

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

Held 4:30 p.m. October 2, 2006
At El Centro, California

Reported by:
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STAFF PRESENTATION

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

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STAFF PRESENTATION

MR. MICHAELSON: Good evening. My name is Lewis Michaelson. I work for a firm called Katz & Associates. I've been asked by the CPUC and BLM to serve as a neutral meeting moderator tonight and at the six other meetings that will be held this week throughout San Diego and Imperial Counties.

Some of you may know that these meetings are being held to satisfy the CEQA, California Environmental Quality Act, and to satisfy the NEPA, National Environmental Policy Act, which is the federal statute to which BLM must comply.

Because some of you may be unfamiliar or familiar with one versus the other, we thought it would be very helpful to just provide an orientation, first to this meeting and then to the process and the project.

So if you could put up the agenda there, I'm going to introduce the panel that we have up here, and then I'll explain a little bit about the purpose of scoping. It's often misunderstood, where we are in the process. Scoping has a very specific purpose to fill at this stage.

Susan Lee, seated to my right, from Aspen, will be giving a description of the proposed project. Then we have Billie Blanchard, seated immediately to my left, representing the California Public Utilities Commission, who is going to talk about that process and the schedule. Then we have both Lynda Kastoll and Tom Zale. Tom Zale will be speaking on behalf of BLM and about their process, and then we'll be going through the EIR/EIS process in somewhat more detail. Susan will cover that.

Two more things: the most important part of this meeting is an opportunity for you to offer comments orally to this panel. I want to emphasize that there is no decision being made tonight. The primary purpose for you being here and for the panel being here is so that they can listen to your comments firsthand. But also, you have the same opportunity anytime during the comment period to provide written comments, either instead of or in addition to oral comments, and they will be given the same consideration as any oral comments.

After we finish going through that public comment period, then we're going to provide for a question-and-answer period, so in case there are any clarifications that you need about the project or about the process, the representatives are here to take care of that. They really do want to hear your comments and to make sure that you're as informed as you want to be and need to be in order to do that.

So I'm going to roll on into the purpose of scoping. Again, to reiterate, it's to inform the public and responsible agencies about an upcoming project for which an EIR/EIS will be prepared. So that's their part here, the panel seated here. That's their opportunity to inform you. And hopefully some of you took advantage of the displays out front before we got underway to get some of your questions answered. It's also to inform you about the process so that you can participate knowledgeably and know the opportunities that you and the public or an agency have to provide input.

Importantly, scoping is an opportunity for you to provide input regarding the potential alternatives to the proposed project and the appropriate scope of issues to be studied in the EIR/EIS. In other words, the document has not been prepared yet.

Just like it says, the word “scoping” means they want to scope out what are the issues that need to be focused on, what are the issues that are important to consider from an environmental standpoint, as well as what they have already: the Applicant has already provided a proposed project and some alternatives. There may be others that you've thought of that you want to share with them.

Finally, the Scoping Report will be shared and placed on the project website after scoping is completed.

I've already mentioned some of the key players here. It's important to understand, No. 1, the California Public Utilities Commission, they are the lead agency for CEQA. Bureau of Land Management is the lead agency for NEPA. Not here tonight, but we should mention, is San Diego Gas & Electric, referred to as the Applicant. They apply and then it's reviewed by these agencies. Finally, I've referred to them earlier, is Susan from Aspen Environmental Group, who's been hired by the CPUC and BLM to help them.

With that, I'd like to turn it over to Susan Lee to give a description of the proposed project.

MS. LEE: Thanks, Lewis.

I'm going to describe the proposed project fairly briefly because there's a very long description of it in the Notice of Preparation, which I think you all have.

In overview, the proposed project is a 150-mile-long transmission line. That's the major component.

The Imperial Valley component, the parts that are in Imperial County itself, is the 500 kilovolt portion. That would start at the existing Imperial Valley Substation and would end at the new Central East Substation. That's 91 miles long. Then there's about 60 miles of new transmission lines, the 230 kV portion.

The remainder of the Imperial County portion runs along an Imperial Irrigation District right-of-way, and then follows Highway 78 and crosses the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.

One other aspect of the project I'm sure you already noticed. There are several maps that are included with the NOP. The first one is a project overview that shows you the entire project itself, but Figure 2 zooms in. Figure 2 focuses on the 500 kV segment, so there's a little more detail there. When we provide the EIR/EIS, we'll have much more detailed maps where you can actually see each tower.

One other component I wanted to point out, and this is described in the NOP on Page 2, is that while the project we're looking at is from SDG&E's application to the CPUC and a separate application to BLM, there is a component of the project that involves the Imperial Irrigation District. There is a Memorandum of Understanding between SDG&E and IID that states that the project between the Imperial Valley Substation and the Narrows Substation (on Figure 1), about ten miles into San Diego County in Anza-Borrego, would ultimately be owned and constructed by IID, and the remainder of the project from there west would be owned and operated by SDG&E.

The goals and the need for this project as presented in the application to the CPUC are divided into three main portions.

The first one is to maintain reliability of the electric service in SDG&E territory. The second one is to promote renewable energy from potential sources in Imperial and San Diego Counties, particularly around the south side of the Salton Sea. The third one is to reduce energy costs.

This next slide shows the objectives of the Sunrise Powerlink. Basically, these objectives track with those three goals in a little more detail. They provide the guide for how SDG&E designed its proposed project. The last two are land-use components that describe the way power lines are generally always designed in terms of avoiding residential areas and minimizing the need to construct in the most dense areas of urban and suburban parts of the county.

I will now turn this over to Billie Blanchard to describe the CPUC process.

MS. BLANCHARD: Good evening. I just want to go over a little bit our processes for the CPUC and to also indicate to you the schedules that we now have.

The CPUC has two review processes that go somewhat in parallel for the application for a CPCN, which is a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity. There is the general proceeding for the application. There's two application numbers at this point which have been consolidated into one. There is the environmental review process, which we are all part of, which is the CEQA and NEPA process.

The general proceeding on this application is led by the Assigned Commissioner Dian Grueneich and the Administrative Law Judge Steve Weissman. Under the Public Utilities Code Section 1002, the scope of the CPCN process basically is to determine the need for the project, considering community values, recreational and park areas, historic and aesthetic values, and, of course, the review of the environmental impacts under the CEQA.

Right now we have a general proceeding schedule. When SDG&E filed this application originally in December, there was a Pre-Hearing Conference in Ramona that was on January 31st, 2006. There is a second Pre-Hearing Conference and a Public Participation Hearing in Ramona that took place on September 13th. At this time, the ALJ is working on the scoping memo for the general proceeding which outlines all the issues to be addressed and the schedule for the whole proceeding, and that is scheduled to come out sometime in October of 2006. The other parts of the proceeding schedule have yet to be determined, but that will all come out in the scoping memo in the next couple of weeks.

Now, in the environmental review schedule, they originally filed the application in December but without the Proponent's Environment Assessment, which we call the PEA. Then they did file an amended application and the PEA on August 4th, 2006. The Notice of Intent of the EIS was published in the Federal Register on August the 31st. The Notice of Preparation for the EIR went out on September 15th. Public scoping goes from now until October 20th, 2006.

At this point in time, we haven't determined yet the actual schedule for the release of the Draft EIR/EIS, the Final or the certification. There's several issues that we're still trying to address, so at this point we don't have that. However, we hope to have it soon, and when we do, we're going to go ahead and send out a card indicating those dates to the mailing list of all the CEQA and NEPA people. There will be notice through the service list, the scoping memo, and the general proceeding as well.

I'll now turn it to Tom Zale with the BLM.

MR. ZALE: Hi. My name's Tom Zale. I'm with the BLM here in the El Centro field office. Lynda Kastoll and I will be working on this process from the NEPA side.

BLM is involved because SDG&E filed an application for a right-of-way to cross BLM lands. As you can see on the slide, there are 31.4 miles in Imperial County that cross public lands and another 1.3 miles in San Diego County.

Additionally, we've listed the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park there. When the patent was issued for the Park back in the 1930's, it included a reservation for the existing power line right-of-way across the Park, and we're currently reviewing that to determine what BLM's role will be in continuing to administer that right-of-way.

As we mentioned a minute ago, there will be a 90-day public review comment period for this project on the Draft EIR/EIS, and the reason for that is because there is an amendment to the California Desert Area Conservation Plan that would be required because the project as it's currently proposed deviates from designated utility corridors. The other role that BLM will play is to conduct nation-to-nation consultation with interested tribes.

MS. LEE: Okay, I'm going to take over for a while. Susan Lee, Aspen.

One of the most important things that the EIR/EIS does is provide information to the agencies that also have to make decisions on the project or issue permits. There's a long list of agencies as well as tribes, which Tom referred to, that will use this document to identify impacts and decide about permit issuance. We've listed many of them here.

What we're doing with these agencies, in addition to getting scoping comments because we've mailed the NOP to each of them, is meeting with many of these agencies during the scoping period. This afternoon, for example, we met with Imperial County Planning. We're hoping to gather input from each of these local agencies because they have the expertise that we need in order to make sure the EIR/EIS is complete.

The next slide shows the process itself from start to finish, and we've talked through this already. I'm not going to spend much time on it. Billie went through the schedule already.

The main point we wanted to illustrate with this slide is that we're very much in the beginning of the process. We really are here to hear input and creative ideas to make sure that when we prepare this EIR/EIS over the next several months, we have the detailed information that we need. I'm going to describe just a little bit of what's in an EIR/EIS so you understand what you can tell us that will be the most helpful.

This slide is broad overview of the contents of the EIR/EIS. We have a fairly detailed description of the environmental setting. We'll have lists of endangered species that occur, what the land uses are along every mile of the right-of-way, where there may be sensitive receptors. We'll describe environmental impacts of the project itself, and a NEPA requirement, we'll describe the impact of alternative. We'll provide mitigation measures to reduce the impacts that are identified. The purpose of all of this is to give information first to the public, and second, to the decision-makers, the BLM and the CPUC, so when they make a decision as to whether or not to approve the project or whether to approve an alternative, they are doing so with a full disclosure of environmental information.

Here we list more detail in terms of the contents of the environmental report. It will include a detailed Project Description that's based on the information we get from SDG&E is enhanced with data requests where we've asked SDG&E to describe in more detail components of the project so we can do a complete environmental analysis.

The alternatives process is really important and I'll talk about that in just a minute. Again, the EIR includes proposed project and alternatives analysis. Other important topics include cumulative impacts - other projects in the area, indirect impacts, and growth-inducing impacts — the extent that the project may cause growth in the area. CPUC has a process for mitigation monitoring, and if the project is approved or an alternative is approved, the CPUC will ensure, in coordination with the BLM, that mitigation measures adopted are actually enforced in the field.

This is a list of the types of disciplines that we include in an EIR/EIS. And again, the purpose is to let you know the types of issues that we'd like to hear about. Your comments could relate to any of these issues. The list is also in your handout.

I'm going to talk in more detail about alternatives because for this project in particular, the alternatives are one of the most important issues, as shown by Commissioner Grueneich in the conference a couple weeks ago. She requested that SDG&E look at alternatives that don't pass through Anza-Borrego State Park.

There is a lot of concern about alternatives — routing alternatives, generation alternatives. The analysis will also look at non-wires alternatives, that could be done and still meet most of the project objective. So we're going to have a very extensive and thorough alternatives analysis in this process. And first, on this slide, we'll just describe how that process works.

When people suggest an alternative or when we come up with an alternative, we look at every alternative under three main categories. The first is, does it meet most of the project objectives. I went through that list a little earlier. Second, does the alternative have the ability to reduce impacts or avoid impacts of the proposed project, and third, is it feasible. That's the last big category, can it be built technically and could it be permitted to be built.

This next slide shows us the sources of alternatives and the types of alternatives that we think we'll be looking at at this point. Routing alternatives are obvious. They are different ways you could design an alternative to get from Point A to Point B, either the Imperial Valley Substation ending up at Peñasquitos or other ways that would meet SDG&E objectives. They can be big picture or much smaller scale. They could be alternatives that follow the Southwest Powerlink instead of following the route SDG&E has proposed. They could be very small scale in terms of avoiding a land use, for example, a dairy — and I think we'll be hearing about this today — that's along the route, and the alternative could be designed on a small scale to avoid the impacts to the particular land use. That's what we want to hear about as well.

One of the other things I wanted to mention, as some of you may have heard, there is an alternatives workshop next Friday, on October 13th. This is a workshop that's being held through the CPUC's general proceeding, which Billie mentioned. It's being run by the Administrative Law Judge Weissman and the Assigned Commissioner Grueneich.

The purpose of that is for the formal parties to discuss alternatives, so if you're not a party to the CPUC proceeding, you can't participate in that. But don't feel left out because the information

you're providing us here in the scoping process is just as important and gets to us the same way. So we wanted you to know that that exists, and if you are a party, we can give you more information about that, but if you're not, just talk to us at any of these scoping meetings this week.

This next slide just explains what happens after the EIR/EIS is completed. The CPUC needs to vote on the process and decide whether or not it will certify the EIR as being adequate. That's required under CEQA. If the CPUC ultimately decides to approve the project or an alternative, then the decision will include a requirement for mitigation monitoring and it will identify mitigation measures.

One other thing I wanted to point out with respect to the CPUC's process is that CPUC takes alternatives very seriously, and we have worked with the CPUC, and Billie in particular, on many projects where alternatives are selected by the CPUC and are actually built. They don't need to be designed by engineers.

We had a project where one component was actually designed by a woman who lived across the street and had an idea about the way that project could be better built, and that component of that alternative actually was accepted by the PUC and it's actually been built now. So we're seriously looking for information on alternatives, and really are hoping that you'll give us everything you can think of from big scale to small scale.

The BLM process, Tom talked about a little earlier. Following the Final EIR/EIS, the BLM has a comment period. That doesn't happen under CEQA, but it happens in the NEPA world. There's also a 60-day process where the Governor reviews it. Then the BLM will prepare the recommendation that will approve or deny the project and also address mitigation measures.

Lewis?

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you, everyone.

Hopefully, that's given you a good orientation to the whole process, and, in particular, the purpose of this evening. Again, we know that a lot of people have feelings and opinions and some strong feelings about the proposed project, and we understand that that's natural. Please recognize we're at the scoping stage and the types of comments that are going to be most relevant and most useful, it's helpful to you to make the best use of your time and your input.

And just to perhaps reiterate one more time, if you can help identify the location and extent of environmental impacts of the proposed project, that's very helpful to the people preparing the EIR/EIS.

Part of the reason for doing these meetings in so many different locales is that we would hope, for example, that here in El Centro we get local comments, local knowledge, local experience that would be useful to the team. Second, I don't want to reiterate too much, but if there are alternatives that you've thought of, it's extremely useful if you can provide that in your comments.

So I have with me right now nine speaker registration cards. We're going to use a consistent process throughout all of the meetings, in all of the locations, in which we are going to give each person three minutes to offer us their comments. If we are done fairly early in the evening, which it looks like we might be, then we will make it possible for people to come up and make additional comments after that. But out of fairness to every process, whether it's ten people or a hundred people, we want to make sure everyone who showed up and signed up gets their first three minutes in before we would go back.

I have a very, very simple low-tech way of telling you about the three minutes. When you've been speaking for two minutes, I'll hold up my index finger, like this, indicating that you have one minute left, and then when you've reached three minutes, I'll hold up my closed hand, like this, indicating that your three minutes are up, and if you would help us respect that, the process will go much more smoothly. That also means that occasionally while you're speaking, you need to look up at me. That would be very helpful as well.

What I'll do is I'll read the first several names so you'll know the order. That way you don't have to line up at the mic, you can just wait and know when your time is going to come. Both of these mics are on, both of them work, and I don't have any preference, so you can use either one you want, these two up here at the podium.

So with that, the first four names that I have are (and I apologize in advance if I mispronounce anyone's name. I'll try and be as phonetic as I can.) Nicole Rothfleisch, Richard Van Leeuwen, Doug Westmoreland and then Ed McGrew. And if you would begin your comments just with your name for the court reporter.

I should mention that this lovely lady seated down here below me is a court reporter. She is taking verbatim everything that's said here in order to prepare a complete record and make sure we capture all of your comments.

And, again, for those of you who are uncomfortable with public speaking, which all the polls in America say is the majority of us, please don't feel that you're left out if you don't come speak tonight. Written comments are given the same consideration as any oral comments offered, and we encourage you to do that as well.

So, Nicole Rothfleisch, if you would come up first.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

MS. NICOLE ROTHFLEISCH: Good evening. Thank you for the turn to be here and comment on this. And, by the way, excellent job on the name pronunciation.

Imperial County Farm Bureau, which I represent, is a voluntary membership based organization comprised of over 800 members, most of which are farmers and ranchers of the Imperial valley.

Farm Bureau has not taken a position on the Sunrise Powerlink Transmission project; however, we are concerned about the location of the 500 kilovolt line. It is our understanding that SDG&E has filed for a preferred route, the so-called eastern route, which would run in close proximity to the Bullfrog Farms dairy. This is problematic for the following reasons:

The County of Imperial along with the Farm Bureau and other organizations has worked diligently over the past decade to attract agricultural industry such as dairies to Imperial County in order to simulate our agriculture economy. We have what's called the dairy attraction committee. That's been active for probably a decade or so. Bullfrog Farms was the first dairy to relocate to the Imperial Valley and has proven to be an incredible asset to our community. Furthermore, the area surrounding Bullfrog Farms has been designated as an area ideal for additional dairies to relocate to. An electrical transmission line of this magnitude would be detrimental to this industry.

The impacts of stray voltage and therefore electricity in general have been well-documented. Studies have shown that it would be necessary for the line to be located a minimum of one mile away from livestock in order to prevent impacts to the health and productivity of the animals. The Van Leeuwens, owners of Bullfrog Farms, have determined, based on studies and real-life experience, that they would lose ten pounds of production per cow per day due to impacts from the electrical line. And I actually have specific figures in here, but I'm going to let Richard address those since he's up next. Basically, a 3200 cow dairy cannot survive a loss of this magnitude. It will surely put them out of business.

It's also our understanding that the proposed route for the line would run through as well as directly adjacent to land in agricultural production. A major problem with this scenario is the hazard that this would cause for agricultural pilots.

It's the recommendation of the Farm Bureau that SDG&E select an alternate route for the Sunrise Powerlink Transmission Line that would not negatively impact agriculture in the Imperial Valley.

The Farm Bureau appreciates the opportunity to comment on the project and looks forward to working with you to find a compromise suitable to all stakeholders involved.

MR. MICHAELSON: Richard Van Leeuwen.

MR. RICHARD VAN LEEUWEN: Hello. Richard Van Leeuwen, owner of Bullfrog Farms, along with my wife and my mother and father, family partnership. Nicole addressed basically most of the same issues that I want to address, but now you can put a face to us. I do have a letter that can be submitted. I'll kind of read off of it and go from this.

We've owned and operated a family dairy farm at this location since February of 2004. Our concern about this power link is the proximity to the dairy facility.

The earlier proposed routes showed that the power lines were miles away from it. And you've probably seen in the early proposals, they are way out on the west. That looked like the obvious route, so we really weren't concerned about it. And then the other proposed route went to the east of the dairy, close enough to be concerned about, and then SDG&E's final route was right on top of the dairy, but I'll get to that.

However, SDG&E's final proposed route is shown going over our milking facility and over the cow shade facilities, which is where the cows live and milk; it would be right over it. This concerns us because it's been documented and proven electricity near cattle adversely affects their milk production, reproduction, and the length of their life for the animal, not to mention the health of the 30-plus employees that we have there that work there day in and day out 24 hours a day.

In verbal conversations with SDG&E personnel, we found that SDG&E was using five-year-old maps to decide where the route would be; they were not current. And since then — their maps didn't show the location of the dairy, which makes me wonder what other parts of this project have been overlooked on outdated information.

Our facility itself is still in expansion mode. We have more corrals, more cattle that come in. I have two brothers that hope to build dairies in the same area, adjacent to ours, to relocate our whole family down here.

Okay. And the last note would be what Nicole already talked about. In respect to this part of the Valley, there is a potential to increase the dairy industry. If this power line was within five miles of this section of the Valley, it would be discouraging for dairymen to consider this area for their family farms.

Most dairymen are very familiar with high power lines. Usually dairies are out in remote areas that these power lines go through, and it's been — I know it's been documented, but — but just on personal notes, we've had cattle near these lines, and they don't do as well. And dairymen know this. So if there's power lines in this area, they will not — they'll run. I mean, it's just like somebody screaming wolf. They are going to run from it.

Okay. That's all I have.

MR. MICHAELSON: Our next speaker is ready. It's Doug Westmoreland.

MR. DOUG WESTMORELAND: Yeah, Doug Westmoreland, land owner and farmer in the general area of the proposed power line. And basically, three comments:

As to the earlier meetings about the proposed routes for the power line — and they've changed drastically in the past few months, and so it's hard to make comment or know if you're concerned because you don't know where it's going. And even with the maps that we have now, it's hard to tell where it is in relation to my operation.

Another comment is I'd like to see meetings held locally about when a decision is made as to where the power lines will go. And you can see, it's greatly affecting the Imperial Valley, and Ramona is kind of a way to go for the meetings for anybody down here.

Third comment is — and it's already been mentioned, is — I also feed cattle, and I've seen what electricity can do to cattle, and getting dairies into the Imperial Valley is a goal for the Valley, and power lines won't help that, and having a power line go directly over the present area, that's not going to help.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you very much.

I'll read ahead the next several speakers so you know who's coming up after Ed McGrew. Marie Barrett, John Pierre Menvielle, Scott Martin and Jeff Martin.

Mr. McGrew?

MR. ED MCGREW: Yes. My name is Ed McGrew. I'm a long-time resident of the Valley and currently have a consulting company called NuDairy One. I represent an absentee landowner that has spent over \$25,000 in rezoning and designing or having the preliminary dairy design plan for his property, which is in the vicinity of this proposed line.

About 15 years ago, our county I felt did a very progressive job of zoning the Valley. And along with that was the zoning along the western perimeter of the Valley, a zone for heavy agriculture, which is dairies.

We've touted to dairymen out of the Valley that we have a very conducive and very welcome governmental environment down here for them to relocate. We've also stressed that the west side of the Valley is a place for them to be — slightly cooler, a little more air movement, and particularly, it's 12 to 13 miles away from any populated areas. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to know that dairies do have certain odors, certain dust, and maybe flies for that matter.

I've personally been in contact with three other dairymen from out of the Valley that are seriously looking at the Valley — that's in addition to the Bullfrog brothers — who are interested in relocating here, and we're focusing on that entire area, the very area west of Imperial, along that perimeter, to be the preferred area for these dairies. And as a matter of fact, I hate to even call these fellows and tell them these hearings are going on because I worry now that just this cloud hanging over us is going to be terribly detrimental.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you very much.

Marie Barrett.

MS. MARIE BARRETT: Good afternoon. My name is Marie Barrett, and I am representing the conservation committee of the San Diego/Imperial County Chapter of the California Native Plant Society.

After reviewing the Sunrise Powerline SDG&E application to the PUC with attention to native plant conservation, our representatives have drawn the following conclusions, which I will summarize:

One, SDG&E failed to include in their list of goals that any major development must meet the Federal Endangered Species Act by respecting the integrity of multiple species conservation plans.

Two, we have noted a flawed core listing of all plant species in the Proponent's Environmental Analysis.

Three, it is difficult to determine if a particular plant is in a given location. Node segments are confusing.

Four, it appears not all species of concern are listed in particular node segments.

Five, it is difficult to reference field survey data with tables and charts. It's grossly premature to determine acreages for mitigation.

Six, ten days' notice is not sufficient advance notice for plant removal during construction to protect species of concern.

Seven, the proposed route has changed since the PEA, so the document as prepared does not protect species of concern.

Eight, access roads necessary for construction and maintenance will be very disruptive for the life of the line.

Our conclusion at this time is that the documents supporting this application fail at this stage to analyze risks to rare, endangered, or threatened native plants, and, therefore, it cannot be conclusively stated that there are or are not risks to species of concern.

MR. MICHAELSON: Okay, thank you.

John Pierre Menvielle.

MR. JOHN PIERRE MENVIELLE: Okay. My name is John Pierre Menvielle. I reside at 897 West Ross Road here in El Centro. The comments I want to make have been stated by the Farm Bureau and Mr. Van Leeuwen and Mr. McGrew about the West Valley.

A 500 kV line going through there is going to be detrimental to the Van Leeuwen dairy and also to the future plans of getting dairies here in the Valley. The dairy attraction committee has worked for the last 12 years to start attracting dairies out of the Chino area. So the proposed route will do economic damage here in the Valley.

The hay industry is very dependent upon the dairies, and the dairies are moving out of the Chino area and we're trying to get some of them to come here, which will be an economic boon to this area.

I know that when we first got involved in these lines, they were talking about running it through the bombing range, and I thought that's where it was going to go, and then all of a sudden, we show up with that route.

Another thing, I farm in the south end of the Valley and we have land down there, and a big 500 kV line goes through the valley in the south end and in the area of the — it does have single poles, and they are much better to have single poles from the crop duster standpoint and from the farming standpoint. And we have one ranch where the 500 kV line goes right over the top of it. You can stand over it and that thing hums like crazy. And even if you get a ways away from it, you can still hear it. So I know that Mr. Van Leeuwen's dairy would be greatly affected by the electricity in the lines. And

so this route through the agriculture area on the western side of the Valley really needs to be relooked at.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

Scott Martin, please.

MR. SCOTT MARTIN: My name is Scott Martin and I appreciate the opportunity to give these comments. I do plan on doing written examples, but I came here to see how this process was going and figured I'd take the opportunity to mention a couple of things.

I would really like to make sure that in this process we look at the correlation between the Sempra Energy LNG plant terminal that's going in in Baja California, where I understand that they have invested \$1.5 billion in putting in a liquified natural gas terminal, and my understanding is that that is supposed to supply a significant amount of gas for power plants on both sides of the international border. And my concern would be — is if this line goes in, what are the effects on air quality on both sides of the border, particularly in Imperial County, because of the power plants that are currently in place south of the border that do supply power into California.

I would just like to note that there are some inaccuracies, or at least I believe there are some inaccuracies, between the Notice of Preparation and even SDG&E's application.

There's a misprint on the number of acres that would potentially be impacted. These are state wilderness acres. I believe that the NOP says 43 acres and the application says 73 acres. And I also noted a difference in the amount of miles through Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. I think we're only talking half a mile, but I think one document says 22 and the other says 23, or says 22.6.

I don't believe that there was any survey done for paleontology along the line and I think that that should be done. I think that there may potentially be some impacts too on paleontology resources.

Unincorporated communities are grossly under noted in the application. In particular, the community of San Felipe, the community of Ranchita, the community of Santa Ysabel, they are not listed as unincorporated communities, and indeed I believe that they are.

I would like to echo the comments of the woman from the California Native Plant Society. Those exact same comments could go to endangered animals, federally listed species, along the line.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you very much.

The next speaker up is going to be Jeff Martin, then Denis Trafecanty, T. Huss, and Kelly Fuller.

MR. JEFF MARTIN: My name is Jeff Martin. I'd like to talk about some alternative thinking.

I feel that you've moved the line up against our farmland area. Originally, it was out in the desert going through military land. I feel you can bury this line underground to make the military happy. Right now on our Chocolate Mountains we have gas lines going through which service the

Imperial Valley. And this is a bombing range and you can go up there and watch them bomb, from a distance.

The line can be broken down into smaller voltage lines and run through vaults underground. This also will not affect the wildlife as much because it will still be movable underneath it. It will be more natural looking for resources around us. To me, just running those big power lines just kind of makes the desert look ugly in itself, and I think we can think of some other ways. We can come and bury these lines, hide them from society, where we can be more in tune with nature.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: One thing I might say, the pronoun used was “you” moved them. I just want to be clear that the Applicant is not sitting up here and these are the agencies that are reviewing the application.

Denis Trafecanty.

MR. DENIS TRAFECANTY: Thank you.

Susan mentioned the three R's that SDG&E — my name is Denis Trafecanty. I came from Poway to come to this meeting, and I live in Santa Ysabel. I have a business in Poway that I share with my partner, and we're not worried about a shortage in electricity in 2010. But the three R's of SDG&E, I just have to comment on it because it was on that board.

As far as renewables, untested technology has been driven out by some other utility companies. There's six prototypes in Sandia Park in New Mexico, and the experts — I'm not an expert, I'm a finance guy. The experts, as you go along in your travels, you'll find out that — it's highly questionable, but the executive that's running it, that spoke to me the last week at the County Board of Supervisors, is a retired executive from SDG&E. Renewables, we talked about.

Reliability. It's kind of comical to me. If you can do in-county generation of power in San Diego County at Carlsbad, where they want to move the plant, and make it more efficient using natural gas — and the Chula Vista plant, to me that's a heck of a lot more reliable.

Both of these lines, the — the proposed Sunrise Powerlink and the SWPL, I guess they call it, the Southwest Powerlink, would be coming out of the Imperial power station right here. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out how to disable all of our power — if you took that substation out.

And also — I'm just showing you something. Last time I went to Mammoth Lakes, I went through Mojave. There's five lines on this piece here. These are five transmission lines going right next to each other. So this story about reliability, you can't use SWPL's line and run another line along that, that's just the story; it's not the facts.

And reduced costs — they just raised their prices 13 cents. They are going to have a five percent increase in power in January of '08, they are proposing. This is the same company that said we were short of energy supply, and they manipulated the supply and they manipulated the gas prices. They ran — they did contract sending energy out of the state and bringing it back in at higher prices. And they are the same company that's going to spend \$350 million to pay us back. So the reduced costs doesn't compute for me either.

Real quickly, 120 miles of this whole line goes through the back country. I consider myself the same as these folks from Imperial Valley here. I'm in Santa Ysabel. The pictures in the application, if you look at the pictures that they showed you to tell you that it's less than significant impact, they are pictures of roads. Some smart cameraman took pictures to make it look like — I plead for you to drive through Borrego Springs and go up through the grade and come across Santa Ysabel and go down into Ramona and see what we look like. We want to preserve that.

Thank you very much.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

T. Huss. And I don't know when people came in towards the later comments. They may not have heard that we have three minutes, and when you have one minute left, I'll put up my finger, like that (indicating).

MR. T. HUSS: I'll try to keep it brief.

When you all get over there to the gas and electric company, the first thing when you go out there — it's new soil, it's not old. You got old dirt in the mountains. This is new soil. What are we going to do with the wells out there if something happens when they go out there? Are they going to drive pile? You can auger down, but the water level out there goes up and down. But if they drive pile and hit rock, what's to keep them from cracking that rock and the water shooting off somewhere else? Nobody said nothing about that.

One gentleman mentioned the hum. Out in the desert, you can hear for miles, somebody just talking like this, for miles. You get that hum out there — I don't understand it. People can't live like that. If — the electromagnetic fields are dangerous to be around for two minutes or more because it affects your body. How they keep moving them over the highway on 78 and 86 where you can't get away from it — ten miles on 86 and 10 miles up on 78. I don't understand that.

On the maps they made — they made those in 1994 — they were already labeled “Powerlink,” or “Desert Powerlink,” whatever. 1994, that's 12 years ago.

Figures 2 and 3, the desert link, No. 2, and Figure 3, the blowup of the park. The desert link is an inch and a quarter equals five miles. Figure 3, an inch and 5/16ths equals two miles. You can't see anything. It is the least resolution of them all. But on the Central East Substation, Figure 4B, you got two inches to 800 feet.

Well, I believe they give us those poor maps because they want — don't want us to see the fields they were going through, the total destruction of the desert that they are going to come up with, because they are out there on quads right now and go anywhere they damn well please, just tearing up everything. No respect.

Now, how are they going to keep the people off the roads, and are the people in Ocotillo Wells just supposed to sit out there and breath the dust from the wind from their work plots and the roads that go to the powers, or — the people that come out there on the weekends are just going to go over those roads that they are supposed to build. Are we supposed to get asthma? That's ridiculous. The wind blows out there.

Do you know if you go out there with a flashlight in your hand, underneath 500 kilovolts you can have light saber star wars out there. I did it down in Tecate. I was going to try and go down here on the highway and have the CHP just give me warnings. I can show it does happen.

You can't put windmills out there; they kill birds. That's just ridiculous.

All right. I'll be back. I'll wait.

MR. MICHAELSON: The last speaker is Kelly Fuller.

MS. KELLY FULLER: Thank you.

I'm Kelly Fuller. I'm from the San Diego and Imperial County Sierra Club. Tonight I'm just going to be giving a portion of our comments on Imperial County. We have lots more that we can submit on the later due date.

The San Diego and Imperial County Sierra Club is opposed to the Sunrise Powerlink and feels that there is a number of other energy solutions that should be selected instead, much as we would select different kinds of food to make a healthy balanced meal.

These potential alternatives that should be studied in the environmental review documents include better programs for conservation, demand management and energy efficiency; more local renewable energy, based on proven technology, not experimental technology; replacing current transmission lines with new wires that can conduct more electricity; more local power generation.

If we need more transmission lines to move more renewable energy from Imperial Valley, we should look at upgrading existing very high-voltage lines, such as the existing Southwest Powerlink or existing IID high-voltage lines, rather than creating new high-voltage transmission corridors. That's what I have on alternatives.

I'd like to — I think you're going to give me the one-minute sign.

Impacts that should be studied are the air quality and related human health impacts of increased power production in Mexicali — and that would be new power plants and increased production from existing power plants — should that power be transmitted over the Sunrise Powerlink, because both CAISO, the California Independent System Operator, and SDG&E say they cannot guarantee that renewable energy will be transmitted over it; air quality impacts from particulates added to the air by off-road vehicles driving on the new access roads created for the project; cumulative ozone production from power lines and related equipment; and the PEA's section on air pollution caused by power line construction is particularly inadequate.

Impacts of this project on global warming and fulfillment of California's global warming policies, especially if the Stirling Solar project and/or other renewable energy projects are not completed by the time the Sunrise Powerlink project would start transmitting power. We found the PEA's analysis of the timing of renewable energy development projects particularly inadequate.

Noise impacts. We are skeptical of the noise readings conducted by Greystone because they don't match our own experience.

We're concerned about impacts on endangered species and rare species.

And groundwater. We very much, like the last speaker, are concerned with groundwater impacts from earth compaction and subsoil effects created by the road and power line construction and what they would do to wildlife and wells.

Thank you very much.

MR. MICHAELSON: We appreciate everyone providing us with the written copies. That way we have a complete record of what you have had to say.

That exhausts all of the speaker registration cards that I've been handed today. Do you have one more for me?

Why don't you go ahead and give us your name and start speaking. I can wait for the card to catch up.

MS. V. DOYLE: I'm V. Doyle and I live in Imperial County as a resident. And where the current proposed line is going along the western edge of Imperial County, the line goes within a half a mile or less of several residents with small school-age children, and I'd request that that line be moved back away from them.

Also, one thing that I've been — there's really been no notification to Imperial County residents. San Diego Gas & Electric filed August 4th. They've had almost full-page ads in the newspaper, and not once have they mentioned that their preferred route there is going through Imperial County at all, from the south to the north along the whole entire western edge. They have full-page ads, they don't say anything about any of this. And essentially, they don't want people in the Imperial County to notice and know.

And I request that the Public Utilities Commission come to Imperial County and have a meeting, like they had in Ramona on September 13th, and I request that they put it in the paper and show the route so that the people will know. Because the few people you see here, they are just microscopic. Most people don't even know; they have no clue. You know, maybe some of them want it, maybe they want it right there, maybe they want to destroy the whole western edge of Imperial County and its economy. Maybe that's so, but they should at least have the opportunity to know about it.

That's all I have to say.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you very much.

Is there anyone who would like the opportunity to come back — well, first of all, let me check. Is there anybody who didn't sign in who would like to take this opportunity to speak? If not, I'd like to invite anyone, who would like to have what I like to refer to as a second helping, to come on up.

Yes, sir, come on up. This is T. Huss, correct?

MR. T. HUSS: Yes, sir.

This power in Mexicali, it's against the law right now for them to bring that power into America because they didn't put scrubbers on those power plants like they said they would do. So I don't know why they are doing this. I mean — unless they are going to take it to Canada, which I think they are going to do.

But I want to go back to this power. If they go out there and they drive pile or they do dynamic compaction — and I've done both of them when I was running cranes — I guarantee you some of these wells are going to go out.

Now, when they go up there and do this and then the guy's well doesn't work, they are going to tell him to go to the lawyer department. And then this is going to be just a long, drawn-out — and I guarantee you there's some old wells out there.

And dynamic compaction — I don't know if you're aware of it. They usually lift about (inaudible) pounds, pick it up 75, 80 feet, and drop it two or three times until the ground is packed, and then come in and drill on the side or whatever. Some of them old wells out there — use it or lose it. They are not cased all the way to the bottom. You shake them up like that and that man's well is going to cave in. There's a \$90,000 well out there; it's expensive. And there's not a thing that these people are saying about it.

On those maps, the density that they have shows — about the park and their blowup, you can't see anything in there. And they took them in 1994, which 12 years ago, and then the last five or six years, this place has grown. It was the last cheap property in San Diego County out there. And it's grown. Trust me. And the maps that they have don't show any people, don't show any flowers.

The one map they have, the main one, that has all the lines of — somebody just went we'll put a line here and there and a line there and a line there. Then the next one that has the blowup, it's so high up in the air, you can't see. But yet you can go over to the — another map that doesn't mean anything, 4B, and it's two inches to 800 feet on that map. Well, you can see everything. But out there where they are going to go to the flora and the fauna, and everything else they are tearing up, the most delicate part of it. They used the worst maps. This isn't fair, nor is it right, nor is it needed.

If it's all for brand new houses, and they haven't been made yet, you can put solar panels on the south-facing route. The government will pay about two-thirds of the 30- or \$40,000, so the homeowner ends up with only about 5- or 10,000, and that's if they don't put batteries in it. Then they only have to run the power plants at night, just half the time, until the sun comes up.

So that's about all I got to say. I'll see you again in Borrego. I'm sure we'll meet. I appreciate your listening.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

And I'm sure others on the panel would echo this. Everyone has been providing extremely helpful, relevant, appropriate comments, giving us a whole range of issues to look at and examine in more detail. So as far as this being already a good scoping process, you guys have set a very high standard.

I think you wanted a second chance. Just give us your name.

MR. DENIS TRAFECANTY: Denis Trafecanty, Santa Ysabel.

I just wanted to add a little bit. I know Anza-Borrego State Park is a crown jewel, and we'd never take lands away from the park and — for the purpose — like, is the park a land bank for future development? I don't think it was ever planned to be that way. I don't think anyone ever planned that.

But in addition to the state park, there's the remote back country. All through Santa Ysabel, Mesa Grande, and Grapevine Canyon and Ranchita, there's a tremendous amount of property there that somehow the people that governed us in past years declared it — pretty much no growth. I own 49 acres, my wife and I own it. We're allowed one house on it. If you have 80 acres in Santa Ysabel, Mesa Grande, you're allowed one dwelling.

The Williamson Act is agricultural preserves. You could declare your property as an agriculture preserve and you get tax benefits for doing it, but you're committed not to develop that land for a period of ten years. And that's a rolling ten years. And the year that you decide that you don't want to be on the Williamson Act, you have ten years before the property taxes go back up to the way they should be. What I'm trying to get across is all this back country is really remote. It was set by somebody to be remote and not to grow.

We have scenic highways. There's — I believe that this proposed — I like to use the term “proposed.” The proposed Sunrise Powerlink that is — has been — the current proposed route runs about four miles of a scenic highway, a “scenic” highway. Someone designated that as a scenic highway. Now, why do we want to run a 160-foot power line along a scenic highway?

We have people — one lady in Santa Ysabel, six-generation family, she made a goat pen, and because of the no-growth area, she was told that she couldn't put a cover on this pen. Okay. And the reason was that it's in a no-growth, scenic area, and so she had to put little dog houses in the pen to protect the goats from the rain and the wind.

And then there's another guy by me that — that he wanted to put a shed to put his motor home in. They said that's too tall, make two sheds. I'm saying why are we going to run a tower along a scenic highway and run this power back across 78 all the way down to Ramona if we can't as individual property owners? Don't we have some right? We can't even build stuff on our own property.

We had a wind storm when we first built our house. Our house was built in 2001. We had a wind storm that was in excess of a hundred-mile-an-hour wind — that can be documented. I don't know if there's records on wind. But 105 miles. Our house didn't get blown over and the roof didn't get torn off, but our gutter got torn off on the east-facing side. I read that some of those power lines fall over suddenly, so I'm concerned about that.

And finally, when CAISO, which I think is the California Independent System Operator that gets paid for by our rate payers — they were asked to evaluate the Sunrise Powerlink. I went to the CAISO meeting. It was a real laugh. There was hundreds of people there at the San Diego regional energy office, and the gentleman there got up and said, “We're here to hear your comments, but we're not going to change our opinion.” This was a couple of days before August the 3rd.

So as you can tell, I'm a very frustrated property owner, and there's a lot of us out there. And please remember that 120 miles of the line is in the remote back country, it's not just in the city.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

Anyone else who would like to add to their comments?

MS. KELLY FULLER: Kelly Fuller again from San Diego/Imperial County Sierra Club.

What one of the women here earlier tonight said about problems with notification, people not knowing about this, I've got to say, we have been discovering that a lot. I have been getting phone calls at home from the general public, upset because a neighbor told them; they didn't know this was going to happen. Also, there are people in the Southern San Diego County who have no idea that some of the alternative routes that may now be on the table could affect them, and yet this whole week of scoping meetings is going to pass because those people don't know what's going on.

Also, I've had some experiences now, this week, where I have talked to reporters who did not know about these scoping meetings until I press-released the reporters. So I will be happy to share my reporter E-mail list with anybody who wants it if it would help getting out the word to the media about these events.

A few more impacts we're concerned about: Fire. I don't know if everyone knows, but the desert is not fire adapted and there's an increasing problem throughout the west of what's called "type conversion," and when you get too many fires, instead of the native vegetation coming back, you get a different kind, and deserts all over the west are turning to grassland after repeated fires. Well, that might sound good at first, it doesn't have a lot of wildlife habitat value. And it burns more easily, so you set things up for repeated series of fires.

We also are concerned about if the line gets moved back to where the original preferred route was — and I know a lot of folks are concerned about the dairy cattle. There are other concerns out there as well.

When I talked about what was then the preferred route in April. I slept out there, and one night in particular, I couldn't sleep for part of the night because I was being repeatedly buzzed by a military helicopter that was doing night-landing practice. If that 500 kilovolt line had been out there, that pilot would have been in quite a bit of danger of bashing into it. So I don't think we expect to see a situation where it's the dairy Farmers versus the military airspace.

What's going to happen with the new roads that will come in when and if they open up more remote areas to visitation? One area we're very concerned about, on what used to be the preferred route and is now an alternate, is the far western Imperial County; it's adjacent to the Carrizo Impact area. It's marked with signs warning people to keep out because of the unexploded ordnance. I don't know about you guys, but you tell people not to go somewhere, like a child, you know where they want to go.

What is the impact on public safety going to be when you get more people coming in on those roads that are improved and therefore easier to come in on?

I want to end with just one thing about the wildlife. We'd like to know what the projections are and how many bird deaths or bird injuries would result from collisions with the line; how SDG&E would monitor deaths or injuries to these birds from collisions with the line; what would be the impact on the bird population and the danger created from the additional perches that the line would create?

For example, would this create a change in in balance from the prey species to the other species. For example, the flat-tailed horned lizard. If you have increased perches out there with the birds of prey, would you see problems with the flat-tailed horned lizard population because now it's being preyed on due to more perches? And it's those kinds of sort of domino issues that we're really concerned about.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Anyone else? Yes, sir.

MR. SCOTT MARTIN: Scott Martin.

I'd like to reiterate an issue that hasn't been brought up specifically to Anza-Borrego State Park, and it would be the notice issues of this 500 kV transmission line.

Currently, and actually historically, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park has had open camping on its 500-plus miles of dirt roads where anybody can go out on any one of those roads and find a spot that is to their liking and they can camp there, and that is unique among state parks and — in California and maybe parks across the country.

I took a trip with my daughter last summer and we got in trouble from trying to open camp in Santa Barbara County. And I invited the sheriff that I dealt with to come down and spend some time in Eastern San Diego County where it's encouraged to open camp. And so all — well, I guess we'd have to except the distance of the scenic highway along Highway 78, but all of the other distance in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park is open to camping, and I don't think that that has really been addressed in the document that SDG&E provided. That would be the Applicant.

There is also in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park an air route. There's a tour that anybody in a small aircraft can do, and there's a route — you can buy the booklet, and it includes Grapevine Canyon, and that is not addressed at all in their application on recreational uses in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.

And there is also — there may be mention of it in writing, but in the maps that are presented, at least by Aspen and in the maps that SDG&E has in their application, there is no indication of the 500 kV — actually, that would be 500/230 kV transmission — or substation in the — again, in the unincorporated community of Ocotillo Wells, which also is not designated as an unincorporated community on SDG&E maps. And on the Aspen maps, there are no indications of the proposed 500 kV or 12 kV substation in Borrego Springs on one of the alternate alignments.

And then — I touched on it a little bit before, but I want to make sure that it really gets touched on adequately. It's grossly undervalued — I don't know what the right word is — the impacts to animals. I would really say along the whole route, including the multiple species conservation areas as well as in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. I think there are just a whole lot of species that are not listed that could be impacted, and these may not necessarily be federally listed endangered species, but they could be species of concern, and I would hope that we would take the time to look at all of those.

Thank you.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

Anyone else?

All right. We mentioned that we would also provide the opportunity, after we took public comment, for questions of clarification.

If I could be clear about that. Remember, again, we're at the scoping stage, so if you ask what have you concluded about the impacts to X, they haven't, so they are not going to be able to answer

questions like that. But to the degree to which there may be some lack of clarity about the proposed action itself or the alternatives or steps in the process for the EIR/EIS, if anyone has a question like that, the panel's prepared to try to answer those questions, or they might have to do some more research and get back to you.

Just so we can get everything on the record, sir, if you have a question, if you wouldn't mind coming back to the podium to ask it.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

MR. DENIS TRAFECANTY: Denis Trafecanty from Santa Ysabel.

I am concerned about the word, "mitigation." And I do know that the president of — the lady from the Anza-Borrego Foundation, a foundation that's been around for many, many years, has been buying up — that foundation has been buying up lands that are owned by private property owners in Borrego Springs and then they donate it to the park. And I do know that I've heard through her — I was at the San Diego County Board of Supervisors meeting last week — that SDG&E is now purchasing this land, raising up the prices, and basically making the Anza-Borrego foundation inept.

So my question of you is, what does mitigation mean, that it was looking on the sites? Does that mean that there's thought that we may permit the utility to run this transmission line through the park if they donate lands to the park that are somewhere else in there? What does mitigation mean?

MR. MICHAELSON: Let's see if we can get you a start of the answer to that.

MS. BLANCHARD: Basically, what we're talking about is under the requirements of NEPA/CEQA, what mitigation monitoring would occur if the project or some kind of amended project is approved. There is adopted mitigation measures that would go along with that. Per the CEQA and NEPA requirements, we would be monitoring all of the adopted mitigation measures that the decision-makers would make. That's just strictly on the NEPA/CEQA law.

Mitigation monitoring is caring and making sure that the mitigation measures that are adopted are in fact enforced and carried out, and we have an extensive mitigation monitoring program with our consultants who are out there monitoring the construction process the whole way.

Susan, do you want to add to that?

MS. LEE: Just with respect to defining mitigation, there's a huge range of options, from things as simple as enforcing a speed limit for construction workers driving along on a dirt road, keeping a speed limit of 10 or 15 miles an hour, which keeps dust down, to things like doing surveys the day before certain construction activities occur so you make sure we're not affecting a population of some endangered animal that may be there that wasn't there when you did the survey, to things like you mentioned.

Mitigation can include, if the impact is determined to be a loss of a certain amount of habitat, that SDG&E purchase similar lands here that mitigates the loss of land in one place. So there's a huge range in the definition of mitigation, from the very, very site specific to a way that you can more regionally balance loss and gain of habitat.

MR. DENIS TRAFECANTY: This is Denis Trafecanty.

The fact that they are already purchasing the property makes me, as a concerned citizen, feel like this is a *fête accompli*. We're going through this process, and maybe all we're going to do is trade properties at the end. It's very frustrating.

You know, I'm supposed to be — I'm going to all these meetings. I'm working to try to earn a living, and I know when SDG&E is here, they are getting paid, and we're all leaving our job early, or doing whatever we're doing, to try to express our concerns. But when I see that — as a finance person, it sounds like some decisions have already been made, because they are buying all this property up.

MR. MICHAELSON: Okay, thank you, sir.

Other questions that you'd like to ask?

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

I'm wondering if we see some alternative routes, new alternative routes, that avoid the park, and I'm thinking specifically in Southern San Diego County, will there be a scoping process for those new routes, because those people don't know right now, and that you would not be able to get their input if there isn't going to be one.

MS. BLANCHARD: I think that's something that we need to consider and talk about amongst ourselves. But the NEPA/CEQA process evolves, you develop a Draft, and it goes out with these alternatives and --

MR. MICHAELSON: Good question for a lawyer, which we're not. So let's take that under consideration.

MS. BLANCHARD: But it's a great idea and I think we need to talk about it.

MS. KELLY FULLER: May I ask?

One thing I want to add is one of those local communities, Boulevard, is actually going to discuss this at their meeting this Thursday, and they are very uncomfortable — if — especially if you go on the website and you look at the PUC's data request, you can see specific areas of south county mentioned, and none of those people know about it, or virtually none.

About the mitigation, you were talking about monitoring. Does that monitoring only happen during construction, or is there monitoring that goes on later to make sure if something, for instance, say, some mitigation was on non-native plant removal, that those plants cannot come back?

MS. LEE: It depends on the way the measure is written, but oftentimes a measure that requires re-vegetation will have a requirement for ongoing monitoring over a period of years. If the draft comes out and you see a measure that you don't think provides adequate monitoring — and that's something that we usually try and incorporate — we would love to have a comment on there saying this kind of thing requires ongoing monitoring. I know with desert vegetation, that's definitely an issue.

MS. KELLY FULLER: South of the Imperial Valley Substation areas, there is some Tamarisk that was cut for the relatively new power lines that go to Mexicali and it's sprouting and coming back and there doesn't seem to be any follow-up on it.

MR. MICHAELSON: Thank you.

Anyone else have a question of clarification about either the process or the proposed project?

MR. DENIS TRAFECANTY: Denis Trafecanty.

I noticed — I'm pouring through that 2000- page report with my wife and — what was really troublesome to me is SDG&E's comment about what the impact of these lines are to the aesthetics of the area. And I saw it so many times, “less than significant impact.” And I just wondered, Susan — I mean, when you go through the process, how do you evaluate comments like that?

Because I am — I mean, unless I'm totally out of it. I mean, I'm a runner, I'm an endurance runner. I've been all over the park up in the mountains, and it's one of the most beautiful places in the whole world, this area that we're talking about. A lot of people say it doesn't even seem like it belongs in California. It's so unique, this area of the Cuyamacas and the Anza-Borrego. How do you evaluate those kinds of comments?

MS. LEE: You're talking about the impact conclusions made?

MR. DENIS TRAFECANTY: Yes.

MS. LEE: Basically, we look at them and we move on and make our own conclusions independently, because we need to use our own assessment of the environmental setting, our own standards in terms of the way impacts are determined and our own professional judgment in terms of making impact conclusions.

And I think if you look back at documents that have been done for the CPUC over the years, you'll find many, many, many cases where the Applicant's PEA has one purpose, which is to present the project in a certain light. When you're doing an EIR/EIS for the lead agencies, the purpose is to be objective and present the information that we believe is fair and complete and, we hope, impartial.

MR. MICHAELSON: Yes, sir, did you have a question? I have to ask you to come up to the mic, sorry, because we are recording this.

MR. SCOTT MARTIN: Scott Martin.

I want to make sure that we were going to — I heard earlier there was going to be some discussion on the workshop. Was that going to be talked about further?

MR. MICHAELSON: The workshop, the one with the --

MS. LEE: It was mentioned on one of the earlier slides, and I'll just go back and reiterate.

On the 13th of October, SDG&E is sponsoring a workshop at the request of the CPUC. The assigned Commissioner and the Administrative Law Judge have asked them to hold a workshop for the parties committed to be involved in this process as it starts now and continues through the next year. So it's not open to the public, but it is open to everyone who is a formal party at the proceeding.

MS. BLANCHARD: People can attend the workshop, but the parties will be the speakers mainly involved in the interaction.

MS. LEE: Several of us from the team will be there just to listen. SDG&E has also been asked to provide a summary memo in terms of the proceeding to the rest of us.

MS. BLANCHARD: Are you on the service list?

MS. LEE: I think he's a party.

MS. BLANCHARD: Okay. So you have seen the ruling. And it lays out the particular process of what they are going to do at the October 13th workshop.

MR. MICHAELSON: So you're a party, so you'll be there.

MR. SCOTT MARTIN: Scott Martin.

I thought that there was an indication that there was going to be some more specifics about that. And I am a party so I'm sure that I will get the information, but I thought maybe you had some more specifics about where it was going to happen.

MS. BLANCHARD: As the Energy Division staff person, you saw the ruling, and it directed SDG&E to do this, and it stated what they should address, and there was an agenda that was put out.

MR. SCOTT MARTIN: Right.

MS. BLANCHARD: And then they had discussion about when to have it, and I believe there's a draft agenda out there for what that workshop will be about. I'm not sure if that agenda is changing in motion at this point. I've seen an agenda, that's all.

MR. SCOTT MARTIN: Okay.

MS. BLANCHARD: That agenda would be what the workshop would be about.

MR. SCOTT MARTIN: Okay. I just had not seen any specifics yet and I thought maybe you had them.

MS. BLANCHARD: No.

MR. SCOTT MARTIN: But I will wait patiently.

MR. MICHAELSON: You know as much as she knows at this point, I believe.

MR. SCOTT MARTIN: I guess I would like to just clarify that as a party we are allowed to invite —

MR. MICHAELSON: Observers.

MR. SCOTT MARTIN: — observers?

MS. BLANCHARD: Yes. Parties are going to be interacting with SDG&E because they are parties and this is a workshop set up around this ruling that is stating this. But it is an open, public meeting where other people can attend. It even says in there that the Energy Division staff won't facilitate it, but that we will attend. So anyway, it is a public meeting.

MS. LEE: I think the one thing SDG&E has requested is that you tell them how many people you are bringing. That was in one of their E-mails.

MR. MICHAELSON: They need to know whether they need Qualcomm stadium or whatever.

We just have two last slides — before we lose anybody — I just don't know how many more questions we are going to have. If you want to --

MR. T. HUSS: My name's T. Huss.

There's one more thing. On that preferred route, the route that the young lady over here walked, San Diego Gas & Electric, IID Department of Water and Power, California Water Authority and Borrego Water District want to put a waterline from the end of the East Main Canal and follow that exact power line to Borrego Springs at the cutoff there at Canyon Springs Road. It will be at least 200 feet wide for that power line.

Now, if they want to go back to that, you've got to ask them about that road that they are going to put in there. They won't talk to me about it. They say it has nothing to do with the power line. But it's the same people that are going to bend that waterline to Borrego Springs that want to put this power line in there. If they run it on the same place, they are going to have a 200-foot-wide road.

Now, you need to talk to SDG&E and IID about it. They would not discuss that subject. They said it had nothing to do with it. Some examples: You're going to put a power line here, you can't come within 150 feet of it. Then you're going to have a 200-foot denuded swath through the desert on the same utilities, so — and if they are all involved in it, I don't see the difference.

So anyway, I asked those people, San Diego Gas & Electric and IID, about monitoring stations on my properties. I said if — I wanted them on there right now and — so if they wouldn't put them on there, I'd pay for it and have them — I have to know where to find them. Because if they come out there and do what they want to do and I start eating dust, I'm not going to have anything to do with — a year ago, it wasn't here, and now I got it. They won't discuss it with me. And they will not put dust monitoring stations on my properties, and I just do not understand it.

MR. MICHAELSON: All right. If we could go to the last two. I just want to mention that we appreciate everyone who did take the time and energy to come out and offer us comments orally. But we know that there are people who either have a lot more to say or aren't comfortable with public speaking. So please be aware that Billie Blanchard with the CPUC and Lynda Kastoll with BLM are the people specifically taking the lead in reading your comments, and that written comments will be sent to the care of Aspen Environmental Group, to that address. There's also an E-mail, so you can send them that way as well. So there's lots of ways for you to get your written comments in.

If we could go to the next one. There is a website, which will be kept updated as details become available. There are 18 information repositories in case you don't have Internet access and you want to have background documents to look at. If you have questions or, again, don't know what the process is, need to know what's happening, when is the next meeting, those types of things, you can email that address, sunrise@aspeneq.com. And there's also an 800 telephone line that you can call if you need project information.

So the CPUC and BLM have tried their best as technology allows — I think carrier pigeon is the only thing they haven't included to try to make it easy for you to get your questions answered throughout this process.

Is there anyone else that has something to say, that they wanted to say tonight?

Okay, yes?

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

Pardon me if I missed this, if it was answered earlier. Do we have an estimated date yet of when the schedule for the proceeding will be released?

MS. BLANCHARD: Well, there's two things — go ahead. Okay, I will.

As I had indicated. There's two things going on. The ALJ, Administrative Law Judge, Steve Weissman needs to prepare a scoping memo, which will basically outline all of the issues and the dates that things will be addressed. It's my understanding at this point that he's supposed to have that out by mid-October. The CEQA/NEPA schedule had some issues that we needed to address. We hope those get resolved such that we can finalize a schedule for the Draft EIR/EIS and the Final, and at that point, when we do that, we are going to send out a card to the entire CEQA/NEPA mailing list to indicate what those dates are. But right now, I can't come here tonight with those dates.

MR. MICHAELSON: So stay tuned.

MS. BLANCHARD: Hopefully soon. I would like to know soon because we've got a lot of work to do.

MS. KELLY FULLER: By “some” issues, was one of the issues you're referring to as one the request for some of the biological surveys to be done in the summer and the question about whether or not it will come out in the spring when there was still surveys in the summer?

MS. BLANCHARD: You're right that that came up at the Pre-Hearing Conference, and that is an issue.

MS. KELLY FULLER: The other thing I want to ask is a number of us have photos of the route and of wildlife and all kinds of stuff that's out there, and we're wondering what's the best way to submit them — submit paper copies, submit them electronically? What's the easiest way for you folks to look at them?

MS. LEE: I'd say the ideal thing would be if you can PDF them. Then it makes it easier for us to direct them to our team and we don't have to worry about JPGs and file sizes.

MS. KELLY FULLER: So we would go ahead and send that in as part of the comment like --

MR. MICHAELSON: Yes.

The court reporter desperately needs a finger break here, so I'm going to call a temporary recess. If ten minutes from now people are still around and want to start up again, we can do that, but for now we're going to take a recess. Thank you.

(Recess.)

MR. MICHAELSON: This is Lewis Michaelson. We've just recessed for about 30 minutes. We have not had anyone new come for the past hour, so we're going to go ahead and officially adjourn this meeting. Thank you very much for coming. It's 7:00 o'clock.

(Whereupon, at 7:00 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.)

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