

**DENIS TRAFECANTY**  
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April 10, 2008

Ms. Billie C. Blanchard, CPUC, and Lynda Kastoll, BLM  
EIR/EIS Project Managers  
CPUC/BLM  
C/O Aspen Environmental Group  
235 Montgomery Street, Suite 935  
San Francisco, CA 94104

Dear Ms. Blanchard and Ms. Kastoll:

Executive Summary

I live in the Santa Ysabel Valley and I'm very familiar with the Valley and the surrounding area. The proposed Sunrise Powerlink, if approved by the CPUC, would cause significant visual degradation in Santa Ysabel Valley and surrounding areas, including the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve. Under grounding of the transmission lines would also result in visual degradation. Also, the proposed line is not consistent with the mission of the San Dieguito River Park, which is to "To provide a continuous and coordinated system of preserved lands.....encompassing the San Dieguito River Valley from the ocean to the river's source." We need to keep the Santa Ysabel Valley in its present state for our future and for the future of our children and their children. We need to add to the Draft EIR/EIS the significant and unmitigable impacts to the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve and to the stated intentions of the San Dieguito River Park.

Qualifications

My name is Denis Trafecanty. I have lived in Santa Ysabel since 2001. Prior to 2001, I lived in Leona Valley, California and in the San Fernando Valley (Greater Los Angeles area). Since 1983, I have been an avid runner and I have always been an outdoor enthusiast. To further your understanding of my appreciation of the wilderness, I have visited the backcountry of the Sierra Nevada's for the last 44 years and I have owned resort property in Mammoth Lakes, CA since 1969.

In my six short years in the Santa Ysabel Valley, I have visited the surrounding backcountry wilderness areas, including the Pacific Crest Trail, Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve, San Dieguito River Park, Volcan Mountain Wilderness, Cuyamaca State Park, Anza Borrego Desert State Park, Laguna Mountain Recreational Area, Hauser Wilderness as well as other Preserves and Wilderness Areas. I am a current member of

the Pacific Crest Trail Association, Anza Borrego Foundation and Institute, the Escondido Creek Nature Conservancy, Mono Lake Committee, Southern California Ultra Running Friends, Santa Clarita Runners, High Desert Runners. I have performed a significant amount of volunteer trail work in State Parks, wilderness areas, recreation areas and in National Forest lands.

Since our residence is merely one mile from the entrance to what is now called the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve, I believe that I have visited this preserve more often than anyone else in the last six years. This property was purchased by The Nature Conservancy in year 2000, shortly before we moved to the area. Then the property was transferred to San Diego County a few years later. This is when I began to explore the area. I believe that I have been inside this property at least 150 times in the last four years. Accordingly, I am very familiar with this Preserve.

### Significant Visual Degradation

When you enter the Preserve from the Highway 79 entrance, you have a very steep climb within the first mile to a very picturesque location about 600' above the Santa Ysabel Valley floor. From there you will experience an excellent view of the Santa Ysabel Valley. At one point at the upper end of this mountain range, I have noticed that even the Indians enjoyed this same view. On a rock mound at the very top of the first mountain range within the preserve, with an excellent view of the Santa Ysabel Valley, mortars are prevalent. I guess the Indians also had a good taste for the beautiful Santa Ysabel Valley as well! I am happy to share this beautiful view to anyone interested.

Jerry Schad, author of "Afoot & Afield in San Diego County", recently wrote an article that was published in the Los Angeles Times. He wrote this article to describe his first visit to the Santa Ysabel Preserve. The picture that was used in the LA Times was a picture looking west from the west end of the Preserve, overlooking the Santa Ysabel Valley. A copy of that article is attached.

I do not believe that the Draft EIR/EIS gives proper consideration to the significant and unmitigable impact to the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve. Any construction of large transmission lines and transmission towers in the Santa Ysabel Valley will permanently degrade the most beautiful view of this valley from all surrounding areas, including the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve. That is not what was intended for this area by either the Nature Conservancy or by San Diego County when this property was purchased for the enjoyment by all of us. Also, any under grounding of transmission lines will also cause significant visual degradation to the view, as gravel roads and equipment yards for trucks and equipment will be visible from the Preserve. And finally, these roads will create greater unauthorized access to the area, creating dust and noise pollution and a much greater risk for a catastrophic fire.

### San Dieguito River Park's Mission

The San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park Joint Powers Authority, also known as the San Dieguito River Park, is the agency responsible for creating a natural open space park in the San Dieguito River Valley. As stated in their website, this Park was formed as a separate agency by the County of San Diego and the cities of Del Mar, Escondido, Poway, San Diego and Solana Beach. The mission of the San Dieguito River Park is 1) “To preserve and restore land within the Focused Planning Area of the San Dieguito River Park as a regional open space greenway and park system that protects the natural waterways and the natural and cultural resources and sensitive lands and provides compatible recreational opportunities, including water related uses, that do not damage sensitive lands, and 2) To provide a continuous and coordinated system of preserved lands with a connecting corridor of walking, equestrian, and bicycle trails, encompassing the San Dieguito River Valley from the ocean to the river’s source.”

The footprint for the San Dieguito River Park includes Santa Ysabel Creek and the Santa Ysabel Valley. The Proposed Sunrise Powerlink transmission line is not consistent with the Mission of the San Dieguito River Park. I do not believe that the Draft EIR/EIS gives proper consideration to the significant and unmitigable impact to the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve and to the intent of the San Dieguito River Park to provide a continuous and coordinated system of preserved lands from the ocean to the river’s source.

## Conclusion

There is a need to add to the number of significant and unmitigable impacts in the Draft EIR/EIS for the impacts to the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve and to the stated intentions of the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park Joint Powers Authority.

Thank you,

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Note: Photos will accompany the copy to be mailed.

## **D0111 cont.**

**SDGER17;s three R's are renewables, reliability and reduced cost.**

**Renewables is just a bait and switch. They only have 60MW of geothermal for a new T-line and the Stirling Solar project is a joke! There are 6 units in the USA and one in another country. The same 6 units in New Mexico that were there several years ago. What investor is going to put up money based on unproven technology? SDGE/Sempra wants to convince us that there is all this renewable energy in Imperial Valley. And then if they get approval to build this 130-150 transmission line, they will be running dirty oil based fossil fuel on that line because the renewable energy hasn't been developed yet.**

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**Reliability is best achieved through in basin generation of renewable energy and natural gas power generation. A 150 mile T-line is not reliable nor is the Imperial Valley Substation with 2-3 lines going through it.**

**Reduced cost is bunk. We saw that when SDGE kept lowering their cost savings. In basin generation is much cheaper than the T-line. Look at the San Diego smart Energy 2020 Plan (copy attached).**

**Do you know that Southern California Edison just announced that they are building 250MW of PV solar by leasing rooftops in Riverside County? And they plan to build another 250MW of PV solar after the initial installation is complete. Why doesn't this happen in San Diego? Because it goes against SDGE's plans to build a transmission line.**

**Do you know that the Sacramento Municipal Utility District is doing a deal with new homebuilders to enable homeowners to buy a solar home and pay back subsidies on their electric bills?**

**Do you know that San Francisco and Berkeley have a low interest loan program to encourage homeowners to install solar that is paid back over 30 years through tax deductible property taxes?**

## **D0111 cont.**

**Are you aware that the Imperial Irrigation District, the electrical utility in Imperial Valley, has filed testimony with the California Public Utilities Commission asking that they don't approve the Sunrise transmission preferred route? They filed this testimony as it most likely will render one of their existing lines as unusable for power transmission.**

**Are you aware that the Southwest Powerlink in South County was built 25 years ago with the promise of renewable energy from Imperial Valley? It never happened. So we should let them build another power line based on those same promises?**

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