

## Comment Set C.172: Bryce and Cathy Worthington

10/02/06

John Boccio / Marian Kadota  
CPUC / USDA Forest Service  
c/o Aspen Environment Group  
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Re: Draft EIR/EIS for the Proposed Antelope-Pardee 500kv Transmission Project (Application # A.04-12-007)

Dear Mr. Boccio and Ms. Kadota:

We are writing to strongly oppose and protest the proposed alternate route # 5 of the Antelope-Pardee 500k transmission project. We have raised nine children in Leona Valley, several of whom have also chosen to start their own families here, due to the quality of life and safety that Leona Valley affords. We are requesting that the CPUC throw out the possibility of using route 5 as a viable route and utilize an alternative, more suitable corridor for the transmission lines being proposed.

The following are some of the major reasons we feel alternative route 5 is the worst possible choice and one that is not acceptable:

1. Leona Valley is considered a "high-risk fire danger" area. (It is, in fact, quite difficult and extremely expensive to get home owners insurance here due to the extreme risk of fire.) We actually lost our home to a fire in 1994, but still chose to rebuild here rather than move to a more urban environment. The USDA contends that the addition of taller transmission lines would create increased hazards and hindrances to fire fighters, specifically those using helicopters and water dropping aircraft (the primary means of fighting fires in this mountain setting). This will endanger both fire-fighters and home-owners lives in an area where fires move rapidly due to high wind conditions which exist almost daily.

2. Alternate 5 is 40% longer than the existing corridor. This added expense of millions of dollars would be unnecessarily passed on to taxpayers. In addition, route 5 will waste our valuable electrical power due to the longer line resistance loss. In a day of skyrocketing energy costs and the public mandate to conserve all energy sources while cutting costs, this option is unacceptable.

3. Statistical studies prove cancer rates increase 50% in people living near transmission lines. If route 5 were chosen, over 30 homeowners (most with very expensive homes) would be forced to re-locate to protect their health. This would come at a huge cost.

4. Surface water runoff is a huge problem every year. After the mountain behind us burned in 1994 we had runoff that caused a 20 foot river of water dissecting our property which land-locked us. Construction on mountains and roads required to access those construction sites would greatly increase this devastation and could cause massive landslides during heavy rains.

The original existing 1000 ft. corridor through the National Forest would be the least expensive and most efficient option because:

A. No homeowners would be displaced. The quality of life in Leona Valley would remain pristine, and the local school (consistently one of the highest ranked in the state) would not have to close.

B. No costs would be involved in purchasing homes from existing homeowners.

C. Costs and/or risks for fighting fires and other disasters would not be impacted.

C.172-1

C.172-2

C.172-3

C.172-4

D. The original route is 40% shorter than alternative #5 - thereby saving millions of dollars.

E. Route 1 involves the least amount of disruption to geological elements and to wildlife.

As this entire process seems to have been handled in a secretive and underhanded way (as is evidenced, for example, by showing photos of the route 5 that were "photo-shopped" to take out existing homes as if they did not exist) we strongly urge that true facts be brought to light. When this occurs, we are confident that route alternative #1 will be chosen, thereby preserving the quality of life in this wonderful Leona Valley.

Sincerely,

  


Bryce and Cathy Worthington

## Response to Comment Set C.172: Bryce and Cathy Worthington

- C.172-1 Thank you for your opinion regarding Alternative 5. We recognize that Alternative 5 would constrain the ability to aggressively fight a wildland fire in the vicinity of the route, and would create additional fire risks to inhabited areas such as Leona Valley and Agua Dulce (see discussion in Section D.5). Your concerns will be shared with the decision-makers who are reviewing the Project at the USDA Forest Service and the CPUC.
- C.172-2 Although project cost is not discussed in the Draft EIR/EIS, we agree that due to the increased length of Alternative 5, it would cost substantially more than the proposed Project. Your comments will be shared with the decision-makers who are reviewing the Project and alternatives at the USDA Forest Service and the CPUC.
- C.172-3 Please see General Response GR-3 regarding EMF concerns.
- C.172-4 As discussed in Section C.5 (Geology, Soils, and Paleontology) there is a potential for construction of the proposed Project or an alternative to affect local runoff patterns through the introduction of new infrastructure and impervious areas. Any impacts to surface water runoff from the construction of new impervious areas (such as access roads and transmission towers) would be less than significant for the proposed Project and Alternatives 2 through 5. For Alternative 1, Mitigation Measure H-5 (Permeability of Ground Cover) would be implemented to ensure that any potential impacts to runoff would be less than significant.