ones that are eliminated, so if you live in Borrego Springs or up along Ranchita or Tubb Canyon, along Highway 78, and on the part of S-2 that is south of Highway 78, these are alternatives that were suggested in various places, either by SDG&E or things that we thought to look at that might in some way reduce impacts that we are now recommending be eliminated from consideration in the EIR/EIS.

The two alternatives that we're recommending be retained for analysis through Anza-Borrego — the first one is called the Partial Underground Alternative, and we really wanted to retain an entirely underground alternative through the park. That was our goal when we started this project because, clearly, the visibility of this transmission line through the park was one of the very major concerns.

We were almost entirely successful at that. You'll see if you follow — and I know it's a little hard to see on this map. You can see it better on the bigger map in the back. There's a pink and white line that starts at the San Felipe Substation on the far right-hand side. In this alternative, the San Felipe Substation would be converted to a much larger substation eliminating the need for the Central East Substation in the San Felipe area, so this would become the substation where the 500 kV would convert to 230 kV. That allows the underground alternative to be feasible.

So the underground alternative, starting at the right-hand side at San Felipe, would follow the proposed route along Old King Springs Road underground, so it would be under the dirt road that's there now. It would enter Highway 78 east of the Narrows Substation and stay entirely within the roadway on Highway 78, all the way down to the point where you see a little triangle about a mile east of the intersection of Highway S-2 and 78.

This is the point where we had some geologic obstacles. There is a fault, the Earthquake Valley Fault that runs parallel to Highway S-2. It's a state-designated Alquist-Priolo zone fault, which means it is a recognized active fault.

We are still working with our engineers, but it is a very difficult thing to underground a route across an active fault, so at this point, we're looking at a one-mile overhead segment, unfortunately, within wilderness because it is right next to the road.

As I said, we're going to keep working with our engineers to see if there is any kind of engineering mitigation, and we've worked with this before, but crossing an active fault is a real challenge with an underground line.

The route would then go underground again when you get to the other side of the fault. Right at S-2, it would have an underground segment of about three miles and then would require again an overhead segment again for the upper half of Highway S-2 because, again, the Earthquake Valley Fault actually follows S-2 all the way up to the intersection at the top of the road.

So that alternative, at this point, is a combination of an overhead/underground alternative, but it's underground almost entirely through the park.

The second alternative is what is called the 100-foot Right-of-Way Alternative, and I think Lynda mentioned earlier that the existing right-of-way that has been granted by BLM to SDG&E is 100-feet wide.

SDG&E's proposal is a 150-foot right-of-way, and that is more traditional. In fact, 150 feet is somewhat narrow for a 500-kV line. Those are often a 200-foot right-of-way, but they wanted to constrain it.

It was suggested that if we look at a 100-foot right-of-way following the existing wood poles all the way up, that would eliminate direct impacts to wilderness, so the poles would not move out of the existing right-of-way. They would follow the existing 69 kV all the way up through the park.

It's a little bit different route, and we have in the back — actually, if you want to take time, we have some very detailed maps that show where every tower would differ under the proposed scenario as opposed to the 100-foot right-of-way scenario because, as you may know, through the middle of Highway 78, SDG&E has proposed moving the route a little bit north of Highway 78 rather than

crossing the road several times, which the wood pole lines do. So we're happy to show you that in more detail.

Again, that route would eliminate direct impacts to wilderness. Clearly, it would not eliminate any indirect impacts to wilderness. In fact, the towers would be taller than the proposed route because of the way they would have to move and follow the right-of-way.

So those are the alternatives we have remaining on the table in Anza-Borrego. The things that I think are more important — and let's jump ahead to the slide that talks about Southwest Powerlink Alternatives. If you'll go to Figure 8 in your map set, this is another figure that has lots and lots of colored lines on it.

As many of you know, when we started this process, one of the first things we were asked to do by Commissioner Grueneich, who is the assigned commissioner of the Public Utilities Commission, is to look at alternatives that avoid Anza-Borrego.

If you know the park — and I know all of you know this park very well — it extends southward almost all the way to the Mexican border but not all the way.

So we were looking at alternatives that follow a portion of the Southwest Powerlink, which is the 500-kV line that leaves the Imperial Valley Substation and heads basically due west.

So we have looked at — because we had many suggestions — in fact, many of them here, we looked, for example, at Interstate 8 because it is a major east/west corridor and that we look at using the Southwest Powerlink itself as an east/west corridor.

We have identified four potential alternatives that follow different lengths of the Southwest Powerlink. Again, if you look at this map, the yellow lines are the ones that are not being considered. The colored lines are the ones that still are being considered by us.

If you start with the pink one, that's the one we're calling the Interstate 8 Alternative. It turns off the Southwest Powerlink in the area of Jacumba, just, in fact, due south of the southern end of Anza-Borrego and heads up towards Boulevard along — and then follows Interstate 10 for miles and miles all the way until you get to Alpine.

At the point of Alpine, which is right next to the Viejas reservation, there are two choices. The route could turn north through the Cleveland National Forest following that blue line that says D, or it could convert to a 230-kV line and go underground through Alpine/Boulevard and connect to the purple line that's labeled WF, which is our West of Forest Alternative.

So that's — the first one is Interstate 8. The second route is called the BCD Alternative, and that's the one that's shown in here in brown. Again, it starts down by Jacumba due south of Anza-Borrego, goes up and crosses Interstate 8, and then goes north through BLM land — in fact, it's, at this point, located in an area of critical environmental concern, and we're looking at whether we can move it around in there to get it out of that sensitive area — and then would turn due west, again heading into the Cleveland National Forest, along the freeway and, again, connecting with this Route D that heads up through the Cleveland National Forest and the Boulder Creek area.

So those are the two alternatives that turn off the Southwest Powerlink after about 36 miles.

There are two other alternatives that would turn off the Southwest Powerlink after about 52 miles. They both start with a blue line, where it says D-zero, just south of the area of Campo. The D route follows, partially, an existing SDG&E transmission corridor, turns north, following the blue line all the way north up to the Santa Ysabel area, and it would end at a new substation called the Central South Substation Alternative, which is south of the intersection of Highways 78 and 79 in Santa Ysabel.

The fourth Southwest Powerlink alternative is the one shown on here in purple with the labels WF on it, and that is because it is the West of Forest Alternative. Many people suggested to us during scoping that we should look at alternatives that are not on so much protected land. So rather than use the national forest or use the state park, look at alternatives that don't affect so much protected land. This is an alternative that goes almost entirely west of the Cleveland National Forest. It is almost entirely on private land, so, needless to say, it has a very different set of impacts.

We were in Alpine last night, and we had a roomful of about this many people that had concerns about this route. But without being able to compare the impacts one to the other, we won't know how they compare, so it's something we're considering as an important alternative to carry forward.

Let's now move on to the system alternatives. If you flip ahead to Figure 10, Figure 10 shows Transmission System Alternatives, and this is another category of alternatives that would completely avoid Anza-Borrego. These are different ways that the transmission system, in a regional way, could be improved allowing meeting of the three objectives that Billie mentioned earlier, renewable power — importing renewable power into San Diego, improving reliability, and reducing the cost of electricity.

We looked at, as you can see on this map, a very large number of system alternatives. Many of these are routes that had been studied in previous reports. We just wanted to take a look and see if any of these routes had the potential of meeting those project objectives. We basically came up with three of them that we thought had some potential, and they're the first three listed on this slide.

The first is called LEAPS Project. Many of you have probably heard of this. That's the Lake Elsinore Advanced Pump Storage Project. This project is essentially a hydroelectric generation project, but a major component of it is about a 30-mile, 500-kV transmission line that runs north/south, essentially connecting the Southern California Edison and the San Diego Gas & Electric system grids, so it does have a lot of system benefits for the SDG&E region.

This project right now is being modeled for its economic and transmission system benefits by the California Independent System Operators, so we can see, in fact, how it would work with these transmission grids, and that is also the case for the other two alternatives that are listed here.

The second one is called Mexico Light. This, in fact, is a very small alternative. It would be a very short — on the order of thousands of feet — transmission upgrade actually in Mexico, but it would allow an improvement to the reliability of the system importing into San Diego, which could be used in combination with other alternatives we're looking at, and that's why we're retaining it as a potential combination alternative.

The last one is called Path 44 Upgrades. Path 44 this is all electric transmission regional definitions. Path 44 actually connects Southern California Edison with the SDG&E system. The upgrades in this case would actually occur in the Edison system in Orange County but would allow

better imported power into SDG&E, so this is another one that's being studied by the transmission planners.

The last big category of alternatives — this is another one we heard from many, many people that were important to be looked at. And, again, these are ones we are recommending for retention in the EIR — are a series of non-wires alternatives.

This includes renewable power. And what we're looking at in this one is not renewable power from Imperial Valley but renewable power from the San Diego County region, a combination of solar, wind, biomass, biogas, and we're defining a list of these projects that would allow meeting those three objectives I mentioned earlier.

We're also looking at two other so-called resource bundles that would add to that renewable collection, also the addition of the South Bay Power Plant as an in-basin generation that provides a huge amount of reliability.

The second resource bundle would add to those things, adding to renewables and to South Bay, a renewable energy certificate program that's actually being developed within the state government right now which would allow SDG&E to purchase credits for renewable energy without having to build a transmission line to get it.

The final category on non-wires alternatives that we have on the table is something called In-Area Generation Plus Transmission Upgrades. This is one that we're keeping available to us because we are wondering as we get the transmission study results back whether something like South Bay Power Plant might require some smaller transmission upgrades, possibly in the Imperial Valley. That would beef up the transmission system in a way that would provide both renewables and reliability and the ability to reduce cost, so that one is still in the package as well.

Then, one other thing, of course — we didn't put it on the slide, but because it's required by law, the no-project and no-action alternatives will, of course, be analyzed in the EIR/EIS because the decision makers in this case always have the option of denying approval for the project either because the impacts are too great or because they do not find there is a need.

MR. MICHAELSON: Okay. Again, this is the second round, and in terms of the types of comments that you could make that would have the most impact at this stage in the process — this panel is here because they want to be here. They chose to come out here. We're at a stage where the types of input that you can provide are about whether you agree or disagree with the alternatives that have been proposed either for addition or elimination or additional suggestions for modifications to those alternatives or even yet new alternatives that have not been mentioned or considered. That's the stage that we're in.

In terms of having done the first round of scoping where we heard what people are concerned about about the proposed project, where they heard in detail the types of environmental impacts that people are concerned — as a matter of fact, if you look in this notice — I think it's on Page 26 and -7, Attachment A — there is a full list of the types of environmental impacts that will be looked at, that they are going to look at.

So I'm just trying to give you a clue that — in the three minutes that you're going to have, these are the types of comments that would have the most impact.

We also know, despite the number of people who have signed up to speak, the vast majority of Americans are afraid of public speaking. They would rather do almost anything else. That's why it's important for you to know that there's another very meaningful and effective way to provide your comments, and that's in writing.

They're given the same weight and consideration as oral comments that are offered here today. So if you'd like to take advantage of that, we have the written comment sheets that were available when you came in. If you want to save yourself some postage, you can fill those out and hand them in.

Or if you choose to mail them in, please have them postmarked by February 24th. That's the close of this scoping comment period. The address is on the written comment sheet as far as who you can send it to.

There is a lot of information out there. The official source of information on this process can be found at this particular website. Again, that's on the handout that you got, so you don't have to copy this down.

If for whatever reason, you don't have access to that, there are 29 area libraries and offices that have hardcopy project information that you can avail yourself of.

If after this meeting you have additional questions or clarifications, that's the e-mail address and the project information line. Again, that's in your handout so that you can stay involved and stay abreast.

Hopefully if you were not already on the mailing list and receiving the notification, you provided us with your address when you registered. That means you'll be informed of all the progress and developments and also be told when the draft document will be available and how you can avail yourself of a copy of that.

The process we've used at all of these meetings is that each of you will have three minutes to speak. I have a very sophisticated way of indicating times, which is: When you've spoken for two minutes and you have one minute left, you'll see me put up my index finger like this. That means you have one minute left, so you can find a comfortable place to wrap up your comments.

Then when your three minutes are up, I'll go ahead and put my closed hand up like that indicating that it's time to move on to our next speaker.

We're going to have to be pretty efficient about this because we have a large number of people. As many of you probably know, there is another meeting to be held in the same room directly following this. So we do have sort of a hard time frame by which we need to try to finish so that we can help them set up for theirs.

I think this meeting said it would go until 4:00. We talked to State Parks, and I think they're okay with us staying until 4:30. So if we have more commenters and we need to bleed over 4:00 o'clock, we will do that. We want to make sure we take everybody.

**With that in mind, this is a large room. It takes awhile to get up to the podium. I'll read several names so you'll know where you're coming up in**

**the rotation. Hopefully, that way you can be ready to come up here as soon as your name is called. PUBLIC COMMENT**

The first names I have here are Mike Hussey, Diana Lindsay, Ray Mouton — and I apologize in advance if I mispronounce anyone's names — Lou Bahar, Violet Devoe, and Nick Criss.

So, Mr. Hussey, you're our first.

I'll also mention while he's coming up here that we have a court reporter seated here to my left. She is making a verbatim transcript of everything that you say so that we have a good record of it. She's really fast, but she's not lightening fast. Okay?

So if you're reading from a prepared remark and you get on a real roll, she's going to miss it, so you have to pace yourself just slightly, and if they're written, if you don't finish the whole comment, you can still hand it in, and we'll get everything that you had intended to say.

So you may see me occasionally indicate that you may need to slow down a little bit if it's going faster than her fingers will go.

MR. HUSSEY: I won't take long. Okay. You cut out almost everything I wanted to say.

MR. MICHAELSON: Just give us your name when you start.

MR. HUSSEY: Mike Hussey.

I just wanted to say that on the alternatives, none of it is any good. It shouldn't be here. The main thing I want to complain about this time is the city of Ocotillo Wells — or the town, as you have it — it's going to kill it. They're going to put a dirt road around it. They're going to put that hum around there, and who wants to, you know, listen to that? “Hmmm.”

And then you're going to put a fence across there with that wire, with the electricity. Because of that hum, it's going to separate the coyotes out there and everything else that hears real good. So it's going to be a fence, and everything's going to go on one side or the other.

And I think there's more technology out here than to have to put that thing on there. Put a wind-powered electrical generator on the end of each pier that sticks out in the ocean in California. Why the hell do you have — you got to have this old-time stuff?

And that solar panel out there — that solar farm, that's a thermal solar, and it's going to use more water than citrus trees, and citrus trees use about seven acre-foot of water per acre. They're going to use about 36,500,000,000 gallons of water a year out there.

Where are they going to get it? Instant water, just add water?

And I'll tell you what. If you don't do something to them people, they're going to put the hearse out there. They're just going to eliminate the whole damn thing. This isn't just about a 100-foot wide thing. This is crazy.

Thank you.

MS. LINDSAY: Diana Lindsay, vice-president environmental affairs, Anza-Borrego Foundation and Institute.

The three basic project objectives that are asserted for the proposed Sunrise Powerlink are: Maintain or improve reliability in the delivery of power to San Diego, bring renewable energy resources to San Diego, and, three, reduce the cost of energy in the region.

I would like to say a few words about the overly narrow definition of “cost used” by Sempra and the regulatory agencies before commenting on the proposed alternate routes.

The cost factor in the project objectives, as defined, is limited to dollars only. Esthetics and ethical costs are not a part of the objectives. This is shortsighted and gravely in error in terms of the larger public interests and needs to be redefined according to its total impact.

As an example, what if you had a child or an elderly parent that lived in your house? Having them in your home adds expense to your household budget. If you abandon them, you would certainly improve your bottom-line expense. The real cost would be the degradation of family values not only by your immediate act but in a long-range impact to the next generation who models your values.

Consider the true cost of selecting a route or an alternate route through the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. One, you are sending a message to the next generation that park lands are not sacred and are expendable if money can be saved.

Two, you are devaluing what is important to millions of Americans, pristine desert lands, unparalleled desert views, silence, preservation of the area's unique biodiversity by making in-roads in land set aside for endangered plants and animals and for human re-creation, a place where one can go to restore the soul in a frantic world.

Most importantly, three, you are heading down a slippery slope of no return when you begin to de-designate wilderness lands. Wilderness, once desecrated, can never be restored.

MR. MICHAELSON: I need to remind you. Can you just slow down a little bit?

MS. LINDSAY: I just want to stay in my three minutes. Okay.

One quick comment here on the route San Diego Gas & Electric has along the right-of-way. The concern are the pinch points because even — there are pinch points that are 24 feet, and that will still call for de-designation of wilderness areas. So even along their route, it calls for de-designation.

Much better to use the larger real costs as the starting point and then consider the alternates that are available, such as, one, in-basin generation, two, non-wire resource bundles, three, improving transmission capacity of SWPL, and the proposed Green Path North as a possibility.

While undergrounding through the park with exception of above-ground crossing of the Earthquake Valley Fault Zone would be the least invasive to the viewshed, it would still have a negative impact and would set a terrible precedent for all of our nation's parks.

Please consider these larger, real costs in the cost/benefit ratio in evaluating the best alternatives to the proposed Sunrise Powerlink Project.

The larger definition of cost must include loss of viewshed, loss of designated wilderness, loss of esthetic values, loss of habitat, loss of culture resources, and loss of opportunity for re-creation.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

We now have the example of the outside limits of what she can record, so, if you can keep it just a little bit slower, I would appreciate it.

Are you Ray Mouton?

MR. MOUTON: Yes.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak this afternoon. I am Ray Mouton, president of the Anza-Borrego Foundation Institute.

Over the years, the foundation has acquired over 35,000 acres of land adjacent to and inside the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, and then we deeded that land over to the park. Much of that land is designated wilderness. We have thousands of donors, small- to giant-size donors, who have contributed to these fundraising efforts to add this valuable land to the parks.

Now, fast forward to the Sunrise Powerlink Project. What has been proposed is that some of the wilderness lands within the park be de-designated wilderness and converted to commercial use.

Now, how can we ever face these donors who we said “You're contributing to projects where we're adding land, in some cases wilderness, to the state parks, and we were just kidding you. It's really just a holding area that will be used for a commercial area if the need arises”? This is not a good thing. Let's pursue those alternatives that avoid wilderness areas altogether.

On a personal note, I currently work on the big horn sheep project and have done so for 14 years. There are many sheep in the mountains and the slopes of the proposed powerlink route, the main route that's proposed.

Many of us who are studying and collecting data on these endangered animals use that area. I personally use receive telemetry equipment to locate collared animals and then collect various kinds of data.

The addition of giant power transmission lines and the associated electromagnetic fields generated by those lines will completely destroy our ability to receive signals from collared animals in that area.

While there are many other reasons to oppose this project through the park, this is reason enough to not build a powerlink in the park. Please don't build a powerlink through Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.

MR. BAHAR: Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I'm Lou Bahar. We're property owners of 17 years.

My husband and I are park volunteers of one flavor or another for about 15 years, and I have pretty much the same statement as Ray. Please don't put it through the park. We treasure and value the park very much. Instead, I would ask you to seriously — even more consider the renewable energy issue. We have wind and sun that other areas of the nation and world don't have.

Secondly, I would reevaluate the stated need that SDG&E says for the power. Perhaps it's not exactly as much as they had said.

Thirdly, I think Diana said to put the generating plants closer to the areas of need so that you don't — you can just eliminate — even though my concern is the park, the first speaker made me see that it's not just a park issue.

And then I just have a question. I'm not sure you're answering questions, but I don't understand how you can have the BLM, the PUC, and the EIR decisions all come at the same time. If one says no and one says yes, then I'm not sure what happens.

Thank you for the opportunity.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

Let me read ahead real quickly who's coming up. Violet Devoe, Nick Criss, Bill Collins, David Garmon, Lori Paul, and Mark Kiefer.

MS. DEVOE: Hello. My name is Violet Devoe, and I'm a new resident here in Borrego Springs.

The incremental costs of taking an invasive route around Anza-Borrego Desert State Park should be compared with the value of preserving the park's wilderness beauty for our future generations.

Even outside but near the park, people have gone to great lengths to preserve the beauty of our wilderness, and this should be preserved.

Alternatives such as the state route are a much better choice, State Route 8 — Interstate 8. I oppose any de-designation of California state park land for this or any project.

I am sort of new to this, but I wonder why this line down at the bottom of Figure 10 called Southwest Powerlink 500-kilovolt transmission line, an existing line — is it not wide enough for another power line right next to it? I mean, it's out of the way. It already exists, and why not?

Thank you.

MR. CRISS: Good afternoon. I'm Nick Criss.

I'm a property owner in Tubb Canyon, and I might say a new property owner in Tubb Canyon. That's part of my first comment, which is the fact that I am a little bit perturbed by the capricious nature of the process when you can have an announcement of a primary route, on which I based the purchase of my property, and then, with no notice whatsoever, all of a sudden decide that there's a new route that's going to go through the property that I purchased six months before.

Leaving that aside for a second, I obviously applaud you for recommending the cancellation of the Tubb Canyon Route, which is the Borrego Springs alternate that goes through Tubb Canyon, but I would also say that I think all of us — and I think the next four speakers are all from Tubb Canyon. We would all like to know exactly what that recommendation means.

First of all, it's a recommendation, as I understand it, of the PUC and Aspen Environmental Group, and there's a 30-day comment period. What we all want to know is: When is this over? Is it over when the 30-day comment period is over? Is it over when you proceed with the Environmental Impact Study on other areas and don't proceed on ours? That's the definition we need, especially homeowners like myself — or landowners like myself who want to actually build on our property.

Obviously, we can't build on it, and we can't sell it until this is over. So that's one thing I think we need to very clearly define is when an alternative is truly dead.

Along those lines, all of the property owners in Tubb Canyon initially refused SDG&E permission to enter their properties, and we are still holding to that today. Now being called into court, part of us on the 21st of February and the rest on the 28th of March, to fight a court battle over letting SDG&E come onto land that has supposedly been eliminated from concern.

We would certainly ask the PUC to intervene in that matter, and if this route is, in fact, eliminated, do what you can to eliminate the court proceeding or at least support us in delaying the court proceeding until such time as you've made the final, final decision that this route is, in fact, dead.

Thank you very much.

MR. COLLINS: Lewis, I don't think you got the note. You're supposed to wear a black sport coat.

MR. MICHAELSON: I didn't get the memo. Sorry.

MR. COLLINS: Nick Criss actually spoke on a lot of my points, and some of the people — Ray Mouton before me — but, basically, we're very concerned about what Nick said about SDG&E coming onto our property and doing studies if this is truly going to be eliminated.

I talked to Larry Davis who's head counsel for SDG&E. He told me that it didn't matter whether Aspen or BLM said no. They were still going to go ahead and do their studies.

I have two miles of water line that goes on top of the surface, and I have a guzzler in line for the big horn sheep. It's been in there for 25 years.

My real concern is SDG&E coming up on my property, onto a very small maintenance road with their big trucks, and destroying my water line. All of us are out of the water district. This is the only water we have available, the only water the big horn sheep have available.

I want to just reiterate what Nick said. I don't see why we need to go to court to fight SDG&E on access if you've all eliminated this route. So if there's any way you can press the court system to pull back on that, that would be very beneficial for us and the big horn sheep and all the other wildlife in Tubb Canyon.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: David Garmon.

MR. GARMON: My name is David Garmon, and I'm a Tubb Canyon landowner also and also among those Americans who would prefer to do anything but public speaking, so really, it is in the spirit of stewardship that I just want to say I've had the privilege of living in Tubb Canyon for 20 years

and enjoying its beauty and its peace, of Tubb Canyon and the whole valley, and it would be devastating to see that area destroyed as well as the rest of the Borrego Valley by this project, so I would implore you to eliminate it as you have recommended.

The other point that I wanted to make is about the larger project. One of the ladies had asked the question about why the transmission line could not go along the U.S./Mexico border. Well, the information we read in the paper is because if there is a fire there, then both the old and the new transmission lines would be vulnerable, so we're expected to accept that at face value.

In San Diego, in Chula Vista, there's a power plant that is very eager to sell power to SDG&E. If, in fact, we need power, wouldn't it make sense to purchase it from a willing seller in San Diego and forgo the difficulty and expense of building this huge transmission line?

Thank you very much.

MR. MICHAELSON: As you probably noted, that's included in one of the bundles of the non-wires alternatives as one of those aspects.

I wanted to note; we're not really set up to do Q and A back and forth. We're trying to get through all of the speakers, but the panel is keeping track of the questions, so what I'd like to do is get through all the speakers, and then we'll come back and try to answer all of the questions as we can at one time. That way we can get through it more efficiently.

The next speakers in order are Lori Paul, Mark Kiefer — okay. He's going to pass — Dr. James Rickard, Monty Tam, Jay Price, and Lane Garmon.

Is Lori Paul here?

MS. PAUL: Again, I'm Lori, L-o-r-i, Paul.

I'm a Tubb Canyon landowner. Many of us are absentee landowners, so it's very difficult for some of us to come down repeatedly. Some of our landowners live as far away as Seattle and San Francisco. I have to drive four hours one way to come here anytime SDG&E wants to access land and conduct multiple tests, cultural, archeological, geologic, environmental tests, and so forth.

As you've heard previously from those of us in Tubb Canyon, we have been sporadically informed of SDG&E's projects, and the only time we hear from them is when they want right of entry to our land, which we have denied for good reason.

We are in a severe drought situation. We are outside the Borrego Valley Water District and depend upon water wells and, in the case of the Collins' property, surface springs of Tubb Canyon on that recharge corridor. Those water systems are very sensitive to trucks rumbling over unpaved tracks and so forth.

I'm going to be hauled into court on the 21st of February. SDG&E has not agreed to delay the hearing nor right of entry to my land and other property in Tubb Canyon. They want to hear us separately instead of together, which doesn't make any sense at all.

Our great concern is that they will damage our surface water systems, and they will also damage those water systems for the big horn sheep and two other endangered species that we have in the Tubb Canyon area. We have the burrowing owl, which is a California Fish & Game species of

concern, the San Diego Coast Horned Lizard, a couple of subspecies that integrate, the blaine bivy eye [phonetic], I think, and the front owl [phonetic], and we also, of course, have the big horn sheep.

The sheep, with the intrusion of geological surveys, if they're driven away from the water during these drought stress times, can abort their lambs and can avoid the springs entirely.

We would like to ask for the intervention of Fish & Wildlife Service for this because we don't seem to have any access to the kind of people that can stop this right of entry.

I think one reason SDG&E refused to delay and consolidate access to our land is that if it's intrusive to have trucks, geological survey, and trampling by people for the purpose of their own data collection, then it's obviously inappropriate to have the transmission line down the sheep habitat for the project itself, so it would be kind of an admission of guilt, so to speak.

We definitely need some help. We feel like we're twisting in the wind out there. We have been good stewards of our land. We protect the habitat, and we need some sort of assistance from Fish & Wildlife Service to at least delay for this allegedly eliminated route the access of SDG&E personnel trucks and core drilling on our sensitive land. So thank you for any help you can offer us.

MR. MICHAELSON: I believe we're on Kiefer, who is going to pass. In that case, the next speaker would be Dr. James Rickard.

DR. RICKARD: Good afternoon. I'm Dr. James Rickard. First of all, I want to thank you for preparing, Aspen Environmental, the excellent summary of the alternatives to the proposed powerlink.

I'm going to start out first by saying I'm going to assume that the power line is necessary, okay, and that the path is wrong. And then I'm going to finish by saying the powerlink is absolutely unnecessary and tell you the reason why. I also have some additional evidence that I would like to present to the panel in order to substantiate what I'm saying.

First of all, the path. I asked you — and you seemed to have rejected the proposal through the Anza-Borrego Desert — if you could find some better path in order to place these power lines. Although it's true that some of the path through the park follows the existing old 69-kilovolt lines, these taller, larger, and uglier towers will adversely affect the park, the wilderness areas, and are really unacceptable and unnecessary.

The sections from the park, from the western boundary through Grapevine Canyon down through the Narrows Substation to the new San Felipe Substation are really totally unnecessary.

Your study shows on Page 19 at Figure 8 a much better alternative. And why it's better, I'll describe here very quickly. The section does not go through any park land, any forest land. Essentially, the one that I like — and it's just my personal choice. You've already mentioned parts of it — it follows the existing Southwest Powerlink for about 52 miles. It goes off onto Alternative D for 16 miles, and then it joins up with what you call the West of Forest Alternative for a path of 34.8 miles, where it joins the original proposed link at Mile Marker Number 130, and then westward after that down to Sycamore Canyon.

Why is it better? Well, it is not in the park. It's not in the national forest. It's not in the wilderness areas, and it's not on Indian reservations, all good reasons why it would be a preferred

route. It's 28 miles shorter. It goes through a lot of open, rather rugged private land, but it avoids expensive undergrounding.

You'll notice that none of the undergrounding is the 500 kilovolts. That's because it's technologically quite difficult to do, so they transform it down to 230 kilovolts, which means there's less efficiency in the transmission.

The no-project alternative I'd like to look at, too. Upgrading the two power plants that exist in the San Diego area, in Encino and South Bay, to more efficient combined-cycle plants and participating in the LEAPS project, the pumped hydro project in Orange County seem to provide the cheaper and better alternative.

And now the last part I would like to talk about is the real reason for the Sunrise Powerlink, and that has not been addressed in this study, and I think you ought to include it in further scoping meetings. That is that it provides a direct path to the two fossil fuel power plants in Mexicali, and I have photographs in order to illustrate that, and I would like to give them to you and show you exactly how the system works.

MR. MICHAELSON: Your three minutes is up.

DR. RICKARD: Can I please ask for a little extension here?

MR. MICHAELSON: You've actually already had an extension. You were so captivating; I didn't keep track of the first two minutes. You have written comments that you can hand in.

DR. RICKARD: I don't have prepared comments, but the point of these pictures —

MR. MICHAELSON: This would be easier to go over, frankly, after the meeting. Maybe you can sit down and point these out to —

DR. RICKARD: But basically, the link already exists to Mexico. The Sunrise Powerlink begins there and then is another path to that power from their station — from Sempra Energy's power station —

MR. MICHAELSON: We've heard that.

DR. RICKARD: You've heard that?

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

DR. RICKARD: Isn't it illegal because of the deregulation of the power plants and the distributors to be —

MR. MICHAELSON: I'm sorry. I want to be fair to everyone.

[Audience yelling]

MR. MICHAELSON: Excuse me. I'm not making my decisions today based on what people call out. I have a series of 25 more speakers to get through. He had more time than anyone else. I'm sorry. I'm not going to do it this way. I need to have senility and decorum in this room so we can get through this process.

The next speaker is Monty Tam.

MR. TAM: My name is Monty Tam, and I'm here representing Pacific Crest Trail Association. I am also a marathon hiker who's hiked all 2700 miles of that trail from the Mexican Border to Canada, and it goes all the way through San Diego, and there is no way this powerlink can get from Point A to Point B without going across this trail, so I'm here to read a statement from the Pacific Crest Trail Association outlining their position on the powerlink.

It opens up: "Statement of Opposition. The Pacific Crest Trail Association would like to state that our requests were not sufficiently met by the retained alternative routes proposed. We feel that San Diego Gas & Electric, once again, has not recognized the significance of impacting a national scenic trail. A federally designated national scenic trail provides a corridor in which the user can feel that they are in a wild setting removed from the trammels of human kind.

"Also Anza-Borrego Desert State Park wilderness is supposed to be, by definition, wild and untouched by man. The Pacific Crest Trail Association supports efforts to keep it so. If this project meets approval, the PCTA requests that the routes paralleling the Southwest Powerlink or the Interstate 8 corridor be considered.

"The Pacific Crest Trail Association works hand in hand with the federal government to manage, maintain, preserve, and protect all 2700 miles of this federally designated national scenic trail. The matters affecting the preservation and protection of the trail are also matters of the federal government.

"The Sunrise Powerlink has not even been discussed with the federal government at the level where final decisions are made concerning this corridor. We strongly suggest that those evaluating the proposed project contact the U.S. Forest Service on the Region 5 level, please.

"In conclusion, the impacts on both Pacific Crest Trail National Scenic Trail and the designated wilderness within Anza-Borrego Desert State Park are not acceptable. Thank you, Pacific Crest Trail Association."

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you very much.

I will read ahead again. We have Jay Price followed by Lane Sharman, Betty Backus, Larry Pustinger, and Judith Withers.

Jay Price?

MR. PRICE: Thank you.

I represent approximately 80 homeowners in a community about 50 miles south of here on County Highway S-2. Our homeowners' association is on record with the PUC in a petition earlier in which we opposed the route selection of Highway S-2 between Ocotillo and Highway 78.

On the mailed package, it shows that at Segment 4 and requests that that be eliminated; however, I didn't find it in your recommendation for elimination in here, that that segment be eliminated.

As a group, we have demurred from regarding the necessity or justification of the power line at all because we don't profess to have the expertise to make such a determination.

We do, however, contend that there is no one better qualified to state that the alternative of coming up S-2 cannot be justified under any sensible rationale. We have the southernmost community on Highway S-2, and no power, phone lines, fences, or other visual impediments goes beyond us. This is not another case of not in my backyard. If they came this way, it would go through the yard, over the house, and, like the speakers from Tubb Canyon, we would therefore ask that not only do you allow them to eliminate Segment 4 south out of 78 but that you tear up the paper, burn it, and scatter the ashes so that we know the issue is dead.

Like I say, having made them laugh, I'm not sure if this will meet your decorum test, but if talking a lot about cost savings, run the power line along the Mexican border, put it three feet off the ground. They won't have to build a fence.

MR. SHARMAN: Greetings and welcome to Borrego Springs. My name is Lane Sharman. I'm a third-generation Borregan and a fifth-generation Californian. Many more eloquent than me will call for the wild of Anza-Borrego. They will call for its sanctity, fragility, its biodiversity, its message of bounty in the Spartan edge of the Sonoran.

Please listen to their call for this wild. The wild and the wilderness within the park is, by definition, not intruded upon by the actions, prosthetics, and monoliths of homo-colossus.

Homo-colossus now wants to make a staggering ecological footprint on this gem. It will be a scar of colossal distortion harmed from its construction, maintenance, and EMF output. Its loss of energy in transit is a travesty to the spirit and movement behind energy efficiency and emission management.

Please listen to their call. Lest you do not heed the call for the wild, it will become the cry of the wild. You do not want to hear the cry of generations of Californians, of families like mine who have given time, money, land, and covenants to keep Anza-Borrego wild and free of footprints like Sunrise. Please do not just listen but hear the call of the wild.

Thank you.

MS. BACKUS: Betty Backus from Tubb Canyon.

Would it be possible to donate my time to this other gentleman?

MR. MICHAELSON: No, it's not.

MS. BACKUS: Okay. Then I'll toot my own horn here.

MR. MICHAELSON: Okay.

MS. BACKUS: I'm also from Tubb Canyon, so I didn't know — except for one of my neighbors called me and told me about it, and I'm delighted that this proposal is an alternative that's been eliminated, and I hope it really has been permanently eliminated. I also wanted to add that I do assist a yearly environmental workshop for teaching — especially teachers and therapists and people who are working with the public about the environment, and I'd like to see some funds go to, first of all, more solar panels throughout the county for people to create our own solar energy, more encouragement for youth to get out into nature. They spend so much time in front of their computers

these days, and let's have more enthusiasm for the natural wilderness and avoid damaging as much as possible.

That's all.

MR. MICHAELSON: Larry Pustinger.

MR. PUSTINGER: Hello. My name is Larry Pustinger. I live in Descanso, California. I'm one of the owners of the state park, as we all are, I think. I'd like to thank you for the great job this afternoon and giving me a chance to speak as well.

This guy named Ben Franklin should be here apologizing for what he started such a long time ago. Old men aren't supposed to be flying a kite.

There seems to be a big rush for speeding ahead all of these wonderful agencies that are here to approve something, to come up with some kind of a power line, and I think SDG&E has kind of contributed to this. They're in a heck of a hurry to get a power line approved for technology that isn't remotely available to be added to the power line they wish to build.

Their big claim is renewable energies. I don't know how they can justify that, and I think you folks and the agencies that are going to be regulating all of this ought to take a real serious look at that. If there's someday a need that can be clearly established to bring renewable energy in from Imperial Valley and it's a do-able, feasible thing in 5 years or 10 years or 20 years, I think we ought to reconvene on this issue.

At this time, the technology isn't here. By their own admission, they say it's a few years away. Yet here we are today spending a lot of money, of taxpayers' money, supporting all of these government agencies that are being asked to regulate this.

I'm not the oldest man in this room, but I'm old enough to have seen railroads start to disappear, especially the interconnecting railroads, not the major transcontinentals, no, but I've seen them replaced with an interstate system that many people objected to when I was a kid, scars all across the nation. Well, we've got the scars in place now, and I say we can add more utility to those scars and preserve.

We can't go out and manufacture land. Someday we might be able to manufacture electricity in proficient, efficient, and very clean renewable ways. I think we can now.

We're about to spend \$10 billion in the next ten years of state money, our money, to encourage the development and entrepreneurialship. We're just at the front end of that now. So what's the hurry? SDG&E is publicly denying and proclaiming that they will not ever buy any power from the LS plant in South Bay that is close to being approved. "We're not going to do it," Mr. Avery says.

Mr. Avery goes on to say "nor should we ask our customers to ever pay for things before they're needed," and that was in the Union Tribune just the other day. I wish he were here right now to speak to that issue because, I think, as a rate payer I am already paying for transmission services, and I know I'm going to be asked to pay for reimbursement for this power line, and I don't believe it's necessary.

If you can find a way to manufacture more wilderness for my great-grandchildren who aren't born yet, I would appreciate that. That's the only thing we can't manufacture.

MS. WITHERS: I'm Judith Withers from the community of San Felipe.

I would like to point out that in the San Felipe community where the proposed Central East Substation is located is right where the Pines fire devastated our land. Erosion has been a problem very seriously since then. Residents have suffered erosion problems continuously.

Right beside my residence where they're going to propose one of these 500-kV towers, the geographic conditions of this area really need to be studied thoroughly because of the impacts of disturbance of this kind we'll have in our neighborhood and our homes.

I commend the commission for putting back on the table the no-wire alternative that supports the San Diego Regional Energy Plan. San Diego's plan avoids all of this unnecessary destruction. In-basin generation negates the need for the Sunrise Powerlink. I am also aware and was surprised that the scoping does not include the Green Path North, which would, with any combination of no-wires alternatives and the Path 44 Upgrade Alternative, provide a way to achieve project objectives.

The citizens of San Diego are not only being asked to pay for this unprecedented, expensive project but pay for it by the forfeiture of its scenic and well-used playground of the Anza-Borrego State Park and surrounding wilderness.

California, through the commission, needs to send a message by its actions that a solution to San Diego's and other cities' energy needs are to become decentralized by region. Each geographical region has its own possibility. In-basin generation at its core has more positives than negatives, for example, better energy security by region. The de-acceleration of petroleum-based energy creates lasting jobs within the region, cuts down on greenhouse emissions, allows the public more affordable access to renewable energy for their homes and business as the demand grows and technologies are better funded.

This will preserve what wilderness we have left for the animal life that is already suffering too much from the intervention of man and allow humans their place to commune with nature, which is necessary for the health of our own community.

Above ground or underground, a transmission line project like this through the sensitive and heavily toured backcountry areas and parks would forever devastate these most beloved destinations for many San Diegans and tourists from all over the world.

Our leaders ignored the message that Brazil took to heart, betraying the interests of the American people for their own personal interests instead of moving this country forward. There is nothing that America cannot do, cannot create given the right leadership. Please give us that leadership.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Let me read ahead again. Our next speakers are Glenn Stokes, Robert Barelmann, Larry Hogue, Donna Matson, and Susan Brown.

MR. STOKES: Good afternoon. My name is Glenn Stokes. I'm a resident of the city of San Diego and own property in Borrego Springs.

Perhaps it will be a little easier for me to speak because I bring with me absolutely no facts at all to support what I'm about to say, but I'm looking at most of the documentation, and I'm seeing that most of it is on whether to install a power line this way, that way, or some other way and whether it be above ground or below ground, and I'm here to support Option D, which is really none of the above.

I'm sort of kind of a dreamer in this regard in that someday I think solar power will supplement the need to put power lines over long distances from Point A to Point B. I wish we were there right now, and I hope we're going to be there very soon in the future.

I do tend to believe that installation of the power line 150 miles from Point A to Point B may very well be obsolete by the time it's done. I have to look at — if I was an electric company and I had \$1.3 billion to spend, I sure wouldn't want to be spending it on some power lines going 150 miles and upsetting a whole bunch of people.

As an electric company, I need to provide power to the people who need it, and I need to do so at a profit, and I would be looking at just more documentation and more studies on — is it possible to do that by putting in solar power?

If I spent \$1.3 billion and put power cells on top of existing resources, whether this be roofs of homes, businesses, above highways, on existing land, and pumped that power back into the existing power web, not the power grid but the power web, using the existing electric lines that exist all over the communities throughout Southern California, I wouldn't have to build new power lines, and I wouldn't have to —

So, like I said, I have no facts. I don't know if this is financially feasible or even do-able or not, but I sure hope to see plenty of studies to prove that it's not do-able to help mitigate the installation of a power line, if that's what it comes to.

Thank you.

MR. BARELMANN: We are grateful that —

MR. MICHAELSON: Your name, please.

MR. BARELMANN: Robert Barelmann.

We are grateful that the CPUC and the BLM is issuing a recommendation to eliminate the Borrego Valley Alternative from further studies. We agree that the state-designated Pinion Ridge wilderness area and the big horn sheep habitat should not be touched by the city-size steel structures of the Sunrise Powerlink. Those lands were permanently set aside for wildlands and wildlife.

The Borrego Valley Alternative also crosses land my wife and I purchased over 20 years ago. Our land offers great seclusion, privacy, and dramatic views of the surrounding mountains typical of those views that you see from S-22 in the Anza-Borrego State Park.

We urge you to follow the recommendation and eliminate the Borrego Valley Alternative from further consideration.

We also feel that Anza-Borrego State Park is a desert jewel. Each time we take a hike in the park, we feel refreshed. The park offers so much to see, and rarely do we meet another person on the trail. In our opinion, none of us should rest until a threat of the Sunrise Powerlink is entirely eliminated

from the Anza-Borrego State Park. These parks, campsites, hiking and biking trails belong to all of the citizens of this country and visitors from all over the world.

Each and every one of us on both sides of the table has a responsibility, I think, to our children and grandchildren to enhance, maintain, and preserve the state and national parks.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Larry Hogue.

MR. HOGUE: Hi, I'm Larry Hogue. I'm the author of "All the Wild and Lonely Places, Journeys in a Desert Landscape." I hope to not have to change that title to "Journeys in a Power Corridor."

You heard a little bit about what Anza-Borrego is, but I want to speak a little bit more about what is Anza-Borrego. It is our flagship state park. It is the largest and, except for the beaches, the most heavily visited state park.

It is a place that probably could have been a national park on the level of Death Valley or Yosemite. Can we imagine a power line with these high towers running through Yosemite National Park or the Grand Canyon?

Anza-Borrego needs to have the same consideration as that. I'm a writer, not a public speaker, so — I would like to say that Anza-Borrego is important. Other places are important.

This is Option D. I don't know if you can see that. This is Option D, wild land. We should not do Option D either.

A San Diego regional energy plant sounds good. The wireless opportunity sounds good. The wireless option — let's rename that for me, no wires to the wireless option. That is, I think, the best option.

I live in San Diego. I buy power from San Diego Gas & Electric. I would like to see a power plant in San Diego rather than Anza-Borrego, and I will burn candles before I see power lines in Anza-Borrego.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: I'm going to do something for efficiency's sake. I'm going to read through the next several speakers. I'll ask you to come up. We have five empty seats right next to the court reporter. When I call your name, you can come sit up there, and we'll be able to move more people and save time.

After Larry — I believe you're Donna Matson. If you're Susan Browne, Myrna Wosk, Ted Caragozian, or Josan Feathers, if you'd come take a seat up here, I'd appreciate it.

MS. MATSON: Good afternoon, and thank you very much for this opportunity to speak. My name is Donna Matson.

I live in Los Angeles, and I am a member of the Anza-Borrego Foundation and the California Wilderness and 30 years a member of the Sierra Club, et cetera, et cetera.

There was recently a study done that it is extremely important for people to be able to see the stars at night to help them orient themselves in the universe. As a person from Los Angeles, I love Anza-Borrego. I come here several times a year. I enjoy not only all the other wildlife — I did not attend your first meeting. I was not notified — but, for example, the Swainson's Hawk who go 6,000 miles and stop in Anza-Borrego overnight. It's one of their most important stopovers because it's hot enough here, and you can go out and watch them getting enough heat under their wings so that they can go up, get on the thermals, and glide to Canada.

Hal has been very instrumental in this project. I'm wondering; what are these power lines going to do to the Swainson's Hawks and a lot of the other animals?

As I looked — and I have not studied this carefully — too carefully, but as I looked over the alternatives, it seems to me on Figure 10, the V-R Devers- Miguel via Imperial, it goes along the border and up around, which would totally avoid the park, and the reservations would be a very good alternative.

Also down at the harbor where I keep my boat, there are a lot of people that have solar panels. You can totally run a sailboat with a couple of power solar panels, for your refrigeration, for your — why doesn't everybody get solar panels? Then we don't need to worry about it.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Susan Browne is next.

MS. BROWNE: Thank you.

I'd like to speak briefly about the article about global warming printed in the San Diego Times — Tribune last week, which was about the landmark report released by the UN from its inter-governmental panel on climate change.

This group of 3,700 scientists stated that global warming is unequivocal — unequivocal, and to a 90-percent or greater certainty caused by human activity, further, that fossil fuel consumption has generated much of the global rise in temperature over the last 50 years.

The U.S. energy industry is beginning to grapple with what to do about this situation. Energy generation in San Diego County — energy generation is second only to transportation in producing the largest volume of greenhouse gasses.

With this in mind, I want to point out Sempra Energy Company's statement following this UN report in the same article. Sempra Energy said that the global warming phenomenon is debatable. There was no official's name given to that, but it comes from Sempra Energy. The scientists are still skeptical. The need for more time to study the problem — there isn't much time left.

I feel uncomfortable, even fearful of this company's being permitted to go ahead with these plans for the Sunrise Powerlink. I wonder if it can be trusted to make the best decision about where to purchase power for these high-voltage lines that would carry it through our desert park.

Knowing that Arizona and Mexican energy plants are coal powered, I'm skeptical. I think we may be discussing the wrong issue here today.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Myrna Wosk.

MS. WOSK: My name is Myrna Wosk.

I support the non-wire solution for San Diego. I'm afraid of anything that's going to start in Imperial County with wires attached to it because I think Imperial County Substation is very, very close to Mexico, and it's just an entry for Mexican power, and that means an incredible amount of pollution, and I'm really concerned, not for me so much but for all the people in Imperial County.

I had one other point. Oh, yes. Wilderness. Kind of going along with what one of the other men said, once wilderness is de-designated, then everything is up for grabs. The parks — alternate routes that have been so-called eliminated like Highway S-2 — that goes through wilderness, and that's why it was supposedly eliminated, but if it can go through wilderness where it's proposed, it will go through wilderness and parks and forest, and non-wires is the best way, please.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: The next speaker is Ted Caragozian.

MR. CARAGOZIAN: My name is Ted Caragozian.

I live in Ranchita. I've been visiting Anza-Borrego Desert State Park for more than 40 years, and for over five years now, I've also been volunteering at the park to assist our visitors to get the most out of their stay. We have visitors from not only around the country but from around the world, and Anza-Borrego Desert State Park is a world-class treasure.

I also choose to live in the rural backcountry to distance myself from the industrial-grade impacts of our modern world. This proposed power route is an absolute violation of this precious refuge. Who are these guys who would even suggest it? Sempra Energy. SDG&E.

Well, according to their spin docs, they're the most benevolent, public-minded bunch in town, just improving reliability and costs. But I was reading in the newspaper less than a year ago that they have been nailed for colluding with another energy company to illegally fix the price of natural gas during the energy crunch. They ripped off consumers to the tune of \$2 billion and settled for around half a billion.

They say they want to tap renewable power, but they won't buy it from home producers. They really just want a conduit from their cheap, dirty power plant in Mexico to their plant to a good market in LA.

They tried to subvert the permit process by not providing a route at first. In short, they are villains and liars and are not to be believed or trusted.

The park and backcountry shouldn't have to bear the brunt of overconsumption and greed. We need a new paradigm, and it's time for our public servants to serve us instead of dirty big business.

Please remove all consideration of new or expanded transmission lines in the park and rural backcountry. Let's not degrade what's left.

MR. MICHAELSON: Let me read ahead of the people I'd like to take seats up here. Josan Feather — if that's mispronounced, I'm sorry — Kelly Fuller, Sam Webb, Cliff Webb, Michael Day, and Merle Vogel.

I have two other quick requests. One is if you would, hold your expressions of agreement or disagreement or applause until people are done. It's slowing them down. They can't finish what they're saying. She can't hear what they're saying. So if you can, just wait until they're done.

Come on up here. Are you Josan Feathers?

MS. FEATHERS: I'm not Jason.

MR. MICHAELSON: I'm sorry.

MS. FEATHERS: I'm Josan. My name is Josan Feathers, and I'm a registered civil engineer.

I would specifically like to address the implications of granting SDG&E an easement for their transmission lines, especially in wilderness areas.

Besides the obvious esthetic like, the easements would impact a fragrant habitat including critical big horn habitat as well as other natural and cultural resources, even in the undergrounded segments.

The most intense impacts would be during construction when heavy equipment would pioneer access roads and grade miles of undisturbed land for their temporary haul roads, staging areas, and permanent future access roads.

However, besides the shameless waste of natural resources, like steel, concrete, and other building materials, the most insidious impact will be the utility company's use of the access roads once the transmission lines are built in perpetuity.

Their right to use these access roads for maintenance and repair will forever impact every wash they cross with unnecessary pollution. It will impact every sloped grade where erosion is possible due to their vehicular activity. It will impact the disturbed soil within the easement, making it susceptible to the growth of exotic plants, which late at night while they are driving over them, conducting their ongoing movements, operations. Easements are the stain of our parks and wilderness areas, and we do not need any more of them.

There are other alternatives. It makes sense to generate energy or purchase it where it is needed and where the infrastructure is already in place. For example, in Austin, they mandated zero-energy-capable homes by 2015.

We could use Invision Solar, this new company that will provide Kyocera solar groves with a turnkey operation making it easy to purchase. Right now they've developed polymer-based — the newly developed polymer-based solar photovoltaic cells are the latest breakthrough for the industry, capable of capturing light energy beyond the visible spectrum and estimated to be 60 percent more efficient than the current silicone ones. Photovoltaic technology is improving in leaps and bounds.

Again, I strongly support the no-project alternative. In closing, there are other solutions to our energy needs, and we need to look towards them instead of allowing SDG&E to pilfer ratepayers'

money, impact our parks, and compromise our health just so they can make more millions for their shareholders.

They try to scare us with their tales of energy shortages, which only serve to remind us of the energy manipulations that we Californians have suffered through. Let's create our own intelligent and sustainable future for the greater San Diego regional.

Thank you.

MS. FULLER: Hi. My name is Kelly Fuller. Last year I walked 78 miles of the proposed route through the desert including all of the preferred route through the park, and I came here from Minnesota, where I live now, because 78 miles was one thing to do on foot, but 1500 was the least I could do for the park since I was just going to have to do it in an airplane.

I have some concerns about the second round of scoping document. I think there are some premature conclusions in it.

To start with, as Diana Lindsay mentioned earlier today, there are what are being called pinch points, places where the existing easement is not 100 feet wide, as SDG&E keeps saying it is, but 24 feet wide, and I would ask that the documents that go out to the public really mention that because every time you guys release a document that says SDG&E has 100-foot wide easement, the media prints that, and people don't realize that this issue of how wide the easement really is is going to have a huge impact.

In addition, it's my understanding that the Imperial Irrigation District has not been able to find its easement paperwork, and so there is a real question there on not only how wide is their easement, but what is their legal right going to be, and I think it needs to be noted that all of these easement questions are very complex and are going to have to be worked out, possibly even in court, and it should not be seen as a done deal how wide the easements are.

Also, I would like to question the statement on Page 22 of the document that says levels of energy efficiency in SDG&E's PEA are considered to accurately portray expected future levels of cost-effective energy-efficiency impacts. I would like to know how that was determined this early, especially as the PEA represents SDG&E's point of view, and it seems to me, as a member of the public, that there needs to be more consideration of whether or not what they're saying is the future levels — whether or not that really is accurate, especially since the word “cost-effective” was used, and we've already seen SDG&E have to change its numbers several times within the last few weeks.

Finally, the last statement, I think the focus here, as many have said, should be a non-wires alternative, not on where to put a power line, and please give as much consideration to those as possible.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Sam Webb.

MR. S. WEBB: I'd like to thank you for allowing me to speak before you today.

My first comment is going to be directed at wilderness land. In the San Diego Union yesterday, there was an article about San Diego Gas & Electric was going to be willing to trade off new land that they would give to the park in exchange for destroying existing wilderness lands.

If that's true, it kind of equates to me — I visualize that San Diego Gas & Electric truck driving down my street. He runs into the front of my house and destroys the front of my beautiful home, and then he offers to paint the back of my house to make up for the damage that he's done to the front of my house. So I think exchanging land is not an acceptable alternative to taking away wilderness lands.

But what I want to really talk about now is protection of parks. Parks exist to be future assets and things that our grandchildren can enjoy, and if they're taken away bit by bit, there will be nothing left for them in the future.

80 years ago, a gentleman by the name of Fredrick Law Olmsted, Junior, who is a famous landscape artist who was commissioned by the State of California to go out and look for land to go into the state park system — and he picked an area here. One of the selections he picked was the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, and I'd like to read his comments about why he picked this area and why it was important.

“Certain desert areas have a distinctive and subtle charm, in part dependant upon spaciousness, solitude, and escape from the evidence of human control and manipulation of the earth, a charm of constantly growing value as the rest of the earth becomes more completely dominated by man's activities.

“This quality is a very vulnerable one. Nowhere else are casual thoughtless human changes in the landscape so irreparable, and nowhere else is it so important to control and completely protect wide areas.”

I think it's your job to evaluate that you protect the parks, not just for us today but for the future generations because once you allow a corridor to go through, San Diego Gas & Electric and their parent company Sempra Energy will come back years later, and they'll want another tower going through that same easement, and pretty soon, you will have no pristine parks left.

Thank you very much.

MR. MICHAELSON: The last speaker was Sam Webb.

MR. C. WEBB: Good afternoon. My name is Cliff Webb.

I'm the vice-president of Stirling Energy Systems, and we are the solar developer who is proposing a 900-megawatt solar plant in Imperial Valley. I'm here to speak on behalf of renewable energy.

I might say at the outset that I'm not here to talk about or have an opinion as to the right routes for this line, but I can speak to the critical need for this line. We can talk about global warming. We can talk about the needs to reduce our dependencies on fossil fuels.

We are a company that has been in business for ten years. The technology we are proposing has been developed for 20 years. It was developed in aerospace technology with DOE in the 1980s. It holds

the world's record for the most efficient conversion of solar power to electric energy, near 30 percent, and its technology has just been waiting for its time.

It's a technology that has to be developed in a central station setting. We can produce three times the energy that an equivalent photovoltaic system can produce at one-fifth of the cost.

I must say on behalf of San Diego Gas & Electric — they're kind of the 2,000-pound gorilla who kind of runs over everything to try to get what they need to have done, but they have mandates from the State to develop renewable resources. They need to provide power for their consumers, and they need to do it at low cost.

I must say also that this is an extremely unique opportunity for the people of Southern California and California in that it's very unique in the world where you can have a population of near 20 million people from a mere 100 miles from a desert environment where the application of solar energy is absolutely ideal.

There were some discussions earlier about the technology. Our technology uses no water, has no combustion products, has no dangerous heat transfer fluids. It will provide a large number of jobs when it's developed in Imperial Valley. The assembly will take place in Imperial Valley, and we do need water for mirror washing, but it's 14 gallons per dish. We're looking at like maybe using 30 acre feet per year for a 900-megawatt facility.

So I'm here, and I could also make myself available if anyone has any questions that they'd like to ask of us. We're a technology that's been fully developed. It's currently operating in a small power plant at Sandia National Labs in Albuquerque, and it's just waiting for its time to apply.

We also are going to have to go through a permitting process very similar to the transmission lines, so for us to even get into production, we're going to have to file those permits. We're nearing that time to file those permits, and we would be ready to start construction in mid 2008.

Thank you for your time.

MR. MICHAELSON: The next speakers to come up and take seats are Michael Day, Merle Vogel, Carolyn Morrow, Adrian McGregor, Debbie Westcott, and Esther Rubin.

Michael Day. Is Michael Day here?

I'm going to go past.

And what is your name?

MR. VOGEL: I'm Merle.

MR. MICHAELSON: Okay. You're Merle.

Okay. Merle, you're up.

MR. VOGEL: Good afternoon. My name is Merle Vogel.

First, I'd like to ask a point of clarification. All of those yellow routes on those maps you've shown have been proposed for elimination. They haven't been eliminated, have they?

MR. MICHAELSON: Correct.

MR. VOGEL: So they're just proposed for elimination. Thank you.

One of the reasons to build this power plant is to get access to renewable resources, energy resources, and that's one of the criteria for judging this proposal; isn't that correct? Well, that's one of the assertions. Now it seems that everything that's going on is based on the assertion that there isn't renewable resources, and San Diego Gas & Electric talks about solar resources and the Stirling engine that Mr. Webb talked about, geothermal resources, which has been out there and hasn't done anything for years.

But let's take a look at this. Are they really going to be able to get this? A representative from Stirling told me — and Mr. Webb can correct me if I'm wrong — that there's no commercial example of a Stirling engine on a scale that they're proposing for this power plant.

The Stirling engine was invented over 100 years ago, and you can go online on the web and buy a little model that you can put in your hand, and it will turn a little wheel just from the heat from your hand, which sounds really great, but there's no commercial example on a scale of this.

Another engineer told me that to go from, you know, nothing to scale up to 900 megawatts is just impossible in the amount of time that they say they're going to do it.

Now, SDG&E has a contract to buy 900 watts of power from Stirling if they can deliver it. I assert that they won't be able to deliver it. So I think that the panel and the EIR should look at the fact of whether or not renewable resources really can be delivered, or is it just going to be taken from those dirty plants in Mexico?

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Carolyn Morrow.

MS. MORROW: My name is Carolyn Morrow, and I live in Grapevine Canyon, and, yes, I am the lady in the newspaper that you've been seeing.

I'm co-director of CASE, Communities for Alliance for Sensible Energy. Thank you for coming today.

After careful research, it is our understanding that this line is not needed. I have four points that I want to emphasize.

Why is Green Path North not among the alternatives being considered? It is our understanding that this line is slated for construction. Mr. Peevey already stated that both Sunrise Powerlink and Green Path North are not needed to transport renewables. Plus the renewable claim for the powerlink is highly suspect as Stirling Energies Project has not even remotely been proven.

It is imperative, Number 2, that fire planes be considered as numerous fires are caused by downed power lines. 150-foot towers would significantly impede firefighting efforts, including but not limited to uses of planes to drop water, and retardant should not be facilitated around these types of structures, and firefighters themselves will not work under these towers. If another fire gets out of town, like the Cedar Fire downtown San Diego, we'll be at risk.

Number 3, the health concerns of these towers have not been studied. It is our understanding that the CPUC has research on health issues near, at, or around these power lines. We ask that you make that available to us.

In conclusion, as agreed by all parties, including SDG&E in the 2030 plan, in-county generation, conservation, and green energy are the preferred methods of keeping the lights on in San Diego as SDG&E so wants to talk about.

In their application for the powerlink, SDG&E even admitted that in-county generation will be less costly. SDG&E needs to be a responsible community citizen and proactively explore ways to keep the lights on without building a dangerous, invasive 150-mile transmission line which will only end in Mexico. We support a no-wires alternative, which is very reasonable and attainable and hope the CPUC will concur. Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: The next speakers are Adrian McGregor, Debbie Westcott, and Esther Rubin.

To the degree to which people have already covered what you're going to say, if you could stick to the new stuff, that would be great.

MR. MCGREGOR: Adrian McGregor.

Arnold Schwarzenegger and the CPUC last week were in agreement to no longer import dirty energy made anywhere in the country, so that means your 11 networking places who make them cannot import to California. It was in the newspaper last week.

It's a known fact that your [unintelligible] powering on 500-kV lines has to be done by helicopters and that it contaminates everything around it. It's also known that you have surging temperatures around the power lines — the lines heat up the air around them — and that in hotter areas, you have more surging in the heavy, hot months, which, one, causes more fire and also causes what we call — your physicists would tell you exploding 1,000 to 1,200 feet in the area and distributing ozone dust up to seven miles in your wind.

My concern for your valley is that you have an inversion layer that holds your air around in the valley, and your people would be breathing more ozone.

I first heard of the Mexicali line coming 11-and-a-half years ago on my 50th birthday. I live in Temecula. At that time, Sempra presented that, when they brought this line up. They would not just be coming with one line. They would end up with four lines up where I live.

When I came here this weekend and saw that you're back again after knowing what Arnold had said with thermal heating of our country, I was quite surprised. But, then again, not.

Also, my last statement is I feel that putting these lines through our national park is discrimination against seniors. When Vice-President Cheney was told by the White House doctors that he could never be around high-powered lines — you're eliminating people and children with pacemakers from ever coming here again because it turns them off. Your radical EMF — EML — what you call electromagnetic force fields — penetrate buildings. They penetrate animals, and they are known, as Paul Brodeur was trying to tell the nation in 1989, to be carcinogenic, cause all types of cancers, leukemia in children. You eliminate the quality of our living, and long lives is what I support.

MR. MICHAELSON: Esther Rubin.

MS. RUBIN: Hello. My name is Esther Rubin, and I work as an ecologist for the Conservation Biology Institute, and I am a resident of Borrego, and I have been working out here for the last 13 years on our native big horn sheep.

You've heard many comments at this meeting and previous meetings about the negative impacts from the powerlink, including the powerlinks on viewsheds, human health, history, cultural, and biological resources questions, about the need for the powerlink.

What I would like to focus on today is a concern that is much more familiar to me, personally, and that is on the impact on the environment, in particular the endangered big horn sheep that inhabit our desert.

Any proposed powerlink that goes through Anza-Borrego Desert State Park is going to be going through the critical habitat of these big horn sheep. We do not know what impacts this will have on these sheep. For instance, will the activity of construction, the grading, helicopters, et cetera, cause them to abandon their habitat? Will the presence of the powerlink itself disrupt their movement patterns? What if these animals hesitate to move past or under the powerlink?

This could sever the connectivity of the population, leaving some groups isolated from others, which could have negative effects on the genetic well-being of this population.

Will the presence of maintenance roads encourage illegal off-road traffic or relieve traffic in the big horn habitat? How will that disturb them? Will increased roads and maintenance vehicles increase the invasion of exotic plants into their key foraging habitat or watersheds?

These are just a few of the questions that can be raised. I've studied big horn sheep for 13 years, and I do not know the answers to these questions. Are we willing to risk this?

I want to share with you quickly some observations that were made over the last two days. A biologist who has been monitoring the sheep here e-mailed me yesterday, and she said that she saw a group of 17 sheep along Highway 78 right where the powerlink — one of the still-proposed powerlink routes goes right through, and I have the UTM coordinate, which I'll give to you.

In this group, there was 17 animals, three rams, at least six lambs, eight ewes, at least — and I'm reading here what she sent me — at least two of the collared ewes were very pregnant, a third possibly, one with only a green ear tag in the left ear, Sheep Number 140, very pregnant.

According to my description of lambs, these lambs are no more than six months old. I went down to this area this morning just to see if I could find that same group of sheep. They are still there. What will the powerlink do to this group of sheep? It's an important resource area for them. Would they be there if that powerlink was there? That is a really important question we should think about. I strongly urge you to use non-wireless options.

MR. MICHAELSON: The next speakers are Sara Feldman, David Hogan, Craig Maxwell, Denis Trafecanty, and Martha Sullivan.

MS. FELDMAN: Good afternoon. I'll be very brief.

My name is Sara Feldman. I'm the Southern California Director for the California State Parks Foundation. My organization has 75,000 members throughout California, and every one of them is concerned with threats to state parks, which are many and varied throughout the state, and especially with the threat posed by the Sunrise Powerlink Project.

Our members share Diana Lindsay's understanding of the real cost of destroying precious, irreplaceable park land. On their behalf, I am here to ask that you thoroughly consider all of the alternatives in a fair and really thoughtful manner in order to specifically avoid de-designation of protected wilderness areas and to completely avoid a destruction of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: David Hogan.

MR. HOGAN: Would you mind if I used the mike up there?

MR. MICHAELSON: Yes. I would mind. I want you to speak to the panel.

MR. HOGAN: My name is David Hogan. I'm here today on behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity. We're also concerned about protecting people in communities. That's why we're engaged in this fight against the powerlink. I'm going to focus my comments on some legal issues around the scoping notice today.

MR. MICHAELSON: I need you to please slow down for the court reporter.

MR. HOGAN: I'm going to submit written comments, so just don't worry about it.

I wanted to thank you, first of all, for including the wireless and system alternatives. That's the only way that this project could possibly uphold the public interest and minimize harm from the powerlink to nature and people.

We appreciate that the bundled no-wires alternative and/or system alternatives are the only way to really encourage energy efficiency and conservation in San Diego, to encourage local development of renewable, cleaner, more efficient fossil-fuel generation, to encourage energy grid security and reduce energy costs and, most importantly, protect people and nature.

San Diego Gas & Electric's alternative and other stand-alone alternatives clearly do not advance public interests. They're inferior and should be eliminated from consideration in the EIR/EIS statement.

The basic project statement identified in the second round of the scoping notice really overly emphasizes SDG&E's self-serving, transmission-biased agenda over the public good.

The second scoping notice also does not appear to anticipate necessary evaluation in the draft EIR/EIS of the viability and cost of claimed Imperial Valley renewables.

We know the Stirling solar project is not technologically or commercially viable. We know that geothermal energy development appears significantly limited by market forces. We know that geothermal or other renewable energy production is not likely to exceed existing and planned export capacity by the Imperial Irrigation District. There is no need for the powerlink to remove the renewables.

The second scoping notice also doesn't appear to anticipate necessary evaluation of the current or future capacity of existing or other planned transmission lines to accommodate delivery of Imperial Valley renewables.

The notice appears to neglect one of the single most likely sources of significant cumulative impacts, the full loop. This is the master plan. As mentioned by others earlier, the idea is to move fossil fuel from Mexicali along the Sunrise Powerlink and eventually complete that project by extending it to Riverside. It's called the full loop, and it has been on public record for years.

All of the Southwest Powerlink alternatives would also result in significant impacts to environmental issue areas. I want to make it really clear that we, as an organization, and many of the others we're working with don't support one route over another. The non-wired or wireless alternatives are the only reasonable alternatives to this project. If this project proceeds, it's vandalism against people and nature.

MR. MICHAELSON: Craig Maxwell.

MR. MAXWELL: My name is Craig Maxwell, and though Mr. Hogan earlier foreshadowed my rhetorical question, it's a point worth reiterating. If the project we're discussing today were in, say, Yosemite Valley and the shortest route for your powerlink was through the valley itself, would you do it? To save money, would power lines be stretched from El Capitan to Half Dome? Of course not.

But this answer begs the question: What is it about our desert that makes SDG&E think it's viable? Please consider this question carefully as you weigh your alternatives because we who love the desert will not sacrifice its beauty and integrity for SDG&E's fiscal advantage.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Denis Trafecanty.

MR. TRAFECANTY: Denis Trafecanty.

The gentleman from Stirling Systems incited me, so I've got to respond to that. I do know that the jet propulsion lab rejected the Stirling systems because their prototypes didn't work, and beyond that, I don't know if you heard him say it, but they've been in business for ten years. Is that trying to get that thing to work? And first he said no water, and then he said he had to use water to clean it.

Can you imagine with all the wind that we have in the desert that you don't have to clean those units all the time? What are you going to use? It's a bait and switch.

And the renewables can go up through Green Path North which, as Carolyn Morrow indicated, is already approved, and it's going to be implemented in 2010.

I want you to — now I'm going to — oh, one other thing. I'm worried about the smog in the southeastern section of Anza-Borrego State Park, and I really think that the Aspen Group ought to look into that. It comes from — as we all know, pollution doesn't have borders, and it's coming over. We know that the poor Imperial Valley people are complaining about the brown area, and their children have asthma, highest rate anywhere around.

But now I want to talk to the people. First of all, before I get in trouble with my wife, we do have a petition that I hope you all consider to sign that says “Say no to the Sunrise Powerlink,” “Don't let it go through the desert” as well.

Picture this: Picture you're in San Diego, and you're telling your kids and your family “Let's go up to Anza-Borrego State Park.” So you get in the car. You get into Ramona. You get some gas. You feed the kids and yourselves, and you head on, and you can just feel this energy, this release of pressure as you go up the hill. Then you get into Santa Ysabel. Maybe you'll stop at Dudley's. Then you go on up 79 through that beautiful Santa Ysabel Valley and come into the park, and it's peaceful, and it's quiet.

Our forefathers gave us this wonderful opportunity to see this lovely park in such a pristine state. There are also our forefathers who were property owners who also did the same, both in north and south county, by declaring that their lands that they owned were under the agricultural preserves, and they kept it pristine. Look at Santa Ysabel County. Look at Mesa Grande.

So a group of us got together in Santa Ysabel, and we decided that we were going to somehow get you all to put a little money into the Santa Ysabel Foundation. I'm passing this out. I want you to sign the petition, and we also have our own bottled water, thanks to one of our Santa Ysabel owners who owns the Borrego Springs Bottled Water Company.

I want you to all consider donating to the cause. And also, I can be challenged. I will run up to 100K through the park and through the Imperial Valley to Christmas Circle if you will donate to this cause.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you, Denis.

Martha Sullivan? Martha Sullivan? Maybe she's no longer here.

We did promise state parks that we would be out of here by 5:00 because they need to set up for their meeting, but I wanted to offer two minutes if there's any particular things the panel said they could clarify before we wrap up. Then I'll ask everyone to quickly leave the room so we can get out of their way.

I think the critical one was: When will they know for sure whether or not an alternative has or has not been eliminated? Will that be when a draft EIS comes out, which is July?

MS. BLANCHARD: [Inaudible response].

MR. MICHAELSON: July 13th. I think that's the answer to the question.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Do we still need to have —

MR. MICHAELSON: You're going to have to ask SDG&E that question. So come talk to us afterwards but outside.

[Proceedings adjourned at 4:54 p.m.]