

**SDG&E'S PROPOSED SUNRISE POWERLINK PROJECT  
Reporter's Transcript of the CPUC/BLM Scoping Meeting  
for Preparation of a Draft EIR/EIS**

Held 6:30 p.m. October 4, 2006  
At Borrego Springs, California

Reported by:  
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**STAFF PRESENTATION**

Lewis Michaelson - Katz & Associates, Public Facilitator  
Tom Zale & Lynda Kastoll - Bureau of Land Management  
Billie Blanchard - California Public Utilities Commission  
Susan Lee - Aspen Environmental Group

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## STAFF PRESENTATION

MR. MICHAELSON: Good evening. My name is Lewis Michaelson. I work for a firm called Katz & Associates. We have been hired to provide support for all of the public meetings that are being held, and I have been hired to serve as a neutral moderator for all of the scoping meetings that are being held.

As you probably know, this is one in a series of seven meetings being held this week, El Centro, Ramona, Borrego Springs, and a couple of locations tomorrow in Mission Valley and Rancho Penasquitos in San Diego County, so we're a little bit past the halfway point here.

We had a great meeting here this afternoon, excellent comments. I would just say, personally, that I have been doing this for about 22 years, and I cannot remember a more fruitful, constructive, useful scoping process in terms of people really having done their homework and bringing forth relevant and useful comments for the scoping process, so you all — your community and others — are really to be commended for that. We look forward to more of the same tonight.

This meeting is being held to satisfy two laws, a state law, the California Environmental Quality Act, for which an Environmental Impact Report is prepared in a case like this, as well as a federal law, the National Environmental Policy Act for which an EIS, or Environmental Impact Statement is prepared. We're taking comments to satisfy both of those processes tonight.

Some of you may be unfamiliar with that process, so I just want to walk you through a little bit of what to expect tonight, and others on the panel here will provide you more background on that.

I'm going to explain very briefly, in just a second, the purpose of scoping. Susan Lee, seated directly to my right, is going to talk about the proposed project, just give an overview of that. Then to her right is Billie Blanchard with the California Public Utilities Commission, and she will be talking about their process and schedule for the EIR.

And then we have with us Lynda Kastoll and Tom Zale with the Federal Bureau of Land Management, and they will be talking about their role in the process and schedule.

Then we will go back to Susan Lee briefly, who's going to go over just a few slides that deal in more detail with what to expect and the steps in the process and what kinds of things are produced during an EIR/EIS process.

Then we will get to what is the most important part of the meeting, which is an opportunity for all of you to provide input to the people who are seated here before you. And I just want to be clear. As you'll see shortly, if you did not know already, scoping is at the very early, front end of this process. They are not decision makers. They are not here to make a decision tonight about this process. Okay? This is scoping. In fact, let me go to the next slide.

The purpose of this meeting and of the scoping process is to inform you and responsible agencies about an upcoming project for which this document is being prepared, to inform you about the environmental review process, to solicit your input. This is key: at this point in scoping, the most relevant and useful comments are ones about the potential alternatives to the proposed project and the scope of issues to be studied in the Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement.

Of course, we'll also use this as an opportunity to identify issues of concern and areas of potential controversy, and you should know that a Scoping Report, after all of the scoping period ends, will be prepared that will provide a summary of all of the comments received, both oral and written, from all of the meetings. So if you're not able to attend all of the meetings, you're still able to be aware of all of the issues that were raised in different locales. So the main purpose for these people being here tonight, representing these agencies, is to hear your comments firsthand.

Just to be clear, the California Public Utilities Commission is the lead agency under CEQA. Bureau of Land Management is the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act process. One of the other key roles or participants is the applicant, but the applicant at this point has handed over their documentation, and this is now an independent review that takes place by the related regulatory agencies.

Aspen Environmental Group is represented by Susan Lee — but there are several of their team here with you here tonight probably talking to you at some of the stations out there. They are the contractor that was hired specifically to help these agencies prepare the Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Review.

So that's what we're going to be doing tonight, and with that I'd like to turn it over to Susan Lee.

MS. LEE: Thanks, Lewis.

I'm going to describe the proposed project fairly briefly tonight because there is a much more detailed description in the Notice of Preparation that you should have received either in the mail or back here at the door. Let me just point you to a detailed verbal description of the project Link by Link, starting on Page 4 and continuing for five pages after that. Each of those Links is connected to a map that's presented in the back of the Notice of Preparation.

The two maps that are most relevant to where we are today are the ones called Figure 2 — and that shows the Desert Link, which is the entire project starting at Imperial Valley Substation and continuing through Anza-Borrego Desert State Park — and the map right after that, Figure 3, which is a close-up of the Anza-Borrego link itself. So those are the two maps, and I know a lot of you have had a chance to look at them in the back. Let me just step back a moment and describe the process again in a fairly big-picture way.

There's a 500-kilovolt portion, which is the high-voltage portion starting at the Imperial Valley Substation just down west of El Centro. The 500 kV portion is about 90 miles long and continues all the way through Imperial County, up into San Diego County, through Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, and into an area just south of Warner Springs, where there will be constructed, if the project is approved, a major substation at which the 500-kV line would be converted to a 230-kilovolt line. The 230 continues, then, through Santa Ysabel, south of Ramona, and on all the way to the coast.

One other ownership issue, as far as the Imperial County portion, is that the application that's submitted right now to the CPUC was submitted by San Diego Gas & Electric, but there is a Memorandum of Agreement between SDG&E and the Imperial Irrigation District under which the IID ultimately would build and operate this line if it's approved. So despite the fact that the permit may be issued to SDG&E, IID, under that existing MOA, may be the entity that ultimately builds and operates it. That's a component of the Green Path Project you probably heard them talk about.

The other system upgrades are internal substation upgrades at some of the other substations within the SDG&E system that are fairly far west of here, so I won't spend time on that.

The need for the project as described by San Diego Gas & Electric is based on three main principals. The first one is that they want to maintain reliability of their electric system. The second one is that they want to promote renewable energy, and this is part of the State's requirement that utilities provide a certain percentage of their electricity as renewables. There's a large renewable resource in geothermal power out here just south of the Salton Sea — and also a proposed solar field that you probably heard about, the Stirling Energy System field down near the Imperial Valley Substation. Those are resources that SDG&E has identified that it would like to have access to. A third goal is to reduce energy costs overall for SDG&E rate payers.

SDG&E has also presented a series of eight objectives, and these objectives basically are just more detail on the three main goals we've already heard. They relate to renewables, to energy costs, and then the last two relate to the ways that SDG&E plans its transmission siting in terms of trying to avoid high-density population areas.

I will now turn this to Billie Blanchard of the CPUC.

MS. BLANCHARD: Billie Blanchard, the CPUC project manager for the environmental document.

I just want to go over the review process that we have and the schedule that we have at this point in time.

Basically, there are two parallel review processes for the SDG&E application for Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessities known as a CPCN. There's the general proceeding process, and there is the environmental review process for the NEPA/CEQA document that I am most involved in.

The general proceeding for the CPCN is being led by the Commissioner Diane Grueneich and the Administrative Law Judge Steve Weissman. The scope of the proceeding is directed by the Public Utilities Code Section 1002.

The three main items are the determination of need for the project — in this proceeding, they'll have to do a lot of work on that — and to consider community values, aesthetic values, park and recreational areas, historic values, and of course the review of the environmental impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act, CEQA.

The general proceeding schedule that we have thus far — there was a first Pre-Hearing Conference in Ramona in January of 2006 and a second Pre-Hearing Conference with a Public Participation Hearing that occurred on September 13th, 2006 in Ramona.

Where we are now, the ALJ has to prepare a scoping memo for the general proceedings, which will lay out all of the issues to be addressed in the proceeding along with the schedule of events including our CEQA/NEPA schedule. He is supposed to be preparing that within the next several weeks in October. The testimony, hearings, and all of that has yet to be determined at this point in time.

On the Environmental Review Schedule, SDG&E filed an application December of 2005, but not the PEA, and then in August, SDG&E filed the amended application and the Proponent's Environmental Assessment, known as the PEA.

There was a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement under NEPA in the Federal Register on August 31st, 2006, then this Notice of Preparation that Susan has been referring to was released for the EIR on September 15th, and the public scoping period for the document goes until October 20th, 2006.

Right now we don't have a schedule for the release of the Draft EIR/EIS, which would be a 90-day comment period, because there's been some issues that we've had to consider. But at a point in time when those issues are concluded and discussed and we make decisions, we will send out a card to all on the CEQA/NEPA mailing list to indicate when those dates are.

I'll pass this on to BLM.

MR. ZALE: Thank you.

Good evening. My name is Tom Zale. Lynda Kastoll and I are here tonight representing BLM's El Centro field office. BLM is involved in this process because the right-of-way application that San Diego Gas & Electric filed involves approximately 33 miles of public lands, primarily in Imperial County but also a short stretch of public lands in San Diego County.

In addition to that, when the patent was issued for Anza-Borrego Desert State Park back in the 1930s, it included a reservation to the United States for the existing power line right-of-way, so there's been some discussion that continues in BLM about what our role might be in terms of issuing right-of-way for that portion as well.

In addition to making a decision on whether or not to issue a right-of-way, BLM's other involvement in this would be to consider amending the land-use plan. The California Desert Conservation Area Plan identifies utility corridors, but this proposed project has an alignment that's outside an existing designated utility corridor. We'll be considering whether or not to designate a new corridor to accommodate that route that's been proposed.

In addition to that, BLM will be responsible for conducting nation-to-nation consultation with interested tribes. Also we'll have the lead in doing a Section 7 consultation with Fish and Wildlife Service in accordance with the Endangered Species Act.

MS. LEE: As Lewis mentioned earlier, really the two goals in terms of reaching people and entities during scoping is to talk to the public and also to talk to affected agencies. There's a large list of agencies that have to issue permits or have some other jurisdiction over parts of this project. At 150 miles long, you can imagine it's quite a long list, and we've presented some of them here just so you understand the extent of the involvement that we will have with agencies. We hope to get comments from them, and we're going out to meet with many of these agencies directly ourselves.

These next few slides cover the EIR/EIS process and the contents of an EIR/EIS, and to reiterate what Lewis pointed out earlier, this shows you where we are in the process. The yellow box right there, which is EIR/EIS scoping, is the very beginning of the process. The only thing that has happened before this is that the two lead agencies made a decision, which is documented in the NOP and the Notice of Intent, that they will prepare an EIR/EIS for this project, so we are at the very beginning stages.

We will be working on preparation of the EIR/EIS over the next several months. Ultimately, we'll issue a Draft. We will be back here to hear public comments on the Draft, and as both Billie and

Tom mentioned, we'll have a 90-day public comment period at that point. After that, the Final will be issued, and I will talk about the process after the Final in just a little bit.

These next couple of slides illustrate the contents of an EIS, and the reason we present this to you is we want you to understand the kinds of things that are included in an EIR/EIS. That way, you can give us comments that will help us elaborate on either impact issues or look at different alternatives or components of the EIR, so I'll describe just briefly what these components are.

We will include a description of the environmental setting, which is a description of what's here in the area already, along the entire route. This includes all the resources that are here, the land use, biology, cultural, and visual setting.

We'll describe the impacts of the project itself and the impacts of the alternatives that are ultimately chosen, and I'll talk more about alternatives in a minute. We'll include mitigation measures for both the proposed project and the alternatives.

The purpose of all of this is to allow decision makers at the CPUC and the BLM to have the information they need before they can decide whether or not this project should be approved or an alternative should be approved.

This slide just summarizes the components of an EIR/EIS that give you a feel for the major sections, in addition to the Project Description which essentially is the project that San Diego Gas & Electric has defined for us. We also elaborate on that with all the detail we need in order to complete a thorough analysis.

We'll describe the impacts of proposed project and alternatives and the mitigation measures, and we'll include a discussion of mitigation monitoring. This list of environmental disciplines gives you a feel for the range of issues that we would love to hear about today.

If you have comments on any of these issues with respect to impacts of the project, impacts of alternatives, values that you have in this area that may relate specifically to the project that's proposed or to alternatives here, then we would love to hear about these issues.

I'll talk in a little more detail about alternatives. We know that alternatives are a very important issue to the public. It's also important to the agencies. It's a responsibility under CEQA and NEPA to do an alternatives analysis under those guidelines. For those of you who may have been at the Pre-Hearing Conference a couple of weeks ago in Ramona, the assigned Commissioner from the CPUC, Commissioner Grueneich, specifically asked SDG&E to provide information on an alternative that would not pass through Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, and they did identify that just this week. I know there were a couple of articles in the paper yesterday and today.

Maybe at this point, I'll just refer you to the map because we got questions on this earlier. The last map in the NOP, which is Figure 8, is called SDG&E Alternatives Considered and Eliminated. The alternative route that SDG&E identified in the required filing that the Commissioner ordered them to file is the one that's called Alternative D on this map, which would involve following the existing 500 kV Southwest Powerlink to the west from the Imperial Valley Substation and then going north through parts of the Cleveland National Forest. There's a B, C, and D going from east to west, and the D route is the one that goes almost due north ending up very near Santa Ysabel. We can describe that later on

the maps that are detailed in the back, or you can ask questions. I just wanted to let you know that was a recent filing that just came out this week.

On this slide, we show the way we look at every alternative that we consider. There are three steps. The first requirement is that it has to be consistent with the project objectives, but it doesn't have to meet all the objectives. The second thing is that it needs to reduce or avoid impacts of the proposed project, so we won't include an alternative that has greater impact. The third thing is that the alternative must be feasible: you have to be able to build it and you have to be able to get it permitted.

Here we list the types of alternatives we expect to be considering in this process. Generally, people think about routing alternatives as being the major component of an alternatives analysis when you look at a linear project like this.

We definitely are looking at routing alternatives, which are essentially different ways to import power along a transmission line from the Imperial Valley into San Diego, but we're also looking at alternatives like in-basin generation. There's a proposal now to re-power the South Bay Power Plant. We're looking at that. We had a speaker last night from the Encina Power Plant.

We're looking at non-wire alternatives, which include demand-reduction energy efficiency issues. We will reconsider the alternatives that SDG&E eliminated, shown on Figure 8.

We will also look at the ones that SDG&E did consider in their application and decide whether we think those need to be pursued. No decisions have been made on alternatives at this point. We start basically from square one looking at alternatives. That is definitely one of the things we would love to hear about from you tonight.

One last slide, just to let you know what happens at the end of this process. The CPUC and the BLM each have a different process after the final EIS. The CPUC is a five-member commission that's appointed by the governor. That commission ultimately will vote on the project after receiving a recommendation that Billie described earlier. That will include consideration of the environmental information and the need.

The CPUC's decision will also require mitigation monitoring, which is having people in the field making sure that the mitigation measures that were adopted actually were implemented.

The BLM has a different process. They have a 30-day comment on the final EIS, which doesn't happen on the State side. They have a 60-day Governor's consistency review, and then they prepare their document. It is called a Record of Decision, issued out of the El Centro field office.

I will turn it back to Lewis.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you very much for your kind attention. That serves as the orientation to what we're here about tonight. We leave this slide up during the comments. We find it's useful to be able to reference it.

Again, because we're at the early stages of this process, the types of comments that are going to be most relevant and useful — and people really paid attention to this — are those identifying the location and extent of environmental impacts or potential impacts of the proposed project that you want to make sure get analyzed, as well as recommending alternatives that would avoid or reduce impacts of the proposed project.



We have been using a three-minute time limit at all of the meetings we've held so far. But because of the number of speakers, we've been able to go back and take what I call second helpings. So if you can't fit everything into three minutes, I'd rather you go slow enough that the court reporter can record it, and come back a second time, rather than to try to rush through.

She is seated over here, and there will be a verbatim transcript, so everything that you say will be recorded as long as we can get you to come up to the mike to say it.

If I didn't mention it already, written comments are another very good way to provide comments. In fact, often if you have more detailed comments, it's actually the easier way to do it, and they are given the same weight and consideration. So for those of you for whom public speaking is the worst possible thing you can think of, don't feel like you're being left out of the process. We're glad you're here tonight, and the panel would certainly love to hear from you. But if you've got thoughts, please feel free to share them in writing, and they'll count just as much and will be given just as much attention.

So I'm going to start calling several names ahead so you'll know where you are in sequence and be ready to come up. That just makes it run a little bit more efficiently.

I have a very high-tech way of letting you know when your time is up. After you've been speaking for two minutes, I'll put up my index finger, like this. So if you occasionally look up at me, it's helpful. That means you have one minute to wrap up your comments. When three minutes are up, I'll put up my closed hand, like this.

We appreciate your cooperation, and again, we've been able to accommodate everybody coming up a second time if they have something that they want to add.

After we finish comments, there will be a short opportunity for some question and answer with the panel. Obviously, there're some questions that they can't answer now, like "What are the impacts of doing this?" They haven't done that analysis yet.

But if you had a question about the proposed action or what kinds of things they look at or analyze, they're happy to answer that for you. If you have specific questions about, you know, very specifically "this particular location, where my house is, a neighborhood," that's kind of hard to answer at this level. They'd prefer to do that at the stations afterwards, so that's what we're about to undertake.

I apologize in advance if I mispronounce anyone's name. The first five speakers I have are Charles Bennett, Joe Rauh, Judith Withers, Scott Martin, and Llouis Jee.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

So if I could ask Charles to start us off — if you would come up to the microphone, please. If you'd just start with your name, we'd appreciate it.

MR. BENNETT: My name is Charles Bennett. I'm with the Anza-Borrego Foundation. We're the cooperating association with the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, and we have a long history with the park. We celebrate our 40th anniversary with them next year. During those years, we've acquired and transferred in excess of 35,000 acres of land to the state park. That land is valued in excess of \$20,000,000.

We don't believe that the project, as it's proposed, explores adequately the alternatives that avoid state park lands. The project is completely at odds with the objectives, goals, and mandates of state parks.

The easiest — or most cost-effective alternative for SDG&E is going to be a disaster for state parks. We really need to have some viable alternatives explored.

Parks should not be viewed as a place where we store lands for some future non-park use. Parks are meant to be forever. They're meant to be held as a sacred trust. The proposed route of this will run through wilderness areas. These wilderness areas have been set aside, and to try to change them from a wilderness area to permit this power line to run through would set a dangerous precedent. This has never been done in the past.

Wilderness areas are, by Public Resources Code, untrammled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. The erection of massive towers 130- to 150-feet high which can be viewed over approximately 90,000 acres of this park — about 18 percent of this park, you'll be able to see those towers from — that is just unconscionable.

We propose that there has to be a complete analysis of visual impacts of the Powerlink Project. We think this is absolutely necessary. State Highway 78, which parallels the route, is a designated scenic highway that certainly wouldn't be scenic with all of those towers next to it.

We need to evaluate very thoroughly the impacts on endangered species. Bighorn sheep inhabit this area. They're a federally endangered species. We have no idea what the impact of this is going to be. You need to look at the impact of the recreational activities of park visitors. A 500-kV line going over Tamarisk Grove Campground and Yacui Wells Primitive Camp is going to discourage the use of a lot of people.

Thank you very much.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you, Mr. Bennett.

MR. RAUH: Hello. Thank you very much for coming out. I really appreciate it.

My name is Joe Rauh. I'm the Realtor in Ranchita. I sit at a desk all day long there and sort of watch over the neighborhood. Ranchita is a unique little high-desert community at about 4,000 feet. We have a mini continental divide there. Water in half of Ranchita flows towards the Pacific. The other half flows towards Baja California.

One of my major concerns to be added to the scoping document is while we sit there at our desks, we notice the aircrafts from Miramar flying out to do their maneuvers and studies in the Naval Training Warfare area to the east of us. That's great. We enjoy the pilots. It does not bother us. All of our horses and animals appreciate the noise, keep us awake in the morning.

But we have a concern that these guys and gals who are flying these jets — they come right across. Today at 4:15, I was painting a house, and they were right on top of us, and right where the continental divide is is where the proposed Powerlink is going to go over, and we worry. With 150-foot towers right there, there's a good chance of one of those guys hitting it, and that's my major concern there because we've already been burned out of Ranchita once by the Pines fire four years ago, and back in the '70s we were burned out again. We really don't want another fire. The Pines fire was caused by a clipped power line.

Secondly, through the Grapevine Canyon in that area, we already have the 69-kV and 15-kV power lines. If they add a 500 on there, our worry is they might need more than one easement to facilitate both the 15-kV and the new 500/69 poles. So we don't know if that was incorporated into the scoping also.

Thank you very much for your time.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

MS. WITHERS: Hi. My name is Judith Withers, and I'm a homeowner/small business owner in the area.

I would like to address issues concerning the proposed preferred route of the Sunrise Powerlink and the location of the Central East Substation, specifically. I won't address the consequences of allowing the route to go through the Anza-Borrego State Park. I'll leave that to others more knowledgeable than I.

The Sunrise Powerlink proposes a Central East Substation in my neighborhood, which is historically known as the community of San Felipe. The new proposal is extremely more harmful than the previous proposed use of the existing substation on Highway 79, as this is in the heart of our community.

SDG&E is doing great disrespect by referring to us and the new location of the proposed Central East Substation as an undeveloped rural area. Not once in the application process nor in the scoping process information are we ever referred to by our name of San Felipe, leaving those who are not familiar with this area to assume there is no one living there.

If you refer to the maps on Figure 8, you'll see that a proposed Central East Substation is proposed by the San Felipe Hills Wilderness Area, Santa Ysabel Indian Reservation, the San Felipe Wildlife Area, and vista irrigation land. Tucked into the middle of all this wilderness is our small but historical community of San Felipe, and that is where SDG&E has staked its claim.

There is a limited amount of private land for sale, of course, there, and most of it has been held by families for generations. It's one such plot of land that they have managed to acquire right in the heart of our community, and they plan to trample our neighborhood with this giant facility using the existing road in our neighborhood and pass it off as virtually uninhabited.

I would like you to observe on the map, Figure 8, that once the Sunrise Powerlink leaves the park, the entire area is either all the wilderness, BLM land, Indian land, and enclaves tucked here and there of small unincorporated communities, like mine, with names like San Felipe, Ranchita, Santa Ysabel, and Mesa Grande.

This area is some of the most beautiful, untouched, pristine wilderness left in Southern California and San Diego County. To quote Supervisor Diane Jacobs recently, this area is a national treasure and the reason that people pay the big bucks to live in San Diego.

All who come here are struck by its beauty, and it's the last area in San Diego County that remains as habitat to the wild creatures and birds where civilization has not yet encroached.

The communities of San Felipe, Ranchita, and Julian four years ago were burned in the Pines fire, which was caused by a power line. When a wildfire breaks out in this wooded wilderness, it is so inaccessible, no one can put it out. Firemen can only help nature help itself. The Pines fire burned 68,000 acres. For nearly three weeks, it jumped every highway — everything.

MR. MICHAELSON: Why don't you come back, and you can finish?

MS. WITHERS: Thanks.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you very much.

Scott Martin.

MR. MARTIN: My name is Scott Martin, and thank you for letting me talk to you again. I would like to — I'm going to give this to you. I only have one copy, but this is the Opportunities and Constraints page that SDG&E — this is actually from SDG&E. I don't exactly know who decides what the Opportunities and Constraints are, if that's a standardized form or if this is something that SDG&E made up, but, basically, there were two opportunities.

One is that it is a designated utility corridor, and one is that it is an existing transmission line corridor, 69-kV and above, so those are the only two opportunities that they came up with for putting this line in.

Then there are an incredible amount of constraints for putting this line in, which include designated critical habitat. Again, I'm not sure who made this up, but they list federal wilderness area as a very high priority and state wilderness area as a high priority. I would argue that they're both extremely high priority.

They also indicate a very high constraint for a national historic landmark, which we don't necessarily have, but we do have a national natural landmark, which is all of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. That was designated in 1974. We have traditional cultural property.

Then we go into the high constraints. We have Bureau of Land Management land. We have designated recreational use area, existing and proposed wilderness area — which I argue should be a very high constraint — federal and state sensitive management area, geologically sensitive area, regional and local parks, designated open spaces and/or preserves, state park, 100-year flood plane, agency-designated use shed.

Now, state parks doesn't actually have that because we're not — or because state parks is not a multi-use agency, but there are definitely impacts to view shed — to wilderness view shed.

There's archeological sites, essential habitats, fault zones, intermittent lakes — and I'm stretching that, but we've got Lake Cahuilla, which dried up about 500 years ago — potential species status habitat area of 640 acres or more, scenic highway, and state land.

I think I'll stop at that and hopefully come back afterwards.

MR. MICHAELSON: Scott, it's useful to have that list, but that's also something you can give them a copy of. Maybe when you come back, you can talk about what you think the significance of that is or what you'd like them to take into account. Okay?

MR. MARTIN: Okay.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

The next speakers, just so you know who's coming up next after Llouise Jee, is going to be Joe Raffetto, Paul Johnson, Kellie Hamilton, and Tom Stemnock.

MS. JEE: Hi. My name is Llouise Jee — that first L is pronounced — and I am speaking to — on Page 18, you say "land use." I have lived in this community since 1977, so I am speaking to the historic and current use of our air space by the military.

First off, the military flight paths cross the park, the entire park, and they end up in the bombing area southeast of the Carrizo impact area. That's one point.

The second point, which many of us have all experienced, is the stealth or under-detection radar flight practice, where you go on wing tip, up canyon, over mountain, and down the other side under the radar. We have all seen this who have lived here. There is nothing to stop them from going under the 500-kV line — under.

And then I blew my brother-in-law out of the water when I informed him that his secret practice for the Mideast conflict was no secret. I said "You're all in the air all over us." Every time there is increased activity in the Mideast, we see practice.

Keep that in mind when you set up the location of a tall tower that bears electricity.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Joe Raffetto.

MR. RAFFETTO: Thank you, everyone.

I got to ask a couple of questions earlier. I appreciate that, and I kept my comment period to tonight because I'm here with my counterpart, who has the other tour company in Anza-Borrego, Paul Johnson, and I thought it would be good if we spoke together.

We're both regulated also by the CPUC. We're kind of at the lower end of the scale. We have to follow strict guidelines, and I just think that if you look at like what the Environmental Impact Statement and Report are supposed to cover, it's aesthetics, agriculture such as ranches, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, environmental justice, geology and soils, hydrology, land use,

noise, paleontology, public health and safety, recreation, socioeconomics, transportation and traffic, utilities, and wilderness of all things.

To determine if any kind of a project of any scope has to go through these same guidelines — it's like this, to me, is like a no-brainer. It's like why in God's name would anyone even consider running the biggest power lines known to mankind through an area like this? And I don't care if they bury them, or they run them through with their 130-foot location — at their height. It's still —

As other people have said, this is an area that was set aside for everyone, and SDG&E and Sempra are doing a good job of trying to spread propaganda through their full-page ads. They've got that cherubic-looking guy who runs his business who needs energy, and it's us folks out here in the back country and the desert that are keeping that poor guy from getting the energy that he needs, and that really steams me because this park and even the back country — the towns of Santa Ysabel, Mesa Grande, Warner Springs, Julian, San Felipe — they are places that people go. Whether they live there or visit there, they are there for refuge. The park is for the people that live here and the people that visit, and the people that visit are from all over the world, so it's not just the people in San Diego that already got stung by Sempra in the past.

So I just think that this is the last of anything in San Diego County. It's the most sensitive area probably in Southern California, and I just think we've already faced the three-headed dragon of the apocalypse, which was the super highway that we stopped from going down Coyote Canyon, the international airport — the new international airport. I don't know how they thought about that. And now this.

My hope is that logic will prevail, and that, if not, this will lead people to see the folly of this 20th century boondoggle, and maybe all of us could switch over. Maybe Borrego Springs could be a springboard of just getting on-site solar energy and win.

Thank you.

MR. JOHNSON: There's no way I can compete with that.

I've lived in the Borrego Springs area for 33 years.

MR. MICHAELSON: Your name?

MR. JOHNSON: I'm sorry. Paul Johnson, local resident, tour guide, photographer, photography instructor. You can call me a few other things, but I'll leave it at that.

I came here in 1973. I make my living as a tour guide, so the aesthetics of this park will have a huge impact on how I make my living. I have five or six different designated tour routes. Five of them are right along Highway 78, so the power line — the huge impact of that power line will have a great impact on my business and what I show people.

I don't know that anybody's discussed this, but San Felipe Creek is the second largest water shed in the park. There are huge flash floods that come down San Felipe Creek right along the right of this power line, and it has taken Highway 78 completely out. It took them six months to repair Highway 78 because of a flash flood coming down San Felipe Creek, and that is the water shed, literally, that this power line will be built along.

The last thing I would just like to suggest is that we look at something really benign, like solar power as an alternative to building all of these power lines. There are a huge amount of houses out here in Borrego Springs that have 375 days of sunshine. We get a couple of extra days. We could produce a huge amount of power by having photovoltaics and solar systems on our roofs throughout this county. This is one of the sunniest counties around. I think there's other ways to do it besides building this line.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Kellie Hamilton.

MS. HAMILTON: Hi. My name is Kellie Hamilton, and I'm a resident here in Borrego Springs.

The Borrego Valley is a very unique place, and for the residents who live here, we absolutely cherish its uniqueness. We do not have a Starbucks here or a Carl's Jr. We certainly do not have an all-night pharmacy or a movie theater, and there are many, many people who have come here before and said "How on earth do you people possibly live in a place like this?" But for those of us that have made Borrego Valley our home, it's one of the most beautiful and pristine places that some of us have ever seen. It's special to the people who live here, the wildlife that roam here, and the vegetation that finds some way of surviving here.

So concerned are we about our future that we have leaders in our community who are currently working on a plan to present to our County Board of Supervisors to designate Borrego as a Desert Conservation District so that we'd actually have a special designation in San Diego County, and that's in an effort to save the precious balance that exists here in this valley as we move forward. I wondered if you guys knew that. I wondered if you knew that we cared that much, that we're trying to get a special designation here.

Thus you can imagine how we feel when we hear that a utility company wants to put 130-foot steel transformers along our southern skyline. The damage that would create to the balance that exists here would be irreparable and the consequences far reaching. That's my heart talking. I wanted to make sure you knew there were actually people who live here and that this matters to us.

I'll close with a comment from my head. Should the utility company be granted permission to further enter and violate our state park, we would be perpetuating a belief that land that is considered protected and land that is considered wilderness doesn't mean anything, and that would be a huge tragedy.

I can appreciate that the utility company is trying to do its job. You need to provide additional power for additional demand, and I understand that you need to complete that with a budget. But in the world that we live today, I expect them to also put as much time and thought and energy into the environmental impact that that will create. We are very educated people here, and we deserve the right to know that those studies were done completely, fairly, and that that information is passed back to us so that we know that those efforts were taken into consideration.

Thank you.

MR. STEMNOCK: Good evening. Tom Stemnock.

MR. MICHAELSON: After Tom will be Esther Rubin, Ryan Henson, Sandy Burnaman, and Robert Staehle.

MR. STEMNOCK: Thank you.

We're part-time residents. We've been coming to Borrego since 1972. We live in Los Angeles half the time. We live here half the time, year round. We don't come just in the winter. We come year round. Almost every weekend of the year, we're here.

I want to comment on a couple of things. One, timing of the whole process. This is an extremely complex process and an extremely complex set of issues, and the timing that, in effect, creates our opportunity to speak is in a time when — this is our downtime.

The resident population of Borrego triples from roughly the 1st of November until about the 1st of May, so you don't have the true population of Borrego here to comment right now.

The idea that the draft EIR/EIS circulation period should be only 90 days I think is extremely short for this kind of a project. Whatever that period should be, it should be, in my mind, at least 180 days, and it has to be during a time period when that winter population of Borrego has an opportunity to consider and comment on the report.

If that six-month period or that three-month period occurs during the summertime, most of the population of this area, both the resident population and visitor population, are not going to have an opportunity to comment whatsoever, and you will have missed 90 percent of the people who will be impacted.

Our land here is state, federal park land, BLM land. A great majority of it is privately owned rural and wilderness land. You've already heard about the values and the gem that we have here. Part of it is preserved by law. The other part of it, I think, by the EIR process should have a greater value.

I saw one of the — I think it was one of the goals that the power company had as their identification, and it was to keep the power lines away from the areas of high population. To me, there should be an equal goal to keep the power lines away from the areas that are preserved and intended to serve that high population in the future. Additional alternatives — certainly routes — I can't believe — and I guess now we have, within the last week, one or two additional routes.

It seems to me that there's got to be many, many more routes along I-8, out of the federal lands, out of the mountain areas where the forest fires could occur and cause damage.

There also, I think, needs to be alternatives as to other power sources, such as producing power in west coastal San Diego County to serve that high population, not producing it out here and then spending the dollars and affecting the environment to bring it from this area back to where the population is. I think there should be consideration of other power sources in their location.

Finally, in the EIR process — I don't think we are talking about tonight long-term, gross-inducing impacts. When I look at the alternatives, I don't just see power going from one part of the state to the other part. I see a distribution system being set up to provide for extreme growth in the future, which I think we need to consider and needs to be part of the EIR process.

Thank you.



MR. MICHAELSON: Esther Rubin.

MS. RUBIN: Hi. My name is Esther Rubin, and I am an ecologist working for the Conservation of Biology Institute, and I want to express some of my concerns about the Powerlink.

In addition to the negative impacts that we've heard about today as far as the aesthetics, health issues, the Powerlink with its infrastructure, maintenance and activity, and many unknown influences will clearly have an impact on the natural environment.

Proposed Powerlink routes will go through the habitat of numerous endangered and sensitive plants and animals. Have these impacts been properly evaluated? I would use bighorn sheep as an example, as this is the species I am most familiar with, having studied them for over a decade. Questions remain about the potential influences of the Powerlink on this federally endangered bighorn sheep population that live here in the Peninsula Ranges.

For example, will the activity of construction, which will involve blasting, grading, helicopters, et cetera, cause them to abandon habitat? Will the presence of the Powerlink disrupt their movements and patterns? What if animals are hesitant to move around, past, or under the Powerlink? This could sever the conductivity of the population, leaving some groups isolated from others, and this could be a negative effect of the genetic well-being of this population.

Will the building of Powerlink jeopardize important water sources that the sheep rely on? Will the presence of maintenance roads encourage an increase in offroad traffic, whether it be legal or illegal, in bighorn sheep habitat? This, in turn, would increase disturbance to this very sensitive and federally endangered species. Will the increased road and maintenance vehicles increase the invasion of exotic plants in key forging habitats and in our water sheds?

These are just a few of the questions that can be raised. We don't have clear answers to all of these, and that is my point exactly. The bighorn sheep are actually a fairly well-studied species, and we don't know what the influence of the Powerlink would be on this population.

Building the Sunrise Powerlink will cause increased risk to an endangered species, and if we don't know how large these risks are, are we wise to proceed? Will we be sorry later? Shouldn't we take a precautionary approach?

The bighorn sheep are just one example. Numerous other species and habitats could be put at increased risk also. And why should they when we have other alternatives? I urge you to strongly consider options that do not include building the Sunrise Powerlink. We've heard about some of the options today, and I really hope that you will look into and consider carefully other options for clean and affordable energy, especially those involving more local renewable energy sources, energy conservation. Demand management of energy efficiency.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Ryan Henson.

MR. HENSON: Good evening. My name is Ryan Henson. I'm the policy director with the California Wilderness Coalition. Our office is based in Oakland, California, and I work and live in Redding, California. I might have come the longest distance today.

I'm replacing Brynn Jones, our desert program director, who unfortunately has moved across the Colorado River into Arizona. She has done all the work on this issue prior to my coming along.

Since Brynn moved to Arizona, I've had to get acquainted with this project, and, frankly, I find it pretty appalling. The idea, for example, that the project proponents would try to make the public choose between preserving cultural resources or wilderness is simply outrageous.

We request that all the routes proposed for Sunrise Powerlink avoid Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, designated wilderness areas, BLM wilderness study areas, Forest Service wilderness areas, and all proposed wilderness areas.

The social and ecological values of these irreplaceable wild lands will only increase over the years as Southern California continues to rapidly develop, and I must say as a Northern Californian who's spent most of his life in rural areas, whenever I come down here, I'm shocked at the sheer pace of urban development, and I'm really reminded of the value of our public lands and that they shouldn't be just a dumping ground for utilities and roads and all sorts of other activities.

You should know that the D designation of either state or federal wilderness to accommodate this project would be truly unprecedented and would, in my view, be similar to the construction of Hetch Hetchy Dam in Yosemite. We Californians should have learned by now that such appalling irresponsibility should never be contemplated again.

There is no public interest or need that is so compelling as to warrant the obstruction of habitat, recreational values, and scenery that would result in power line construction in state or federal wilderness areas, BLM wilderness study areas, Forest Service wilderness areas, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, or proposed wilderness areas. Please do not consider any alternatives that would damage these valuable wild places.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Sandy Burnaman.

MS. BURNAMAN: Hi. My name is Sandy Burnaman, and I live in Ocotillo Wells and have for about 30 years, moved from Fallbrook. When Fallbrook got its first red light, first McDonald's, my husband and I decided we were out of there. We had come out here camping and all. I have a home in Ocotillo Wells. I'm nervous as all get out.

If this Powerlink goes through along where the old power line is, it's going to be terrible. There is the cactus garden that blooms most beautifully in the springtime. We go up there. All the residents go up there, and it just like takes you away, and to see that big — all of those massive things is just going to — it's like ripping your heart out. Even National Geographic has seen — they have a whole article. Can you imagine this beautiful country and looking out and seeing those massive poles? It's just — please, please just put it somewhere else. We like our peace and quiet. It's our country, and like I say, it's just ripping out my heart.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: The next speakers after Robert Staehle will be Kelly Fuller and Lori Paul.

MR. STAEHLE: Good evening. My name is Robert Staehle. First of all, I'd like to go on record saying that as a landowner at the mouth of Tubb Canyon, I've received actually no official notification that this Powerlink might affect my land.

You heard about the 90,000 acres of state park whose view shed would be affected. Well, I own another 50-some acres, and many people around me own other acreage that's in addition to that 90,000 that's in private hands that would also be significantly affected.

This afternoon I had the privilege at about 1:00 o'clock of going up Palm Canyon and showing to our Australian visitors 17 peninsular bighorn. My understanding is that that's a pretty significant fraction of the endangered population here, and, of course, Palm Canyon and Tubb Canyon are two of very few permanent water sources available to that species.

I can't imagine what's going to happen to them and all the other fauna that are less well-studied with the construction that you heard other folks talk about going up Tubb Canyon or, for that matter, across just about any segment of Anza-Borrego State Park. I think that needs to be examined much more carefully than I've seen.

I've also worked as an engineering manager on a federal space exploration project that considered sterling power of the same kind that's being proposed as one of the reasons by SDG&E for putting in this power line over this particular path to the particular terminis in the east.

While I haven't studied in detail this particular application of sterling power, it's my professional opinion that the technology readiness for full-scale implementation at the needed reliability is vastly overstated.

So I'd like to know what is — my expectation is that the San Diego Gas & Electric engineers have much more insight that I do into this and have probably come to the same conclusion.

So what is it that San Diego Gas & Electric really wants to do at that eastern terminis of this line? I don't think it's to connect to a Sterling Power Plant that has only a small chance of being successful at a commercial level. So what's going on? What are the deals with power plants in Mexico and other locations?

There were three objectives stated for this project: Maintaining reliability, promoting use of renewable resources, and reducing energy costs for SDG&E. I think an unstated goal is to increase the profits of SDG&E and its Sempra company, and I think that ought to be investigated very carefully.

Reliability would be better served and promotion of the renewable energy and, in fact, I think, cost to rate payers over the longer term, that is the term beyond ten years, by doing what I did up in Los Angeles County, which is installing 6 kilowatts of solar rays at my residence. That would create a much more reliable network, not susceptible to the kinds of dangers of any single or dual or even five power lines coming in.

So I would like to specifically propose that an alternative be studied, not an alternative route but an alternative to putting in the power lines that says over the next five years, what if the CPUC and the State incentivized so that roughly 100,000 homes put in that kind of power generation along with 10,000 small businesses and parking lots that would generate something over twice that amount of power at peak.

I'll bring up some other suggestions in my repeat session here, if we have time for that.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Staehle.

MS. FULLER: Hi. Kelly Fuller from the San Diego and Imperial County Sierra Club.

The comments I have tonight are going to focus on the California Desert Conservation Area and Desert Link section proposed transmission line. I probably have more than three minutes, so I'll go as far as I can, and we'll see if there's more time.

First, I wanted to let you know that I asked the other night about whether there would be scoping meetings for the Southern San Diego back country since the Alternative D and the other previously rejected alternatives appear to now possibly be back on the table. As a result of SDG&E's response earlier this week to Commissioner Grueneich's request for a route that goes around Anza-Borrego, the Sierra Club has begun its legal analysis of this issue, and I'd like to say that right now our preliminary — and I want to stress preliminary — conclusion is that under NEPA, ordinarily what would have happened is there would have been a preliminary process that would have determined who would be impacted, what areas would be impacted before the scoping even started, but now we're kind of thrown off that because suddenly there are new areas that could be impacted while we're in scoping.

To be fair, we think that the CPUC and BLM should schedule additional scoping meetings for those southern back country communities including Boulevard, Descanso, Pine Valley, Campo, Guatay, obviously not in all of those places but something they can go to, and SDG&E should notify people along those potential alternate routes.

We know that this is a great concern to those people. The Boulevard Sponsor Group is going to be discussing it this Thursday. I understand that Pine Valley Planning Group is thinking about when they can talk about it, so these people will have opinions and scoping information they need to give as well.

Some other things that we think need to be studied: Following up on my comment at the El Centro scoping meeting regarding ground water impact, the Sierra Club feels impact to desert pupfish in San Felipe Creek need to be looked at in terms of ground water changes that could stem from the project. So if changes to ground water occur because of this project and it affects San Felipe Creek, what will that do to the pupfish there?

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Lori Paul will be followed by Sita Antel.

Lori?

MS. PAUL: I don't have any letters to read, so I can speak a little bit slower.

There is an article that was published that says the SDG&E unveiled non-park routes for power transmission line, and Gregory Barnes, the attorney for SDG&E, in a 19-page letter says, to the CPUC, that as many as 50 homes would have to be torn down to make way for the proposed \$1.3 billion Sunrise Powerlink transmission line if one of the alternatives was chosen, but preferred route would not uproot any families.

Of what species? That's what I'd like to know. We seem to be placing homes, which are somewhat ephemeral — I think there's very few homes that are well over 100 years here in California. There needs to be evaluation, as other people have said, for our particular area and scoping on this project that includes evaluation that's very high for the wilderness and habitat that we have.

There are unique resources here. I don't tell anyone where there are, but I have pictures here in my package of yellow Ocotillo, and we've got an integrated form of Gambel and California Quail, and we've got Borrowing Owls.

We have resources here that you have to realize, as you do your study, a lot of residents know about and won't tell anyone until someone shows up with a shovel, or someone shows up with a front loader and decides to bury it.

So when you do your investigation, I think it's very important to speak with local residents on a personal level because many of the studies, even by the state park and by others, will not reveal some of the resources, including some of the Native American artifacts and so forth and fossil sites, that some of us know about. Stealth and quiet is the best way to protect these areas except when a project like this rolls through a particular region. We assume, of course, the state park and resources on our own properties will be protected. Obviously, that's not the case.

There has been a serious failure on the part of SDG&E — not you folks — to post appropriate materials on the website so that people can download them, as I have said, and I will say it officially. We go there, and there's giant PDF files that you could get gray hair waiting to load and print out. They don't print out. We call. We don't get calls back. I still, as a landowner, as Rob mentioned, have not received a formal notification that they want to go across my land because I own across Tubb Canyon, and that's some weeks after the Ramona meeting where SDG&E certainly, like some of you, heard me say that before.

And there's a serious problem with scoping of public input in areas and getting supporters to write in who don't live in the areas where the power lines are going.

Lastly, I also want to state something that someone else I don't think has said, and that is that when you propose undergrounding of some segments, which may, in fact, be technically feasible, what I think that does is it manages to sabotage some of the opposition. It pits one constituency and community against another, and I think it's important that this not be perceived as an attempt to buy off key areas of opposition to get the whole project put through areas that have less population.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

Sita Antel.

MS. BRANCHO: Hi. This is Sita Antel. She's two years old, and she represents the future of California. I'm here to talk on her behalf tonight.

She's lived in Borrego Springs her entire life. We appreciate your being here in Borrego Spring to hear our concerns. We appreciate you already asking for a route that goes outside of Anza-Borrego. Sita's concerned that too much discussion is focused on the routes rather than whether or not this line is needed at all.

And I'm very concerned for her for global warming. I understand that there are coal-burning fossil plants and also liquid natural gas plants being built in Mexico that will potentially be serviced by this line. I think it should be illegal to bring Mexican power into California. Perhaps your commission can address that.

I also would ask that you please come to a decision quickly. I'm worried about the Federal Energy Corridor that the Energy Policy Act put into place. Potentially, it says if you do not act within a year's time, the feds could step in and approve this line.

So please act against it. Act quickly. Consider the alternative of making the local power plants more efficient and also requiring rooftop solar on all new developments so that there isn't a need for such a line, and just please consider the children of California in your decision.

MR. MICHAELSON: If you don't mind, for the record, can you tell us your name?

MS. BRANCHO: My name is Maris Brancho.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you very much.

Cristina Warren will be followed by Joanie Cahill.

MS. WARREN: Hi. I spoke earlier about some other issues, and also at the earlier meeting a lot of people talked about the night sky here and the impact of the red lights on the towers, but I would like to just make a plug for our daytime sky. In fact, I would like those of you who will be here overnight to get up tomorrow morning at 6:30, step outside, and take a look at the beautiful sunrise that we experience out here, and that will give you some sense of what it is that we are fighting so fiercely to protect.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

Joanie Cahill.

MS. CAHILL: My name is Joanie Cahill, and I have lived here in Borrego Springs for 12 years now, and I agree with some of the purposes you have in mind. I think we'd all like to have reliable service. That's certainly something we aren't familiar with here in Borrego Springs. I know we're all in favor of renewable energy and using our resources to the best of our ability, and we're certainly all in favor of reduced costs.

Although, this last one, I just have to point out to you — I have two things I want to say, and one is that coming to Borrego Springs and asking us to believe that some project is going to reduce our energy costs — it's actually offensive to us because when deregulation happened, we were the ones that got it first, and my husband and I living alone in a three-bedroom house, our bill went from 280 a month in July to over \$1,000, and half of the businesses in this town went out of business that summer after deregulation, and it wasn't until San Diego started paying their winter heating bills that anyone did anything about it.

So there's no way anyone in Borrego Springs is going to believe for a minute that this project or any other is really going to affect our pocketbook in a positive way, so you might as well just forget that.

Secondly, and more importantly to me, is the idea of wilderness. I speak about Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, in particular. Wilderness is set aside as a space to be untrammled by man, and there's just no way you could put power poles through it without trammeling it. There's just no way.

We need this space. We need this space apart from civilization to regain our psyche. Wilderness needs this space — or wildlife needs this space, as you've heard from a lot of people in this room already. As the mother of the other noisy two-year-old that you were hearing back there, I worry about what we're going to leave for her. She needs wilderness, too, and I ask you to save some wilderness for her.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Daniel, do we have any more cards?

Is there anyone who has not spoken who would like to before I give people a second chance?

Yes, sir. If you would, just come forward and give us your name, please.

MR. HUSSEY: My name is Mike Hussey. I own property out there in Ocotillo Wells.

If you were to try to go through the forest with this, you would be cutting down old growth. Nothing has ever been done out there. It's been just like it is since God made it, so you've got to keep that in consideration. This new soil — it's not like the dirt up there. It's crazy. The chairman of the PUC has already come out and said — and he's having a little conference over there — that it's a done deal. Powerlink is going to go through because they said "Well, when it goes through" — so I think he should recuse himself when it comes up for a vote. That's how I see it.

The power plants in Mexico right now don't have a permit to send electricity across the border. They may be doing it now, but it's not a given because they didn't put scrubbers on the power plants, and they just tear up — they're just putting out pollution down there, so there's not a piece of paper that says forever they can do that. If they say there is, they're crazy.

When you're putting up these poles here, they're putting up the same kinds of poles and using the same kind of wire they've used for 200 years. A computer went from a block square seven stories high down to a microchip, and we're to believe there's been no new technology on electrical transmissions. That's crazy. What the hell?

San Diego Gas & Electric came out here. Like this one woman said, she had \$1,000 bill, and they wanted to go to IID, and San Diego Gas & Electric said we are not in business to give our customers or our territory away. Then a year ago, they turned around and gave their territory away from Ocotillo Wells to the Narrows to IID. The reason they did that is because IID doesn't need the PUC's permission to put that power line in through that desert. That's why they did that.

If you go underneath those power lines that are down there by Tecate now that run along Highway 8 and you take fluorescent light bulbs, you can stand out underneath there and have a Star Wars fight. They'll light up. You can read by them. And if they're saying that EMF — those electromagnetic fields aren't good for you, why are they putting them along the freeway at ten-mile stretches where you can't get away from them, and you will be physically impacted by it? Because they told the people in Ocotillo Wells that they couldn't build any permanent structures if they bought their

property — from the property line, that they couldn't put a structure within 150 feet because if you stay within 150 feet of those power lines for two minutes or more, it will impact your body.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Is there anyone else? If not, this would be your opportunity, if you were already here once before, to come up for a second chance.

Come forward. All I need is your name again. You were talking to us about all the constraints.

MR. MARTIN: Yes. It's Scott Martin.

I don't want to spend too much more time on the constraints and opportunities, but I think that it's pretty clear that there are an incredible amount of constraints that — it kind of is amazing to me that we're even talking about this right now based on the amount of constraints that there are with this, and what I'd really like to talk about is Page 12 of this NOP and how it relates to the Energy Action Plan of the State of California. I, unfortunately, don't have the Energy Action Plan with me, but it specifically talks about a loading order for how we're going to deal with our electricity, and that we're going to work on energy efficiency and demand response and right on down the line, and there's a very specific order of that.

If you look at Page 12 under System Alternatives Considered and Eliminated By SDG&E, they basically eliminated energy efficiency because it would not meet reliability or renewable objectives. They rejected demand response. Distributed generation was eliminated. Rooftop solar was eliminated. In-area generation was eliminated.

Now, I can't really believe that they actually eliminated all of those, but they pretty much stated it, and I really think that if we took the time to put into place the objectives in both the Energy Action Plan II and the San Diego Regional Energy Strategy 20/30 Plan that we wouldn't even need to be here talking about this transmission line; that we could find a more effective kind of 21st-century solution to a 21st-century problem instead of a 20th-century solution, which I think is what SDG&E is proposing.

Thank you.

MS. WITHERS: Everybody pretty much touched on what I was talking about, but I just wanted to finish talking about the fact that I, myself, and all my neighbors were burned in this Pines fire that was started by this power line and that the wilderness areas up above the park —

MR. MICHAELSON: Could we just get your name?

MS. WITHERS: Judith Withers.

— and we lost a lot in this 13-mile wide inferno of destruction that burned for three weeks. It burned through the communities of San Felipe and Ranchita and Julian and Banner also. We no longer, most of us, can either maintain a fire-insurance policy or afford the \$5,000-a-year policy that I was quoted, and I know people that have had like five cancellations in a row — or I've just been flat turned down. "You are in a high-risk fire area. Forget it." So I urge you not to subject all the unincorporated wilderness communities here to this high risk.

I touched on the Top Guns. Everybody talked about Miramar. I experience that, too. Our valley shares the same valley as the Palomar Observatory. From the top of Teofulio Summit where I



live, you can see all three observatories there. The night sky is beautiful, and we want to keep it that way for everyone.

I want to say that there are far better alternatives than desecrating a national treasure in this great state of California. We don't need to trample precious wilderness areas to accomplish our goals. Our nightly news broadcasts repeat the worries of global warming, and they speak about our addiction to oil and the fact that it's limited. That's why on Page 12 of the preparations for these meetings, that in-area generation and rooftop solar was completely eliminated by SDG&E — well, Governor Schwarzenegger signed the rooftop solar initiative. He thinks it's valuable and viable enough to have signed it, and I know a lot of locals that are planning on taking advantage of that, and I would urge you to consider alternative energy, as well as a route that is a direct — a shorter route than going through wilderness areas and precious desert.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Is there anyone else that would like a second chance? Come on up.

MR. STAEHLE: Thank you.

Robert Staehle again. I have four specific proposals for the coming work, one of which I started on, which was — I mentioned that I had put in 6 kilowatts of arrays up in Los Angeles county.

I'm not a wealthy man. A lot of people would say this is too expensive, but I earn wages like a lot of other folks. I don't have any great inheritance. It's about a ten-year payback period for me. It's quite reasonable. After that, I'm going to start getting electricity for free — or for the cost of the bill.

I think the real reason that SDG&E doesn't look at that alternative is they don't expect to make a very big profit out of it. It's not the Public Utilities Commission's responsibility to ensure profits for SDG&E.

MR. MICHAELSON: Could you all just do me a favor and let them go through their comments and save your applause to the end? That would be helpful.

MR. STAEHLE: So anyway, whether it's going on new or existing homes, I would like to see the alternative investigated of 100,000 homes over the next five years outfitted with rooftop solar and 10,000 small business buildings or parking lots, and that would, as I said earlier, put out about 2.6 gigawatts of power at peak.

Obviously, it's less when the sun is lower in the sky. The heat load and air conditioning load is also less when the sun is lower in the sky, and I think you'll find out the numbers will work out reasonably well.

My second proposal is for another alternative that should be investigated, and that is by implementing in a much wider way time-of-use metering and giving the utility the option to shut down air conditioning at individual residences remotely for, for example, an hour at a time during peak loading periods to smooth the load. They already do this with businesses. An hour at a time in personal residences, except in a few cases which could be allowed that exception, would not endanger anybody. It would hardly make people even a little uncomfortable. I think it's well worth the risk and something that should be investigated.

Then there are two questions I would like to be investigated. I see what I believe is specious argument about vulnerability to terrorist attack. That's why we need Sunrise Powerlink up through Anza-Borrego Desert and not just another corridor down I-8. Well, I'd like to see an analysis of the vulnerability to terrorist attack of a line that goes across extensive remote areas, where instead of 100 pairs of eyes an hour driving by on some road, there's nobody, maybe even for days, seeing somebody who might be up to no good. I don't think that analysis has been done.

Finally, in light of the Pines fire, I'd like to see a quantitative analysis of the relative risk of range fire forest fires started by aircraft collision with the Sunrise Powerlink over the route through the state park and remote areas, forested areas — again, where there aren't too many eyes to see when something happens.

Those are my four specific proposals, but I'd like to ask, in light of the last one: Who's liable for the cost and damage of those fires? Is it SDG&E? Is it the California Public Utilities Commission? Is it the individual landowners, like me? I suspect that the first two of those don't have the financial capacity to carry the liability insurance for the kind of damage that would be caused by something like the Pines fire.

So I go back to the mountain sheep, the peninsular bighorn that I saw this afternoon, and just remind you all that Borrego means sheep. That's Anza-Borrego. That's why this place is here and named what it is, and I noticed that one of the maps that was up where we came in here that over the Tubb Canyon corridor where this line is going to come in right past my property — I don't know what this means, but it says final critical habitat for peninsular bighorn on Page DW-S21. That sounds kind of ominous to me. Again, I go back to — we ought to be looking at all of these impacts a lot more carefully than we have been.

Thank you very much.

MR. BENNETT: My name is Charles Bennett, and one point that hasn't been touched on very much, I don't think, adequately is the impact of cultural resources. The proposed route travels through some very, very rich archeological areas. From Tamarisk Grove Campground as you head west, that area is the ancestral home of the Santa Ysabel people. You can't walk more than 15 or 20 feet without finding some evidence of past inhabitants there.

I'm virtually certain that adequate exploration of that area by qualified people will turn up cremation sites and burial sites. This is a very, very rich area archeologically, and to come in with a power line through that area where they're going to be in there with heavy equipment preparing the sites for these 130- to 150-foot tall towers is going to really desecrate some vital archeological resources. I think that that needs to be very, very carefully considered.

I think that the people in the Santa Ysabel tribe should be able to have some considerable amount of say as to whether or not they want their ancestral home desecrated in a fashion like this. It's very vital that we preserve these links to our past, and I think that — I know that from things that I have personally seen when SDG&E crews come in to do their maintenance on the existing 69-kV line that they have absolutely no sensitivity to plants, animals, archeological sites. They run their trucks. They run their bulldozers. They do what they damn well please and hang the consequences. I can only imagine what's going to take place if they come in with their equipment to build this line. It's going to be a disaster.

As to alternatives, I fully support the earlier speakers who have recommended solar. We have an unprecedented — absolutely unprecedented opportunity here to show what can be done with solar. If the \$1.3 billion that SDG&E proposes to spend on this travesty were put into solar power in the city and county of San Diego, it would really make a difference. Put that 1.3 billion where it does some real good.

Barring that, if they don't want to do that, if they have to go ahead with a power line, then the federal government has just approved 700 miles of fence along the border. Build the thing along the border. You're going to have the border patrol watching the power line so it's going to be well-guarded, so they don't need to worry about any damage there. They're going to tear the land up anyway putting the fence in. You might as well use that same corridor for a power line.

MS. FULLER: Kelly Fuller, San Diego and Imperial County Sierra Club.

SDG&E has put out a Preliminary Environmental Assessment, and we have some comments on that that we would like to see you look at as you work on the final environmental documents. We think the PEA's assertion of no significant impact for the flat-tailed horned lizard and the Colorado fringe-toed lizard needs to be reexamined.

The PEA repeatedly lists factors that could have impact on those two lizards and then lists mitigation measures for those impacts and then draws the conclusion that the impacts will not be significant. One of those impacts is increased predation from increased avian perches, but there is no mitigation for that impact listed. Since one of the impacts appears to be unmitigated, we question the PEA's conclusion that there will be no significant impact.

Further, the PEA also says that one of the impacts to these lizards is construction traffic and says that will be mitigated by having reduced speed during construction. But who is going to enforce speed limits on the new access roads built for the project once the construction crews have left? I believe the BLM currently has one ranger enforcing rules on approximately 1 million acres of lands Algodones Dunes.

That's what I've heard. I don't know if it's correct. Lynda and Tom, you'll know if it's right.

But who's going to do the enforcement? The PEA also states that reduced construction speeds will allow for dispersal, which I interpret as saying lizards can get away, but the flat-tailed horned lizard is known for staying still when approached and even burying itself in the sand.

Similarly, the Colorado fringe-toed lizard also sometimes buries itself in sand as an escape strategy. So how much of these lizards actually are going to run away when something approaches? And how much are they just going to bury themselves in the sand and get run over?

The PEA repeatedly mentions avian death due to collision. It says the number of deaths is not quantifiable and then draws the conclusion that the impacts to bird will not be significant. How can you do that if you don't know how many birds are likely to die? This is of particular concern since many birds are legally protected under the Migratory Bird Act and other legislation.

We're also concerned about visual impact for the portions of the proposed route that do not currently have power lines in the desert specifically, especially the alternate route segments near the Coyote Mountains Wilderness and the Fish Creek Wilderness areas. They are beautiful areas,

remarkably unspoiled, and I've got to say they're very dear to my heart because I spent a couple of days in that area when I was walking the desert portion of the route last April. It's gorgeous out there.

We're also worried about impacts of construction noise on wildlife in the adjacent Coyote Mountains Wilderness and Fish Creek Mountains Wilderness areas that would be for that far western alternate route. Noise really carries in the desert.

We are concerned about impacts of the line on desert hikers, especially in the sections that do not currently have power lines, which would be especially the alternate route section near the Coyote Mountains Wilderness and Fish Creek Wilderness areas.

Desert hikers typically hike without trails because trails are few and far between in the desert. So the absence of trails in the desert should not be interpreted as an absence of hikers.

Finally, we are concerned about impacts of the line for that alternate route to the far west in Imperial County, impacts on the Carrizo wash and Coyote wash. As near as we can tell from the maps, both would likely be used for construction access.

We are particularly concerned about the possibility of introducing additional tamarisk into those washes. Desert washes are known for often having greater species diversity or different species than the areas immediately around them, and those washes need to be carefully examined for plants and wildlife and not just assumed to be the same as the surrounding areas. It does not appear to us from the Preliminary Environmental Assessment that that distinction between the washes and the areas around them was made.

Thank you for your time.

MR. RAUH: Quick comment. Joe Rauh from Ranchita again.

Being a Realtor and selling areas close to Anza-Borrego, we're sort of surrounded by Anza-Borrego, BLM, and this irrigation where we are, and many of my properties are located near the fringes of these properties. People always ask me "Well, what do we do about power?" SDG&E quotes a power pole costing between 6- and \$8,000. So whenever someone talks to me about power beyond three or four poles away, I recommend to them they look into alternative power. Some of them do look into alternative power and also wish to be hooked up to the grid.

As part of the scoping, I talked to several of these people who are hooked up to the grid who do have solar panels. They tell me they do not get paid for any excess power that they might generate. They get refunded for any power that they use but do not get paid for any excess power.

As part of the scoping document, the effect of this non-payback to people — if I was building a solar place, I might want to put up extra panels and maybe sell back some of the excess power, but as it is now, SDG&E does not pay for any excess power beyond what you use, and this might have a significant impact for people who are putting up panels at this time because they only put up what they will use and nothing more.

If there was incentive for people to be able to get a little bit of money back for excess power, people might go ahead and put up two or three extra solar panels at each installation for long-term usage.

Thank you very much.

MS. PAUL: Lori Paul again.

Following on the other comment by another biologist, I want to let you all know that I actually have pictures of — I think it's San Diego Coast horned toad, which is federally listed and quite clearly in one of the preferred routes for this particular power transmission line.

Also following on concerns about impact on species, I don't think there's been 500-kilovolt power lines, except maybe coming out of Boulder Dam and a few other areas that are somewhat mountainous, that go right through prime bat habitat as well. You've got a phenomenal electromagnetic field and buzzing effects that may or may not attract or damage insect populations that feed bat species.

I don't know what the answer to that question is, but I think it needs to be explored because you have federally listed Yuma Myotis and brown bats, Mexican free-tail Pipstrelles. We see them.

Through all of these mountainous areas, I think that bats often get the short end of the stick when it come to a lot of studies. They're not around, quite frequently, when a team sweeps in to do impact studies, and quite a few species have been left out of reports that I know of. So please add bats to your list of species of concern.

Some of your nocturnal — the adverse impacts of this power line with the blinking lights, the power line perhaps could even impact owls and so forth. Some of the nocturnal species require some additional investigation when you put a power line of this magnitude in place across wilderness areas.

MR. MICHAELSON: I know the court reporter missed all of those bat species. Could you say them real slowly?

MS. PAUL: The federally listed species that we might have locally is Yuma myotis, and I can get species later.

MR. MICHAELSON: Okay.

MS. PAUL: And Mexican free-tail, little brown bats, and Pipstrelles. I know, in fact, that Pipstrelles have quite a few colonies in, for example, the split mountain areas.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

Yes, sir. Come forward.

MR. RAFFETTO: Thanks, you guys, again for acknowledging me.

I asked earlier about the I-8 corridor, and I've heard before about this terrorism issue, and I don't know if that's something that — I've never read it.

MR. MICHAELSON: Can I get your name? I'm sorry.

MR. RAFFETTO: I'm sorry. It's Joe Raffetto.

I'm not sure if it's something that Sempra and SDG&E have actually mentioned as a reason not to do the I-8 corridor, but as the previous speaker had said, to me, that's ridiculous because there were two twin towers. You get two power lines — I don't see — and the remoteness of it — and if that's

truly what terrorists are going to do, why put up with using a flashlight and eating canned soup for a few weeks if they're going to blow up our power lines? Frankly, I don't think that's even going to happen. It's going to be something worse than that.

If that is the reason that we're not talking about the I-8 corridor, well, then, thanks, SDG&E, because that means that we should all have rooftop solar panels. Terrorists can't blow that up on a mass scale, so they gave us a great idea.

I think that when you look at this map of all of these alternate maps that they considered and are now on the table again, it's, again, trying to pit people against each other. I don't think everyone down in Campo and that beautiful area down near the border should have to look at this stuff either — or up in North County.

The thing is archaic. They're talking about pulling the switch on this, this great glorious thing of electricity for all of Southern California in 2015. Well, in 2015, good Lord — are we talking about power lines and generators and all of this stuff in 2015? I mean, we should really be looking at the things that previous speakers have talked about, and I think that if this angers enough people, that they go out there, and they get solar things on top of their roofs, that, God, that would just be a great silver lining to this whole thing, if we could get these guys and cut ourselves off the grid and do something like Kennedy did in '63. He said we'd land a man on the moon by the end of the decade.

All of the things SDG&E looked at and said "We can't do that. We can't do that." Why not? The thing is is maybe it's up to us individuals. Frankly, I plan to get my business — we're going to start off with bio-diesel for the trucks, and then we're going to move to solar and wind because that's the two great things that Borrego Springs has is solar and wind, and then I can say "See you later, SDG&E." Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: I also would like to provide time for some Q and A, so if we're ready to move into that —

Did you already speak once? Come on up if you haven't. We just need your name.

MS. HURLEY: My name is Peggy Hurley.

I keep hearing about the solar option, but one thing that hasn't been mentioned with the solar — when I visited Yuma, Arizona, they had solar carports at the public buildings, and that kind of made me start thinking that if SDG&E would go into a contract situation with some of the buildings around and put their own solar panels on it so that the private people aren't obligated with the cost, then they would also be gaining the electricity that came from it, too.

There's an awful lot of public buildings around that they could probably use anyway and then also contract with other buildings that might be available to do that. Then you don't have to worry about people feeling that they weren't getting the electricity back, and SDG&E wouldn't be losing money or electricity. They would be benefitting from doing that.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

MR. TOWNSEND: My name is Ted West Townsend. I've lived in Borrego Springs since only February because of the threat of fires and so forth, and I haven't heard anybody say this, but I had my house burned down by that fire, the Pines fire, in which the helicopter struck a power line. I think that

power lines, as others have said, are a danger for that very reason, having aircrafts fly into them, whether on purpose or by accident, and solar and wind power is the only way to go, as far as I'm concerned. There's no doubt in my mind. Thank you.

MR. HUSSEY: My name is Mike Hussey, again.

I've got a question that I can't get an answer for. What about the wells? If they come out there and they start driving power or using dynamic compaction and some guy goes out there and uses his well and fills his tank on Saturday — they come by during the week. He goes out there next Saturday to use it, and it's ruined, what's he going to do? Is he going to get told to go down and see the legal department? The first thing they're going to say is "Oh, it wasn't us," but here he's going to have a collapsed well.

MR. MICHAELSON: Mike, you raised that question, I believe, in El Centro as well, and the team has taken that as a comment, something to look into, but that's not something they would have an answer to tonight.

MR. HUSSEY: Okay. I've got another one. I believe this is setting a precedent for Bush's Energy Policy. If they can get through this part, they can do his energy corridors across the United States. This is quite a big deal here, but it involves more than us. There's more here than just going across this park. They want to go across here so they can go across the United States and not have anybody giving them any crap. They'll just say "Oh, we went through Anza-Borrego, and that's just how it is." That's what I think.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

MS. WARREN: Cristina Warren.

As a person with solar on top of my house, I just want to make a point here. It's kind of ironic, but the fact that SDG&E will not pay me back for all the extra energy that I make for them every year — at this point in time is an advantage for SDG&E. I mean, how much other electricity do they get for free? Who else do they not pay for the electricity? If us solar customers — I put an extra big array thinking I would be getting a little bit of payment back, but the fact is that right now they're getting free energy from us solar people, which I've made my peace with and said "Okay. I'm making energy for everybody else, so I can do without the money feedback." Anyway, it's just a point I wanted to make.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Is there anybody who would like to ask a question at this point?

Yes, sir. Again, they may or may not be able to answer it, but we'll at least try.

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

MR. STAEHLE: Robert Staehle, again.

My question is: I would like to know: What is the statutory requirement, either in federal or California law, for notifying California landowners, within what distance, with what kinds of effects, at what point in this process, within what period of time of initiating consideration of a route alternative?

MR. MICHAELSON: That's a good question.

MS. BLANCHARD: From our standpoint at the CPUC, we have a general order, 131-D, that outlines the notification process requirements, which includes everyone on the proposed project line within 300 feet, newspaper noticing, and then anybody else that is an interested party that we also add to the list.

CEQA has particular minimum requirements, but we tend to go beyond that in terms of the amount of notification that we attempt to do. Everybody that wants to be on the mailing list gets on our mailing list. There are minimum requirements, but we try to go beyond those, and right now, we are at the stage that we started scoping, and that was our first notification. Then in the future, there will be notifications regarding the release of the draft.

MR. STAEHLE: Can you clarify what you mean by newspaper noticing for people within 300 feet?

MS. BLANCHARD: We did a number of notifications. I don't have all the lists in front of me, but we can get that for you.

MR. MICHAELSON: I think what he's asking you is: You don't mail that individually to every property owner?

MS. BLANCHARD: We mail to all of the names and addresses of everyone within 300 feet.

MR. STAEHLE: And what kind of communication is mailed? Is it something that says "You may be affected by" —

MS. BLANCHARD: The NOP, for instance, was mailed to everyone within 300 feet.

MR. STAEHLE: I didn't receive it, and I'm within 300 feet of what's on the map. Several of our neighbors to the east and west of us are also within 300 feet, and I know they've received no such notification.

MS. LEE: We sent out about 7,000 of these NOPs, and I have to say we got back several hundred already. We're having, I think, difficulty on mailing-list issues. There are a lot of things that came back "Post office unable to deliver." I don't know what kinds of addresses, but if you didn't receive it, if you would maybe asterisk your names or let us know because we got the list from SDG&E, who got the list from tax records.

MR. STAEHLE: I know in my case — you've got my name on record — I just received my tax bill. I've received it reliably every year since I've owned the property. There's no confusion about my address. Okay? I have neighbors to the east and west who get similar tax bills, and I think what I'm afraid I see going on here is a pattern of not notifying landowners.

I mean, if it were just me, I could understand. It could be lost in the mail. A tax bill could be lost in the mail, too. It never has been in my case, but it certainly could be. But when I find that we're the ones notifying our neighbors because we went to a hearing in Ramona and found a map going across our property and they go "What?" — no. I've never received anything like that in the mail, and neither have they.

MR. MICHAELSON: Can I suggest that individuals who are in that situation — that we talk to them after the meeting just to try to make sure we know which ones and see if there's a particular issue



and make sure those people get added. I think they've answered the question as much as they can with what the procedure is. Apparently, there's an execution issue here that we need to get to.

MR. STAEHLE: There's an execution issue, and I believe — I suspect. I can't say for sure — that there's an intent issue here as well, and that's what I think needs to be explored.

MS. BLANCHARD: I just want to say it's not the CPUC's intent to not notify people within 300 feet. If there's an error in the names or if there's some outdated mailing list, then we need to get that corrected. But certainly from my standpoint, it's not our intent to not notify you guys.

MR. MICHAELSON: Any other questions?

MS. WITHERS: Judith Withers.

I just had a further comment on what he said. In my community of San Felipe, where the Central East Substation is proposed, the same thing has happened. I find myself calling all the neighbors and all the surrounding people who knew nothing at all, received nothing about it. They're shocked.

A lot of them have the route going right over their property, and, you know, they never received anything, so I do believe that there's a serious problem about that notification.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

Any other questions?

MS. FULLER: Kelly Fuller.

These are questions for the BLM about the California Desert Conservation Area Plan because, as you know, you guys will need to amend it to put a utility corridor through should this project be approved. It's my understanding that the project would cross what are called Class L BLM lands, and from the California Desert Conservation Area Plan's website, they're described as managed to protect sensitive, natural, scenic, ecological, and cultural resource values. They provide for generally lower-intensity, carefully controlled multiple uses that do not significantly diminish resource values, as opposed to Class M, moderate use, managed to control —

MR. MICHAELSON: You're reading a lot of big words really fast.

MS. FULLER: I'll give it to you.

I'm just trying not to take up too much time, but I'll give her a copy.

MR. MICHAELSON: Perfect.

MS. FULLER: The Class M, managed to balance higher-intensity use and production, and that includes utility development. Okay? So I'm wondering — if we've got a bunch of Class L land out here, which from this doesn't appear to include utility stuff, and Class M does, are you going to have to change the Class L land to Class M in order to designate a utility corridor?

MR. ZALE: I think no is probably the answer, but that whole analysis that you're talking about doing is something that we're just at the beginning stage. We'll have to look at all of these alternatives and the impacts associated with them as part of the NEPA process.

MS. FULLER: Could I ask why you wouldn't have to change the L to M? Is there an answer for that?

MS. KASTOLL: Yes. If you further look at the plan, Kelly, under "Guidelines For Multiple Use Classes," Class L allows transportation facilities subject to NEPA. It doesn't preclude such uses. So as Tom said, when we have the application, we have to look at all alternatives including the proposed action, but it would not require a plan amendment.

MS. FULLER: But the utility corridor would require the plan be — you just wouldn't have to do a land class change?

MS. KASTOLL: We would not have to change the land classification.

MS. FULLER: Thank you.

Also I was wondering — I know sometimes the ACEC, the Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, have management plans that go with them. Are there going to be any management plans that would have to be — ACEC management plans that would need to be adapted for putting in the power lines? Because it looks like Yuha Basin ACEC is out there and possibly — I get confused with the maps. I'm not sure, but possibly one of the alternatives might affect West Mesa ACEC.

MS. KASTOLL: I don't believe any of our ACEC management plans actually preclude power lines or rights-of-way. It's just to make us aware that there are sensitive issues that would need to be addressed, but I don't think any of them actually preclude rights-of-way. Unfortunately, there is no West Mesa Management Plan. It was never developed.

MS. FULLER: Okay. Thank you.

MR. ZALE: I was just going to add that, again, that's all subject to us doing additional analysis as part of this process.

MR. HENSON: Ryan Henson of California Wilderness Coalition.

Alternatives C and D pass through the Cleveland National Forest, and I'm wondering — have there been any Forest Service officials at any of the hearings that have been held within the last week or so?

MR. MICHAELSON: Or meetings held with them?

MR. HENSON: No. Were they at the public hearings like this?

MS. BLANCHARD: We think they were there, but they didn't speak. By the way, we had an agency consultation meeting, with them on Tuesday.

MR. HENSON: Are they going to be revising their recently approved forest plan to make these utility corridors possible, the plan they approved two months ago?

MS. BLANCHARD: I think that right now, we're very early in the process, and we went and had some initial discussions with them just to get a sense of facts and issues, but we're certainly not at that point with them at all.

MR. MICHAELSON: Anything else that we haven't addressed? A question?

MS. PAUL: I'm sorry I'm making a hobby of coming up here, but at the risk of beating a dead horse, in Tubb Canyon — and I can give this list over — as far as I know Tom and Chris Stemnock, who are here; Bill Collins; and the Reagan-Heart family; Barnaby, who lives to our north; the Wadsworths, Ginger and Bill; the Di Francescas at Beaver-Tail Ranch; Walter Boyce, DVM, who runs the cougar research program in the home to our west; Robert Johnson, Frank Gilman, and David Garmon, who are our neighbors, have a little desert house right on the proposed alternative route that isn't listed or illustrated in any of the documents you passed out today; plus three property owners Bill Collins can identify.

And in Ocotillo Wells, Rod Hansen, Brian Serfini, and Jack Bennet — I don't know if any of them are here today. None of us received any notification. We all learned about this project approximately — well, just before the Ramona meeting a couple of weeks ago.

We received absolutely no information from SDG&E. We know it's not you folks, but we received no information that this project existed or that it was going across our land. Some of us are seasonal residents. Some are part-time residents. Some of us are absent remote landowners. We all have APN numbers. We all get, as Rob said, tax bills, and we all have addresses that are quite obviously available, simply through PO boxes in Borrego Springs or through our tax records. There is something fishy going on.

Further I wanted to mention what I've mentioned to some of you individually, and that is that we've had surveyors coming out to our land without our permission and trespassing. Two white SDG&E trucks — Bill Collins, who was here earlier. You've got his contact information — can tell you about it. He chased them off our land and the Stemnocks and off property adjacent. They come with staff. Surveyors seldom travel with two trucks and multiple persons. I suspect they've got some other investigative staff that are snooping around our properties for who knows what resources.

My property markers are uncovered, which are well buried, because I own across Tubb Canyon Road and then abuts the state park. If those towers are going on my land, someone dang well better tell me because I don't give my permission and won't ever.

Further, they also showed up at the Ocotillo Wells properties, according to Rod Hansen, Brian Serfini, and Jack Bennett. They showed up. The caretaker caught them on their 60 acres and other land over there in Ocotillo Wells, and apparently SDG&E threw a postcard out at the fence that the caretaker picked up and then told them they weren't welcome on their land.

According to someone who called me, a woman up in Grapevine Canyon tried to get a restraining order, and the sheriffs were told to escort the SDG&E trucks onto their property, and I don't believe they were just surveyors. Surveyors can check your corners, but they're not supposed to be wandering around in the middle of your parcel, and so this is an impropriety also, and I think we need to make sure that, in terms of proper process, you're aware of this.

MR. MICHAELSON: The timing here is a little strange because we theoretically have five or ten minutes left, but I can see my court reporter's fingers dying, so to speak. We've kind of pushed her to her limit.

I know you already had your hand up. Why don't we take one more question, and then I'd like to adjourn, if that's okay.

MR. MARTIN: Scott Martin.

I just wanted to know if you have been in contact with the Parks and Recreation Commission and discussed their statements of policy, in particular, Policy Number — I don't know — it's Roman Numeral 3.8 that talks about utilities through state parks.

MS. LEE: Not yet.

MR. MARTIN: Will that —

MS. BLANCHARD: We have been meeting with the state parks officials here and probably will be doing that again — or a number of times. No. We have not talked to the Commission, per se, but we are talking to the State Parks people.

MR. MARTIN: Okay. Well, I would just like to make sure that you are aware that there is a State Parks and Recreation Commission —

MS. BLANCHARD: Right.

MR. MARTIN: — policy on utilities through parks.

MS. BLANCHARD: Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

Could we put the last two slides up?

Just to be clear, I hope, about the California Public Utility Commission and Bureau of Land Management's intent, they would like to hear from you. They've tried to provide as many avenues as possible. There is a postal address. There is an e-mail address. There is a fax number. Written comments can be sent to any of these. Remember that October 20th is the deadline for scoping comments at this phase of the process.

If we could go to the next page — there is a website that is run by the CPUC for this process that we recommend you become familiar with and use. In addition, we've heard at some previous meetings that not everyone has as easy or as much access to the Internet as they would like. Billie Blanchard has agreed that even more so than usual, they're going to try to provide hard copies and extensive information available at the actual libraries and offices which are information repositories so people can see them in hard copy, if they would like to do that. There is both an e-mail address as well as an 800 number that you can use in order to contact us if you need further information.

We very, very much appreciate all of you staying so late and taking your time to be here and express yourselves so articulately and eloquently.

With that, I will adjourn our meeting. Thank you.

(Proceedings adjourned at 8:27 p.m.)