

**SUNRISE POWERLINK HEARING  
BORREGO SPRINGS  
FEBRUARY 26, 2008**

Thank you for taking the time to listen to our comments in person and thank you also for the monumental effort that must have gone into the preparation of this impact assessment.

My name is Jeanette Hartman and I am speaking for the People's Powerlink. I am a professional conservationist. I also chair the Land Use Committee for the Sierra Club in San Diego. I live in Borrego Springs.

My comments pertain to the alternatives section of the impact assessment.

Your preferred alternative commendably avoids the outrageous impacts that would occur to Anza Borrego Desert State Park and other priceless backcountry natural areas from the 500 kv transmission line.

But that is not a high enough objective. Borrego Springs is still left with impacts of a 15 mw diesel power plant that would be constructed under Alternative 1.

The Borrego Valley air basin is one of the least polluted in the United States. That is why we have a community of people who are victims of toxic poisoning who have moved to Borrego Springs from all over the United States because their lives are placed in jeopardy when they are exposed to even low levels of pollution.

These are people who live with concrete floors in their homes, because even synthetic carpets are unbearable to their fragile nervous systems. These are people who live like nomads, often living for weeks at a time out of their cars, because of some event, like the spraying of orchards with pesticides, which places their lives in jeopardy.

I can't ignore the impact that the diesel plant would have on my fellow human beings who suffer from toxic poisoning. Nor can I ignore the impact that the South Bay Power Plant is having and will continue to have on my fellow human beings who live in the South Bay. The communities impacted by that plant have been trying to get it out of their neighborhoods for years.

Nor can I ignore the impacts that a new power plant in Miramar will have on my fellow human beings who live in Santee.

We are pushing an air bubble around in a water bed. We are not getting rid of the problem. We are pushing it from one place to another. And poisoning ourselves in the process.

The problem is that we need a new paradigm and you are giving us conventional alternatives. It seems clear that the new paradigm should be based on roof-top solar, the environmentally superior technology for one of the sunniest places in the country.

You eliminated this alternative because it was determined not to be feasible. Feasibility is a subjective matter.

When the Sierra Club Land Use Committee agreed to help a community in San Diego fight a Home Depot big box we did not ask ourselves, "Is it feasible to keep Home Depot out of El Cajon?" If we had asked that question, we would not have tried. In fact, I was told by my colleagues not to try because it was not possible to stop Home Depot.

We did stop them, though. It was the first time in the United States that anyone has stopped Home Depot. We experienced many discouraging days and nights, and kept going through weeks and months when it looked impossible to succeed.

So I know from personal experience that the question is not, "Is it feasible?" The question is, "How can we do it?" This was the question asked by Cuyamaca Woods, a cooperative of 250 homes near Julian that has been off the grid for 20 years with no major problems.

Please include rooftop solar as a viable alternative.

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