

Comment Set C.214: Charles Brink

# Vanguard News

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Providing local news to Acton and Agua Dulce

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October 3, 2006

John Boccio, CPUC, EIR Project Manager  
Marian Kadota, USFS, EIS Project Manager  
Aspen Environmental Group  
30423 Canwood Street, Suite 215  
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

RECEIVED  
OCT - 4 2006

BY:.....

Sent electronically by e-mail to antelope-pardee@aspeneq.com

RE: Antelope Pardee 500kV Transmission Project Proposed by Southern  
California Edison

Application No. A. 04-12-007

Dear Mr. Boccio and Ms. Kadota:

Please place my e-mail address Acton@wgn.net on the electronic service list for  
this project.

A number of residents of Agua Dulce have asked me to submit an objection  
summarizing their position on the power line DEIR. I have spoken to and  
corresponded by e-mail to hundreds of residents and property owners in Agua Dulce.

This entire draft DIR is a conspiracy and is filled with self-dealing between this so-  
called independent firm preparing the analysis Aspen Engineering and the National  
Forest, a co-preparer of the project. Typically showing the self-dealing, the National  
Forest was granted a 10-month extension in 2005 to respond to the project and the  
community was granted just a few weeks extension to respond.

The National Forest took a position that their new National Forest Plan prohibited  
power lines in the forest and instructed Aspen Engineering to develop "Option 5",  
which not only removes the new power lines from the forest, but also removes the  
existing 66KV power line.

Aspen Engineering, like an obedient puppy dog, now claims that "Option 5" is the  
visually preferred route because it removes a power line from the forest and totally  
ignores the impact of condemning 103 properties in Agua Dulce and placing power  
lines in a visually pristine area as the backdrop to Vasquez Rocks, a Los Angeles  
County park.

C.214-1

They placed "Option 5" on their website with no public notice on 7-21-06 with a  
comment cut off of 9-18-06, giving the newly affected community less than 60 days to

respond. Even though Agua Dulce has 2 adjudicated newspapers, they provided no formal notification of this massive project. There is no way that anyone in the community could have been aware of "Option 5" unless they constantly monitored the CPUC's site. As the original proposed project had no effect on Agua Dulce until this stealth change was made under the Forest Service's direction, it would be unreasonable to expect anyone in the community to even be aware of the project.

C.214-2

The self-dealing between Aspen Engineering and the Forest Service has destroyed any independence that Aspen Engineering must maintain under their contract. Their failed analysis of "Option 5", in what appears to be a predetermination that "Option 5" is the best option without regard to real environmental effects, shows their bias.

A detailed analysis of the environmental and economic affect of the taking of property is required under eminent domain, as well as the huge potential cost of destroying the viewscape. Also the costs and awards of the additional lawsuits for loss and economic value to the entire community must be considered, with the taking of peoples' rights and the loss of the community's still pristine viewsapes.

C.214-3

The effect of this huge additional cost on ratepayers with "Option 5" as opposed to simply expanding the existing line in the National Forest needs to be analyzed. The National Forest is neither pristine nor in fact a recognizable forest and has allowed massive mining in Acton and Agua Dulce, without any regard to the injury to the forest.

C.214-4

**The National Forest's rights do not outweigh the community's rights. This environmental study must be started over with a new engineering firm who is actually independent from the proposed project operators.**

Agua Dulce is an unincorporated rural community of approximately 4,000 residents in the mountains between the urban city of Los Angeles and the slightly less urban Antelope Valley in northern Los Angeles County. The community is composed of family owned ranches and homes with very limited commercial areas. It has the largest self-contained winery in Los Angeles County.

While the Draft EIR points out many areas where Alternate 5 route is not the preferred choice, there are numerous areas where the report falls far short and in some areas is woefully inadequate in examining all the issues in a detailed and comprehensive manner. The alternate 5 alignment places a huge burden on Agua Dulce and does not substantially lessen any impacts of the Proposed Project on the National Forest.

The Draft EIR states "Operation of Alternative 5 would create a long-term disruption to residential land uses (Impact L-30)." SCE would be required to obtain new easements across over 100 privately owned parcels. The Draft EIR indicates the actual alignment of Alternate 5 will not be determined until Alternate 5 is implemented causing loss of property values for untold years during the planning and construction phases.

C.214-5

Alternate 5 will result in the loss of many equestrian properties. Agua Dulce is one of the last of the surviving equestrian communities in Los Angeles County. The community is proud of being a ranching community and are protective of maintaining

the equestrian lifestyle. Recreational horse back riding will be greatly impacted. Many ranches located along Alternate 5 operate as agricultural/commercial businesses with boarding facilities, breeding facilities, and training facilities. The Draft EIR is incorrect stating Alternate 5 will have no impacts on business uses.

C.214-6

The mere mention of a proposed high voltage transmission line and a new utility corridor in a pristine area of any community will result in loss of property value. Increased sales time and limited interested buyers has already had an impact on properties for sale in Agua Dulce. The possibility of eminent domain and the uncertainty of the actual alignment will impact hundreds of properties as to the long-term effect.

C.214-7

The project will have a direct affect reducing all property values within their visual range. The loss of the panoramic scenic vistas most properties enjoy will decrease the value of their homes and ranches.

Introducing a new EMF source located close to existing residences compared to an existing right of way in a remote area creates public health and safety concerns. There is controversy over whether EMFs can cause increased risk of leukemia, brain cancer, Lou Gehrig's disease, and miscarriages. Even if the EMF issue is not as serious as felt by many experts, keeping the power lines in remote area instead of adjacent to private residences is the safest approach.

C.214-8

Weather conditions regularly have average sustained winds around 30 miles per hour. Gusts have been reported in excess of 85 miles per hour. Most wild fires are extinguished by helicopter and fixed wing aircraft. These new power lines would severely limit the containment of fires by aircraft and substantially raise the risk for fire emergencies.

C.214-9

The taking of homes through the power of eminent domain is a governmental power that should be used only as a last resort. In fact, a proposition on the state election in November specifically limits the right of the government to take property through eminent domain for commercial use.

We agree with the conclusions made separately by the Agua Dulce Town Council that there are serious concerns regarding the Alternate 5 route. We ask that Alternate 5 be eliminated from further review.

We ask that our comments be given serious consideration. We appreciate the opportunity to present our concerns and hope those concerns are kept in mind during the review of the Proposed Project. If any of our comments need clarification or further explanation, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Charles Brink

## Response to Comment Set C.214: Charles Brink

- C.214-1 As discussed in Section C.9.10.2, the alternative alignment would be constructed across 103 privately owned parcels. The majority of land uses that would be restricted as a result of Alternative 5 would be the erection of new structures within the alternative ROW. However, given that SCE has not conducted construction or final alignment and design studies for Alternative 5, the EIR/EIS has assumed that the removal of one or more homes may occur. As such, Section C.9.10.2 (Impact L-3) concluded that potential impacts to residential land uses as a result of Alternative 5 would be significant and unavoidable.
- C.214-2 Please see General Response GR-5 regarding noticing procedures and the review period for the Draft EIR/EIS. On September 13, the CPUC and the Forest Service formally extended the public review period for the Draft EIR/EIS to October 3, 2006.
- C.214-3 Please see Response to Comment GR-2 regarding property acquisition
- C.214-4 SCE's proposed Project and several of the alternatives analyzed in the EIR/EIS include the use of existing transmission rights-of-way. However, the proposed Project and each of the alternatives would require the acquisition of land for right-of-way purposes, either for new transmission corridors or for widening of existing transmission corridors. Please see General Response GR-4 regarding the development of alternative routes outside of NFS lands.
- C.214-5 Thank you for your opinion regarding Alternative 5 and property values.
- C.214-6 As discussed in Section C.12.10.2 (Socioeconomics: Impacts and Mitigation Measures) Alternative 5 would involve the construction of a route that would have the potential to impact local businesses. However, with regard to the operational impacts of Alternative 5 on Boarding, breeding, and training facilities would be categorized as agricultural uses. Consequently, impacts to agricultural resources are addressed under Impact S-3 under Criterion SOC3 in Section C.12.10.2 of the Socioeconomics section and under Impacts L-5 and L-6 under Criterion LU3 in Section C.9.10.2 of the Land Use and Public Recreation section.
- C.214-7 Please see General Response GR-1 regarding potential effects on property values and General Response GR-2 regarding property acquisition.
- C.214-8 Thank you for your opinion regarding placement of the power lines. Please see General Response GR-3 regarding EMF concerns.
- C.214-9 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 and alternatives at the USDA Forest Service and the CPUC.