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CPUC/BLM
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Subject: San Diego Gas & Electric Company's Sunrise Powerlink Project, Draft EIR/EIS

We support of pending federal legislation, The California Wild Heritage Act, to protect over 45,000 acres of San Diego County public land as federal wilderness. We oppose any wire-based transmission line alternative that proposes to run high-voltage transmission lines through the San Diego back country from Imperial County to San Diego's urban areas.

San Diego supports more biodiversity than any county in the continental U.S. Much of this biodiversity is located on city, county, state and federal public land. A new transmission line would potentially impact sensitive lands through increased fire risk, road support infrastructure, visual impacts, and loss of solitude -- an essential component of federal wilderness protection.

How would each of the alternatives proposed in the EIR/EIS mitigate the impacts they would have on existing and proposed federal wilderness and wild and scenic river areas?

Affected wilderness and proposed wilderness lands include:

Hauser Canyon, proposed Forest Service wilderness
Hauser Mountain, proposed BLM wilderness
Pine Creek Wilderness, existing Forest Service wilderness and proposed wild and scenic river
No Name, proposed Forest Service wilderness
Sill Hill, proposed Forest Service wilderness
Eagle Peak, proposed Forest Service wilderness
Cedar Creek, proposed Forest Service wilderness and wild and scenic river
San Diego River, proposed Forest Service wilderness and wild and scenic river
Fish Creek Wilderness, existing BLM wilderness

Additional impacted federal lands would include:

San Felipe Hills, BLM wilderness study area
San Ysidro Mtns, BLM wilderness study area

In addition to these designated wilderness or wilderness quality lands, the proposed routes would seriously impact other city, county, state and federal public lands -- lands that were set aside for the protection of resources, watersheds, and to promote recreation. We have no business using these important resource areas as transmission line corridors.

As established in "Mineral King versus the US Forest Service", truly, "the rocks have rights" -- a right to an environment free from power lines, roads, and associated infrastructure.

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