



Rob Peterson, CPUC
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RE: Opposition to SE-PLR-2, Templeton – South River Road Alternative

I am writing to oppose the installation of high voltage electrical transmission lines along South River Road. Only the South River Road alternative proposes the construction of high-voltage overhead transmission lines on and between earthquake faults through a populated area that has been designated in its entirety as a “High Fire Hazard Zone.” It is irresponsible to propose installing the same technology on South River Road that sparked the deadly fire that destroyed the town of Paradise and burned 153,000 acres, including 18,800 structures, and 85 human beings.

A 2001 study of a portion of the South River Road route by the **Department of Planning and Building of the County of San Luis Obispo**, found, “The primary seismic hazard is earthquake shaking generated by a major earthquake on the San Andreas fault located approximately 20 miles to the northeast. The occurrence of this event is considered likely to happen during the life of the project.” The report then lists one potential exception to the finding that the San Andres fault is the primary seismic hazard—the fault lines that lie under the South River Road Alternative: “The Rinconada fault transects the site, and should movement actually occur on this fault, the resulting shaking could exceed that expected from the San Andreas fault. Also, ground rupture along the surface trace could cause

major damage to any structures located astride the fault.” Later studies have confirmed that the San Andreas and the Rinconada faults are not just adjacent, they are connected. This gives new meaning to, “The occurrence of this event is considered likely to happen during the life of the project.”

In addition to the threats to hundreds of families that live above the Rinconada faults in this High Fire Hazard Zone, there are important environmental, and cultural impacts:

- Heritage oaks will be cut down—including trees that shaded the 18th Century meeting of Native Americans and Spanish explorers in what would become San Luis Obispo County.
- The footings for 80-foot-high utility poles will be sunk into archeological sites that record thousands of years of Native American history; some of these sites are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historical Places.
- Golden eagles that nest on the west side of River Road and hunt on the east side will face—daily—the possibility of extermination.

I ask the members of the commission to reject the South River Road Alternative and approve a route that poses less danger to human life, to our cultural heritage and to the abundant animal and vegetable life in the air, on the ground, and in the lakes and streams on both sides of South River Road.

Cordially,

