

MOUNTAIN EMPIRE TOWN HALL MEETING

6:30 P.M., September 27, 2007

AGENDA

Welcome – Cliff Northcote

Opening Remarks – Randy Lenac

Remarks from Javier Avila, Chief of Staff to State Senator Denise Ducheny

Remarks of local elected officials

Modified Route D Alternative Overview – Randy Lenac

Presentation by SDG&E – Laura McDonald and Jonathan Woldemariam

Public Q&A of SDG&E and open comment period (1 minute limit per
question/comment) – moderated by Beryl Buchanan

Meeting Adjourned – refreshments

Mountain Empire Town Hall Meeting

TRANSCRIPT of overview of the Sunrise Powerlink:

... The objective of tonight's meeting is to get smart about the Sunrise Powerlink alternative coming through the heart of our mountain communities. We need to set aside differences of opinion and unite all of our little communities in solidarity against this very bad idea. Only if we are together do we have any chance of influencing the final decision of the California Public Utility Commission (CPUC).

The Sunrise Powerlink first became public two years ago and since then SDG&E has submitted their application that contained an EIR identifying the northern route through Anza-Borrego State Park as the preferred option. As part of their due diligence, SDG&E examined many other alternatives which were found deficient to the preferred route for various reasons. Now the CPUC is conducting their own due diligence in an effort to meet federal and state requirements. They too are examining multiple routes for the proposed power line. Some are the same or similar to SDG&E's routes. Some are variations or combinations, but there are only so many ways to move power through the mountains. One of the biggest problems that face all the alternatives except the preferred alternative is the Cleveland National Forest.

All of the other alternatives would require an extensive rewrite of the forest management plan that could delay the project beyond the applicant's stated requirement. We don't know if it was out of guilt for having been an impediment to the process or out of government NYMBYism, but in April the U.S. Forest Service proposed a route that avoided the Cleveland National Forest to the south. It was devised by Forest Service planners who sat around maps and found existing SDG&E power lines and easements that went around the Cleveland National Forest to the south.

The CPUC formally named and sent out a notice about this alternative in May and gave the public until June 18th to comment. The problem was very few people learned about the new alternative that the CPUC had named modified route D alternative. The name served to confuse even the most informed of citizens. To make matters worse, affected parcel owners received notices from Wiggins and Willet informing them of surveys that were being conducted but only vague information on the actual route. All formal scoping hearings by the CPUC had already been held, so there was not a public meeting to explain this new route. The bottom line was that only a few people submitted opposition letters to the modified route D alternative by the deadline. Even the news media was silent about this route except for one obscure article in the UT.

In the mean time the CPUC is continuing to conduct need hearings in San Francisco and the Aspen Environmental Group is working to complete the CPUC EIR which will contain their recommended route. Both of these CPUC actions are presently scheduled to be released to the public right after the first of the year. The northern route remains the preferred route of SDG&E and all the other various routes remain officially in consideration, but the modified route D alternative is suddenly emerging as a very serious candidate for selection. At a discussion during the Campo-Lake Morena Planning Group on Monday, most of planning group concluded that the odds were as high as 75% in favor of the modified route D alternative. I don't know if this figure is accurate, but it is telling. In any case, the northern and southern routes look to be the two most viable routes for selection.

Now, we applaud and support the "big fight" that is being fought to stop Sunrise Powerlink in its entirety. We recognize that our elected officials must take this stance because they have affected constituents in the line of all the proposed routes. We even hope they and the well funded and powerful opposition groups prevail. However, we are concerned that if on January 1st the CPUC finds that SDG&E has established a bone fide need for a second power line and simultaneously the Aspen Environmental Group recommends the modified route D alternative as the best route there will be a deafening silence from much of the opposition that has lined up because they opposed the preferred northern route. In

fact we believe that in that silence those of us in the route of the modified route D alternative will be able to here the champagne corks popping in Santa Isabella and other locations up north as well as in many of the well funded opposition groups who lined up primarily opposed to the SDG&E preferred route. We fear that when the EIR hearings start after the first of the year and the promised “big fight” is supposed to start, our little mountain communities will stand alone against this very bad idea. No, we are not going to rely solely on others to protect us with the “big fight” even though we applaud and support their efforts. We believe the final outcome will be based primarily on politics. Why else would a route that wanders through the back country like a salamander, passing down the main boulevard of Alpine only to deliver the power to the wrong place in the County be a leading candidate for selection. We believe that we must convince the Aspen Environmental Group that modified route D is a bad idea before they make their selection. Once the recommendation is on the table it will be near impossible to change.

When all of this first became apparent, H.O.P.E. of the Mountain Empire appealed to the CPUC to give the public more time to comment. H.O.P.E. was successful in getting the CPUC to reopen the comment period until October 8th. At the same time the Lake Morena Village Council was working on getting a town hall meeting and the Campo-Lake Morena Business Association had voted to do what ever necessary to get the public informed. We decided to combine forces and create MEGA MAD and work together to oppose the power line. MEGA MAD has worked hard to put together this town hall meeting and will continue to work to oppose modified route D.

For many of us this power line is very personal. My wife, Barb, and I are included as it is presently looking like it will go right behind our home, the 110 year old restored historic home of Lester Hook. Like the rest of you, we have nightmares of these huge foot towers and 500KV lines running through our property. When the final recommendation is released in January this alternative will get very personal for literally hundreds of people in Jacumba, Boulevard, Campo, Potrero, Japatul, Descanso, and Alpine. I also want to point out that the modified route D alternative map is only a general description of the proposed route. No one can tell you with any clarity where the final route will specifically go. The map on the screen is from the CPUC and the areas circled in red are areas that are being examined for re-routing. So, even if you are not presently affected, by January this route could have been re-routed to directly affect you. The mountain empire must unite as one community in solidarity to oppose this very bad idea. Do it for yourself and do it for your neighbor. We can make a difference in the outcome of the final EIR. This is the time, before the October 8th deadline to make your voice heard – no to the modified route D alternative! After the EIR is released it will be increasingly difficult to change the final outcome. I along with others believe that a significant portion of the opposition will wither away if the northern option is not selected. We have petitions and sample letters in the back of the room for you to sign. I urge each of you to take the sample letters and encourage every adult in your family to send one to the CPUC. Volume will speak loudly on this issue. The CPUC has not yet heard from the mountain empire on this very bad idea. Thank you.