

H. Public Participation

This section outlines the scoping and public participation program completed by the CPUC before issuance of the Draft EIR.

H.1 EIR Scoping Process

The scoping process for the Miguel-Mission 230 kV #2 Project EIR consists of three elements listed below. Each element is described in more detail in the following sections:

1. Publication of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an EIR and Notice of Public Scoping Meetings soliciting comments from affected public agencies and members of the public, as required by CEQA;
2. Public Scoping Meetings and meetings with agencies;
3. Summarization of scoping comments in a Scoping Report;

In order to maximize agency and public input on the Miguel-Mission 230 kV #2 Project, CPUC established a Miguel-Mission 230 kV #2 Project website, email address, a telephone hotline, and local EIR Information Repositories. The Scoping Report and other project information were posted to the CPUC's website for review by the public and interested parties.

H.1.1 Notice of Preparation

The CPUC issued the NOP of an EIR on September 5, 2003 and distributed it to the State Clearinghouse (SCH No. 2003091025) and federal, State, and local trustee and agencies that may be affected by the Proposed Project, as required by CEQA. There were 1,178 copies of the NOP mailed out to members of the public, including all property owners located within 300 feet of the project facilities. In addition, the NOP was sent to 12 federal agency departments, 25 State agency departments, nine county departments, seven city departments, 16 Native American groups, and 11 special districts (e.g., school and water districts). There was a 30-day required period for interested parties to submit comments regarding the contents of the EIR. A copy of the NOP is available in the Scoping Report, which may be viewed on the Miguel-Mission 230 kV #2 Project website.

H.1.2 Public Scoping Meetings

As part of the EIR scoping process, two public scoping meetings were conducted to solicit comments regarding the scope and content of the EIR, as well as the alternatives and mitigation measures that should be considered as part of the analysis. Thirty-four individuals (eight in Spring Valley and 26 in Santee), including representatives of organizations and government agencies, attended. The scoping meetings were held at the following locations and times:

- September 15, 2003, at 5:30 p.m. at the Spring Valley Branch Library, Spring Valley
- September 16, 2003, at 7:00 p.m. at the Santee City Hall, Santee.

H.1.3 Scoping Report

In December 2003, a comprehensive Scoping Report was issued summarizing concerns received from the public and various agencies and presenting copies of comment letters received. Sixty-three letters and emails were received from public agencies and local residents during the NOP scoping period. The Scoping Report was made available for review on the Internet as listed in Section H.2.2.3. Commenting agencies and scoping meeting attendees were notified via postcard that the Scoping Report was posted on the CPUC's website and available for review.

The majority of public comments focused on the potential impacts of the Proposed Project on the human environment, most often expressing concerns with health risks arising from increased electric and magnetic field (EMF) emissions, visual and scenic impacts, and impacts to property values. Other common concerns dealt with safety issues, noise, construction impacts, fire risk, interference with communication and electronic equipment, security, conflicts with planned uses, recreation impacts, and quality of life.

The specific issues raised during the public scoping process are summarized below according to the following major themes:

- Purpose and Need
- Human Environment Issues and Concerns
- Natural Environment Issues and Concerns
- Alternatives
- Environmental Review and Decision Making Process.

Purpose and Need

The purpose and need for the Proposed Project was addressed in numerous comments received from individuals living in Santee, El Cajon, and Lakeside. Public comments expressed concern that SDG&E had not provided: (1) adequate justification for project need; (2) an adequate description of the transmission line's future use; (3) an adequate description of future growth in the area and its impact on energy supply and demand; (4) information on energy sources and markets; and (5) a sufficiently detailed explanation on what is causing the demand for the Proposed Project. Many residents from the Cities of Santee and El Cajon questioned whether the need for electricity in other parts of the State outweighed the quality of life of local residents directly impacted by the Proposed Project.

Human Environment Issues and Concerns

Nearly all of the public and agency comments raised strong concerns regarding the potential impacts of the Proposed Project on the human environment, most often expressing concerns with health risks associated with increased EMF emissions, visual, noise, scenic impacts, and impacts to property values. Other concerns dealt with construction impacts, safety issues and fire risk, conflicts with planned uses, traffic and transportation, utilities and services, recreation, and overall quality of life.

- **EMF-Related Health and Safety Issues.** The majority of comments from members of the public and organizations expressed concern over the health effects of the proposed 230 kV transmission line and the EMF it would generate. Many of the comments emphasized the sensitive nature of the residential areas adjacent to the Proposed Project due to the large number of family homes, children, schools, and elderly in the area.

- **Impacts to Property Values.** Numerous public comments expressed concern regarding potential impacts the Proposed Project may have on their home property values, business values, and local tax revenues. The public perceives that the Proposed Project would reduce the desirability of homes due to health and safety hazards, increased noise from the transmission lines, and reduced aesthetic appeal. Specific topics mentioned in the comments included impacts to the real estate market and the ability to sell homes in areas impacted by the Proposed Project, as well as impacts to the tax base of San Diego County and the Cities of Santee and El Cajon.
- **Visual and Aesthetic Impacts.** The potential visual and aesthetic impacts of the Proposed Project were raised specifically in many comments from residents living in Santee and El Cajon, as well as by staff representing the City of Santee and the County of San Diego. Diminished views were frequently cited as one of many reasons that the Proposed Project would reduce property values. The County of San Diego Department of Planning and Land Use also recommended that the EIR should provide a supporting visual impact study because staff believed that the Proposed Project could cause visual and aesthetic impacts that would need to be mitigated with appropriate measures. The City of Santee expressed concern that the new poles within the ROW between Los Coches Substation and Fanita Junction would cause new significant visual impacts to the community particularly in sensitive hillside areas and protected habitat preserve areas.
- **Operational Noise Impacts.** Several verbal and written comments stated that the existing overhead transmission line was already causing substantial noise, characterized as a buzzing or crackling noise. Residents living near the existing line expressed concerns that the noise from the proposed 230 kV line would add to the existing noise levels and would cause significant noise impacts to nearby residents. Comments associated noise from the lines with increased perceptions of risk or danger and with decreased real estate value.
- **Construction Impacts.** Several residents, the County of San Diego, and a property management agency presented concerns regarding impacts from construction activities and associated traffic and access needs. Concerns for construction impacts overlapped with concerns regarding noise levels, air pollution, impacts to biological resources, protection of water resources, impacts to cultural resources, public utilities, health and safety, and overall quality of life in the affected communities.
- **Safety Issues and Fire Risk.** Several comments focused on safety issues associated with prevention of fires, explosions, and electrocution. There was particular concern from residents of the City of Santee that fires may occur if the new poles/towers are placed too close to homes. One resident of Santee expressed concern that installation of the Proposed Project along hillsides could result in instability of the ground, creating risk that homes may slide downhill. There was also one request for information on safeguards and contingency plans in the event of an earthquake. The City of San Diego commented that a large portion of the Proposed Project route would traverse the former Camp Elliott site, where there may be unexploded ordnance from previous military training operations. Due to potential safety issues, the City of San Diego recommended that the Draft EIR analyze impacts to this area and that a sweep for ordnance be completed prior to commencement of any technical surveys or project construction in this area.
- **Impacts Related to Transportation and Traffic.** The County of San Diego Department of Planning and Land Use recommended that the Draft EIR should analyze potentially significant impacts from construction traffic including: the location of parking areas, road usage, traffic flow (especially at intersections), property access, and cumulative impacts. The County of San Diego would be the agency responsible for issuing permits for construction traffic that would occur within County facilities.

- **Impacts to Utilities and Service Systems.** The County of San Diego Department of Planning and Land Use recommended that the Draft EIR identify whether the Proposed Project would affect utility easements within County lands. Otay Water District recommended that SDG&E work with the District's engineering public services division to review water facility plans and coordinate the processing of required permits. The Cajon Valley Union School District commented that construction along streets and linear ROWs could disrupt local and regional services provided by underground utilities.
- **Interference with Communications and Electronic Equipment.** The City of Santee commented that the EIR should analyze the potential of the Proposed Project to disrupt or interfere with communications or electronic equipment.
- **Conflicts with Planned Land Uses.** Several local and regional government agencies requested evaluations to determine the potential impacts that the Proposed Project could have on planned land uses. The County of San Diego Department of Planning and Land Use expressed concern that the Proposed Project route could impact residential areas, parks, and commercial areas within unincorporated County lands. The City of San Diego expressed concerns related to possible conflicts that the Proposed Project may have with the regional Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP), Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP), or other local ordinances protecting natural resources. They were also concerned about the potential impacts on the Sycamore Landfill, a privately owned solid waste landfill facility. The Padre Dam Municipal Water District (PDMWD) is planning a new reservoir in the Lake Jennings area and requested additional information regarding the location of the transmission line upgrade within the City of Santee relative to Lake Jennings.
- **Impacts to Recreational Areas and Open Space.** The County of San Diego Department of Planning and Land Use commented that the Proposed Project may significantly impact recreational facilities and open space within unincorporated areas of the County and requested that the direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to these recreational areas be identified, analyzed, and avoided or mitigated as appropriate. The County of San Diego also discussed potential access issues at Louis A. Stelzer County Park and Lake Jennings County Park. The PDMWD was concerned with actions that would occur specifically within Santee Lakes Regional Park including areas accessed during construction activities. The PDMWD requested specific maps and plans for the Proposed Project within the area of the Santee Lakes Regional Park and wherever the alignment falls within District boundaries or crosses District facilities. The PDMWD would like to be notified and given the specific alignment at least for the portions within the District boundaries prior to the start of construction in order to comment on the impact to District operations and facilities. The City of San Diego expressed concern that the alignment of the proposed transmission line could impact open space that is managed by the Park and Recreation Department including a long swath through Mission Trails Regional Park.
- **Impacts to the Quality of Life.** Public comments expressed concern that the Proposed Project would cause a substantial negative impact on the quality of life of residents living near the Proposed Project.

Natural Environment Issues and Concerns

Comments from organizations, individuals, and government agencies addressed issues and concerns with the potential impacts that the Proposed Project would have on the natural environment, particularly impacts to plants, wildlife, and habitats. Preserve Wild Santee, the City of San Diego and the County of San Diego expressed concerns that the Proposed Project would affect: (a) coastal sage scrub habitat, (b) federal and State protected wildlife species, and (c) existing Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and

Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) areas, including the San Diego County Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan. The City of San Diego indicated concern that approximately half of Subsection F (see Figure 1-5 of the PEA, July 2002) would be located within the City of San Diego's Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), which was established by the City's MSCP. The City of San Diego also expressed concern that the proposed transmission line could impact areas within Mission Trails Regional Park, an area that contains a variety of sensitive upland and wetland habitat types and associated flora and fauna.

- **Impacts to Cultural and Paleontological Resources.** The County of San Diego Department of Planning and Land Use provided several comments related to cultural and paleontological resources within unincorporated County lands including: (a) identification of locations that contain or may contain significant cultural resources; (b) analysis of impacts of the Proposed Project on historical and archaeological resources per requirements of State CEQA Guidelines; and (c) completion of field surveys for archaeological features and artifacts. The City of San Diego similarly asserted that the Proposed Project may impact known and/or unknown historical resources on, or adjacent to, the project alignment.
- **Impacts to Hydrology and Water Quality.** The County of San Diego Department of Planning and Land Use commented that the Draft EIR should provide maps of hydrologic features (e.g., 100-year flood boundaries, hydrologic basins) and water resources (e.g., reservoirs, rivers) within the County. The County further requested that the Draft EIR include: (a) an analysis of the Proposed Project's impact to surface drainage patterns, cause for erosion, siltation, or flooding and impacts to storm water drainage systems; and (b) determine if the project will affect water quality under the Clean Water Act via discharge, by increasing loads into impaired waterbodies, exceeding applicable surface or groundwater quality standards, and otherwise impacting beneficial water uses.

Alternatives

Many comments from individuals and organizations and a number of government agencies suggested alternatives, including the No Project Alternative, alternative tower designs, and alternative routes. The most frequently discussed alternatives included a complete underground route or a route that was partially underground at locations close to certain neighborhoods or cities (e.g., City of Santee). Modifications of overhead routes were also suggested, including the avoidance of additional or new poles, increasing distance between new towers and homes and schools, or changing the location (side of the street, elevation) of towers to avoid causing impacts to sensitive receptors.

Several comments suggested alternative tower designs that may reduce EMF levels by grouping wires or by moving the wires to certain sides of towers/poles. Other suggestions included using the most visually pleasing poles available, painting poles brown or with a subtle and harmonious color, and using only existing towers as much as possible. These alternatives were put forth in an effort to minimize visual and aesthetic impacts on the environment. Several comments from government agencies and the majority of comments from organizations and individuals expressed preferences for alternative routes.

Environmental Review and Decision-Making Process

A few suggestions and comments were made regarding the adequacy of the environmental review and decision-making process. Individuals and agencies addressed the following issues: (a) the efficacy of the CPUC's review and the fairness and completeness of the environmental review process in general; (b) the need for the Draft EIR to provide full disclosure of human health risks; (c) the need for a full evaluation of the project alternatives in the Draft EIR; and (d) the establishment of a public relations

program by SDG&E to inform residents about the project schedule, construction schedule, and other project activities, as appropriate.

H.2 Public Notification

This section summarizes the CPUC's program of public notice and participation to maximize agency and public input on the Miguel-Mission 230 kV #2 Project. It consists of three elements as described below.

1. Public Notification
2. Public Review Period
3. EIR Information and Repository Sites

H.2.1 Public Notification

As described in Section H.1, the NOP was mailed on September 5, 2003 to federal, State, and local trustee and agencies that may be affected by the Proposed Project. There were 1,178 copies of the NOP mailed out to members of the public, including all those property owners located within 300 feet of the project facilities. The NOP and scoping meeting information was also posted on CPUC's project web site (see Section H.2.2.3 for web site address). Notices for the two public scoping meetings were also published in the *San Diego Union Tribune* on September 8, 2003 and the *East County Californian* on September 12, 2003.

A Notice of Release of the Draft EIR will be sent to property owners and occupants on or adjacent to SDG&E's Proposed Project route and evaluated alternative routes at the time the Draft EIR is released. The Notice will include information about how to access the Draft EIR, will identify the Environmentally Superior Alternative(s), and the dates and times and locations of any Informational Workshops, as well as the CPUC's Public Participation Hearings.

H.2.2 Public Review Period

In compliance with CEQA Guidelines, the CPUC provides a public review period of 45 days for the Draft EIR. This public review period will commence upon release of the Draft EIR on April 1, 2004, and will terminate on May 17, 2004. Written comments on the Draft EIR may be submitted at the informational workshops and Public Participation Hearings, via fax on the EIR telephone hotline, via email at miguelmission@aspenerg.com, or by mail to:

Michael Rosauer, Project Manager
California Public Utilities Commission
c/o Aspen Environmental Group
235 Montgomery Street, Suite 935
San Francisco, CA 94104

Written comments must be received or postmarked by May 17, 2004. Please remember to include your name and return address in whatever form you make your written comments. Verbal comments will only be received at the CPUC's Public Participation Hearings, in order to ensure an accurate record is made by a court reporter.

Following the release of the Draft EIR, four informational workshops will be held in similar locations to the Scoping Meetings (times and dates are listed below). The purpose of these informational workshops is to help affected communities understand the Proposed Project, the Draft EIR, and how to participate in the CPUC’s decision-making process, including providing comments on the Draft EIR. At these informational workshops, the EIR Team and CPUC staff will be available to respond to questions and provide clarification regarding the impact analysis and conclusions presented in the Draft EIR.

At the same place and time, there will also be Public Participation Hearings for formal verbal comments on the Draft EIR where the public can speak informally on the record about any other issues of concern related to SDG&E’s CPCN Application. These Public Participation Hearings (PPHs) will be held by Administrative Law Judge Kim Malcolm; times and dates are below. For more information on the Informational Workshops and PPHs, you may contact the Public Advisor at (866) 849-8390 or via e-mail at public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov. Following are the locations and dates for informational meetings and hearings:

CPUC Informational Workshops and ALJ Public Participation Hearings
<p>May 10, 2004, at 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Santee City Hall Council Chamber – Building 2 10601 Magnolia Avenue Santee, CA 92071</p>
<p>May 11, 2004, at 4:00 p.m. Spring Valley Branch Library – Community Room 836 Kempton Street Spring Valley, CA 91977</p>
<p>May 11, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. El Cajon Community Center – East Room 195 East Douglas Avenue El Cajon, CA 92020</p>

H.2.3 EIR Information and Repository Sites

Providing copies of documents associated with the Proposed Project in “repository” sites local to the project area is an effective way of making ongoing project information available to concerned citizens. There are 12 repository sites listed below where citizens may view the documents and make copies of them. In addition, copies of documents have been made available at the CPUC office in San Francisco. Copies of the Draft EIR will be available to the public at the locations listed below.

<p>Serra Mesa Branch Library 3440 Sandrock Road San Diego, CA 92123-2198</p>	<p>Benjamin Branch Library 5188 Zion Avenue San Diego, CA 92120-2728</p>	<p>Tierrasanta Branch Library 4985 La Cuesta Drive San Diego, CA 92124-2601</p>
<p>Santee Branch Library 9225 Carlton Hills Boulevard #17 Santee, CA 92071</p>	<p>Lakeside Branch Library 9839 Vine Street Lakeside, CA 92040</p>	<p>Cresta Branch Library 105 Juanita Lane El Cajon, CA 92021</p>
<p>El Cajon Branch Library 201 East Douglas El Cajon, CA 92020</p>	<p>Rancho San Diego Branch Library 111555 Via Rancho San Diego El Cajon, CA 92019</p>	<p>Casa De Oro Branch Library 9805 Campo Road Spring Valley, CA 91977</p>
<p>Spring Valley Branch Library 836 Kempton Street Spring Valley, CA 91977</p>	<p>Bonita/Sunnyside Branch Library 5047 Central Avenue Bonita, CA 91902</p>	<p>Eastlake Branch Library 1120 Eastlake Parkway Chula Vista, CA 91913</p>

Internet Website: The following website will be used to post all public documents during the environmental review process and to announce upcoming public meetings:

http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/aspen/miguel_mission/miguelmission.htm.

Project Information Hotline. Project information may also be requested by leaving a voice message or sending a fax to **(619) 353-5044**.