Attachment 4

COMMITTEE WORKSHOP

BEFORE THE

CALIFORNIA ENERGY RESOURCES CONSERVATION

AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

In the Matter of:	)	
	)	
Informational Proceeding and	)	
Preparation of the 2004 Integrated	)	Docket No.
Energy Policy Report (IEPR) Update	)	03-IEP-01
	)	
Re: 2004 Transmission Update	)	
White Paper	)	
	)	

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY BLDG.

CENTRAL VALLEY ROOM, SECOND FLOOR

1001 I STREET

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

MONDAY, AUGUST 23, 2004

9:14 A.M.

Reported by:
Peter Petty
Contract No. 150-04-002

MS. GRAU: He's 11 years old, so he's not old enough to work anyway. All right, thank you.

So do we have any questions, or would you like to go right on to our speakers? If there's no questions for me we'll just move on.

PRESIDING MEMBER GEESMAN: Thanks, Judy.

MS. GRAU: All right, thank you.

PRESIDING MEMBER GEESMAN: First one up on my list is Keith Demetrak, California Department of Parks and Recreation.

MR. DEMETRAK: Well, good morning, Members of the Commission. My name is Keith Demetrak; I'm Chief of Planning for California State Parks. And I was asked by staff of the Energy Commission to address the Commission on the question of how should the Energy Commission work with the appropriate state and federal agencies to develop a policy for designating utility corridors across state of federally owned land. And I guess the short answer to that question would be closely.

Let me say that, at least speaking for State Parks, and I won't speak for Forest Service lands or National Parks, although I think we share

a common mission, at least with the National Park Service, that we consider these parks as special places.

We consider the placement of a utility corridor or any intrusion in the park for a nonpark purpose in much the same fashion as you would look at a crossing of a national cemetery or a national cathedral in much the same manner.

However, we're also mindful of the state's needs for energy, water and all the things associated with a growing population. There are certain regulatory and policy requirements that we consider in addressing the question of utility corridors and transmissions across state park property, some of which are statutory, some of which are policy.

There is a Commission policy, that's the California State Park and Recreation Commission, on undergrounding of utilities. And quite frankly, we're finding in some cases that's probably not the best alternative. It's Roman numeral III.8. And it essentially says that utilities shall be placed underground in units of the State Park System, exceptions may be permitted by the option of the Director.

In terms of the regulatory kinds of things there are probably three requirements that we look at. The California Public Park Preservation Act of 1971 provides that a public agency that acquires public parkland for nonpark use must either pay compensation that is sufficient to acquire substantial equivalent substitute parkland or provide substitute parkland of comparable characteristics.

Similarly, Public Resources Code 5024 and 5024.5 related to CEQA requires a state agency that proposes a project which may result in adverse effects on historical resources listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historic Resources to consult with the State Historic Preservation Office and to identify feasible and prudent measures that will eliminate or mitigate the adverse impacts.

And then finally, at the federal level, the Act that set up the land and water conservation fund provides federal moneys for which many of our parks or portions of parks require, and that's the -- I can give you the citation later if you'd like -- has a requirement

that the Act prohibits the conversion to a nonrecreational purpose or property acquired or developed with these grants without the approval of the Department of the Interior.

Section 6F directs the Department of the Interior to insure that replacement lands of equal value, monetary, that is, location and usefulness are provided as conditions to such conversions and so forth and so on.

So we are bound by certain state and federal laws and statutes, as well as policy, to closely consider the question of transmissions across State Park properties.

And I should also indicate that state parks are divided into eight classifications and three subclassifications. It's everything from the major classifications are things like state parks, state reserves, state seashore, wayside campground, state historic parks, state beaches, state recreation area and state reserve.

The three subclassifications, that is classifications that are found within the boundaries of existing park units are state wilderness, state natural preserve and state cultural preserve.

And looking at a statewide policy for the transmission lines or corridors across state park properties I think the things that come most to mind are to avoid those resources and particularly as maybe exemplified by the classification of the most sensitive park areas. That would be things like state wilderness, state natural or cultural preserve, state reserve, and to a certain extent, state parks.

To focus more on those areas there where there's probably already more of a developed or disturbed environment. That's going to be off-highway vehicle areas, state recreation areas.

And, in fact, many of our state recreation areas are reservoirs that were created to either store water or store water for hydropower and transmissions. And so you'll find transmission lines already traversing these park units.

Aside from that at the statewide level the thing that we would probably look for are locating transmission lines along already disturbed areas, and that would be generally along park roads. Because oftentimes it isn't so much the initial transmission line, itself, that causes

us the kind of a long-range concern; it's the ongoing maintenance and routine maintenance of these areas and the need for additional roads and traffic along undisturbed areas.

Beyond all that the suggestion that I would most offer is to work closely with our district and superintendents and our field staff. Our Department, the 279 units in the State Park System are divided into 18 districts. And each district has one or more sectors to it.

In the case of Anza-Borrego, which is the Colorado Desert District, and there are three sectors; including one sector that is Anza-Borrego, itself.

And what I'd like to do is just read briefly to the Commission a copy of an email transmittal that went between myself and the sector superintendent for Anza-Borrego, Mark Jorgensen. His comment was:

Our best luck comes from working in the field with the power company representatives, biologists and technical staff to meet both of our missions. Mutual respect has paid off, though there are still some inherent suspicions on both sides. Getting familiar with each other and

practicing some give-and-take has worked so far. We now have worked on two post-fire" -- and that's the major fires that were in southern California last year -- "where we are moving major lines out of the canyons and roadless areas of the park over to our paved or dirt roads."

"Statewide we are having to create new corridors or replace lines, it would be beneficial to consider putting utilities adjacent to paved or designated dirt roads. What we have found so far is that there is a lot of pole maintenance on older lines and annual veg control around poles for fire prevention. And in the wild areas the major work often calls for work to be done by helicopter."

"If we get lines up next to the roads it makes for a situation where all the maintenance work can be done from the roadside using boom trucks and we don't have to get so involved with the power company to mitigate impacts."

Further, his initial response to my question about how is this working in the case of Anza-Borrego and San Diego Gas and Electric, his comment is: Our take on the subject is that with the metro areas of San Diego, Orange County and

L.A. to our west and northwest, there are going to be ever-increasing pressures to deliver power, water and petroleum products from the interior of the county to the coast."

"Since Anza-Borrego is about 70 miles in length from north to south there are obviously going to be negotiations to bring power corridors across the park. Indeed we have met with SDG&E, Mr. Jeff Sykes, Supervisor and Environmental Coordinator, and Mr. Phil Bunch, Biologist, and driven the corridor which would most likely serve the needs of a future 500 kV power line."

"Currently there is a 69 kV line which basically traverses the middle of the park in an east-west direction along highway 78. On its western end the park turns northwesterly up the Grapevine. We discussed the concept, which the Park can agree with, of increasing the 500 kV using taller steel poles with longer spans than the current wooden poles. The taller poles with spans two to three times the current span would actually have less physical impacts on the ground, on archeological sites, riparian areas, wildlife habitat, plant disturbance, et cetera. Although they will have a much higher visual impact along

the corridor."

"We agreed in concept in the field that Parks will work with SDG&E or Sempra or whatever it takes to make this massive energy increase a reality in the future. Where we discussed what will be off-limits to new power corridors are the designated state wilderness areas within Anza-Borrego. The areas not designated as wilderness are the margins of current power lines and along paved highways and county roads."

"Thus the idea of putting any new power lines in the park centers on placement along already disturbed routes, i.e., paved highways, as discussed in the energy briefing paper. We can and will work with SDG&E. We've worked with them successfully in (inaudible) Rancho after the big fires to place the power corridor along state highway 79."

"This allows future pole and line maintenance to be done from paved roads" -- I mentioned that already. We are more than willing to get together with anybody any time we can bring along our GIS technology with archeological sites, eagle nests, bighorn lambing areas, water sources, veg layers, and, yes, even power line right-of-

ways to discuss these."

So I think at the district level it can work very well, and kind of a mutual respect for both our mission as well as the need for the energy, or whatever the corridor transmission is.

There are some statewide things that can be done in terms of siting location with respect to some of the classifications we have.

We can also look towards, you know, how can some of these transmission corridors benefit the basic mission of parks or some of these state or federal areas. And that is that some of these corridors can create conductivity between major habitat areas. If we look long distance, that's one of the greatest problems, especially facing habitat these days, it's both the loss of habitat, but primarily the loss of conductivity of that habitat. Perhaps these long-range or long-distance corridors can connect some of that, particularly across private lands where we're currently having problems.

They can also provide trail opportunities. And there's, you know, trail use, hiking, bike, equestrian is the single largest recreation activity in California. Perhaps

there's some opportunity to work jointly so it accomplishes not only their mission, but our long-range mission, as well.

Do you have any questions?

PRESIDING MEMBER GEESMAN: We sure want to thank you for your contribution. And I think that when we get the transcript of the remarks that you quoted from, it will prove quite helpful.

My question is whether or not you have a regular planning process in your 200-plus units that addresses electric transmission corridors; or whether it's more of a project-by-project as particular sponsors want to address your concerns they bring those to your attention?

MR. DEMETRAK: Well, we do not have a project, we do not have a plan in place, nor do we have it scheduled to look at transmission corridors across park boundaries statewide. We react to them on the basis of either a hearing like this where there is a proposal for how these might be -- might encourage that way.

And I'll use, for example, the high-speed rail proposal right now. We've looked at what's been proposed there, and currently we're looking at potential impacts on 23 park units up