Sunrise Powerlink Transmission Line Project

California SCH #2006091071 DOI Control No. DES-07-58

To: **Recipients of the Executive Summary of the Draft EIR/EIS, Sunrise Powerlink Project**

From: Billie C. Blanchard, CPUC, and Lynda Kastoll, BLM, EIR/EIS Project Managers

Subject: **Notice of Availability**, Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment for the Proposed Sunrise Powerlink Project

Date: January 3, 2008

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), as Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as Lead Agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) have prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIR/EIS) and Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment for consideration of San Diego Gas & Electric Company's (SDG&E) application to build and operate the Sunrise Powerlink Transmission Line Project.

What is the Proposed Project? SDG&E proposes to construct a new 91-mile, 500 kilovolt (kV) electric transmission line from Imperial Valley Substation (in Imperial County, near the City of El Centro) to a new Central East Substation (in central San Diego County, southwest of the intersection of County Highways S22 and S2) and a new 59-mile 230 kV transmission line that includes both overhead and underground segments from the new Central East Substation to SDG&E's existing Peñasquitos Substation (in the City of San Diego).

What is included in the Draft EIR/EIS? The Draft EIR/EIS contains 7,500+ pages in six volumes (see attached Table 3 for the contents of each volume). It includes the analysis of Proposed Project effects, as well as the analysis of the following additional components that are not currently proposed by SDG&E:

- Future transmission lines (230 and 500 kV) that would serve the San Diego area from the Central East Substation (including the Cities and communities of Poway, Escondido, Rainbow), generally following State Highway 76 and County Highway 6
- Other projects, called "connected actions" that are likely to be built if the Sunrise Powerlink transmission line is constructed.

The Draft EIR/EIS describes the Proposed Project, evaluates and describes the potential environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of SDG&E's Proposed Project, identifies those impacts that could be significant, and presents mitigation measures, which, if adopted by the CPUC, BLM, or other responsible agencies, could avoid or minimize these impacts. The Draft EIR/EIS also evaluates 27 alternatives to the Proposed Project, including the No Project/No Action Alternative, as required by CEQA and NEPA.

Impacts of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project as a whole would have 50 significant unmitigable impacts in one or more of the following issue areas: biological resources, visual resources, wilderness and recreation, agricultural resources, cultural resources, noise, air

quality, socioeconomics, public services and utilities, and fire and fuels management. Additionally, there would be a number of significant impacts that can be mitigated to a level that is less than significant, and other impacts that are adverse but would not require mitigation.

Availability of the Draft EIR/EIS. The Draft EIR/EIS will be released for public review on January 4, 2008. It will be available for review at numerous area libraries and on the project website, as listed in this notice. Additional copies of the Executive Summary of the Draft EIR/EIS along with a DVD of the complete document may be requested. The CPUC and BLM also have a limited number of copies of the complete Draft EIR/EIS document available to the public. Requests for documents should be made to (866) 711-3106 (phone or fax) or via e-mail to sunrise@aspeneg.com.

Submitting Comments on the Draft EIR/EIS. Written comments on the Draft EIR/EIS must be postmarked or received by fax or e-mail no later than **April 11, 2008**. Please be sure to include your name, address, and telephone number. Written comments on the Draft EIR/EIS should be sent to:

CPUC/BLM
c/o Aspen Environmental Group
235 Montgomery Street, Suite 935
San Francisco, CA 94104

Fax: (866) 711-3106
E-mail: sunrise@aspeneg.com

Informational Workshops. In order to help affected communities understand the Proposed Project and the Draft EIR/EIS, and to explain how the public can participate in the CPUC and BLM's decision-making processes, the CPUC and BLM will hold 9 informational workshops during the week of January 28, 2008. These informal workshops are an opportunity to speak with the agency staff and the specialists who wrote the Draft EIR/EIS and ask questions; they will be available at the workshop times listed in the attached table. At the start of each workshop, a brief presentation will summarize the EIR/EIS process, the alternatives evaluated, the conclusions of the Draft EIR/EIS, and the decision-making process. Presentation notes will be available during all workshops, so attendance at the beginning of the workshop is not required. While written comments may be submitted during these workshops, there will be no facilities to record oral comments.

Public Participation Hearings. Three Public Participation Hearings will be held on the dates listed in the attached table to receive oral and written comments from interested parties. CPUC Administrative Law Judge Steven Weissman will conduct the Public Participation Hearings, and receive comments on the Draft EIR/EIS and any other issues of concern related to the SDG&E application. These oral comments will be recorded and entered into the public record.

Details on the Informational Workshops and Public Participation Hearings are shown in Table 1. Table 2 lists the public repository sites at which project documents may be reviewed. For additional information or to read the Draft EIR/EIS online, check the Internet website at:

http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/Environment/info/aspen/sunrise/sunrise.htm

Table 1. Sunrise Powerlink Draft EIR/EIS Public Workshops & Public Participation Hearings	
Location and Telephone Number	Date, Time
Workshops on Draft EIR/EIS (to talk to CPUC and BLM staff and EIR/EIS preparers)	
El Centro CALWorks, Meeting Rooms B &C 2995 S. 4th Street, El Centro, CA 92243 760-336-4030	Monday, January 28 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Presentation: 12:40 to 12:55
Alpine Alpine Community Center, Sage Room 1830 Alpine Blvd., Alpine, CA 91901 619-445-7330	Monday, January 28 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Presentation: 7:10 to 7:25
Temecula Community Recreation Center – Multipurpose Room 30875 Rancho Vista Road, Temecula, CA 92592 951-694-6410	Tuesday, January 29 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Presentation: 1:10 to 1:25
San Diego–Rancho Peñasquitos Hilltop Recreation Center 9711 Oviedo Way, San Diego, CA 92129 858-538-8198	Tuesday, January 29 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Presentation: 7:10 to 7:25
Ramona Ramona Community Center 434 Aqua Lane, Ramona, CA 92065 760-789-0999	Wednesday, January 30 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Presentation: 2:10 to 2:25
Warner Springs Warner School Cafeteria 30951 Highway 79, Warner Springs, CA 92086 760-782-3517	Wednesday, January 30 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Presentation: 7:10 to 7:25
Pine Valley Mountain Empire High School - Gymnasium 3305 Buckman Springs Rd., Pine Valley, CA 91962 619-473-8601	Thursday, January 31 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. and 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Presentations: 3:40 and 7:10 p.m.
Borrego Springs Borrego Springs High School, Community Room 2281 Diegueno Rd., Borrego Springs, CA 92004 760-767-5357	Friday, February 1 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Presentation: 1:10 to 1:25
Public Participation Hearings (to make oral comments on the Draft EIR/EIS)	
Pine Valley - Mountain Empire High School - Gymnasium 3305 Buckman Springs Rd. Pine Valley, CA 91962 619-473-8601	Monday, February 25 6:30 p.m.
Borrego Springs - Borrego Springs Resort (De Anza Rm.) 1112 Tilting T Drive, Borrego Springs, CA 92004 760-767-5700	Tuesday, February 26 1:00 p.m.
Ramona - Charles Nunn Performing Arts Center 1520 Hanson Lane, Ramona, CA 92065 760-787-2000 (Ramona School District)	Tuesday, February 26 7:00 p.m.

Table 2. Repositories for Sunrise Powerlink Documents		
Imperial County - Public Libraries and BLM Office		
Brawley Public Library	400 Main Street, Brawley, CA 92227	(760) 344-1891
Calexico City Library	850 Encinas Avenue, Calexico, CA 92231	(760) 339-2470
El Centro Public Library	539 West State Street, El Centro, CA 92243	(760) 337-4565
Imperial Public Library	200 West 9th Street, Imperial, CA 92251	(760) 355-1332
BLM - El Centro Field Office	1661 South 4th Street, El Centro, CA 92243	(760) 337-4400
San Diego County - Public Libraries		
Alpine Branch Library	2130 Arnold Way, Alpine, CA 91901	(619) 445-4221
Borrego Public Library	571A Palm Canyon Drive, Borrego Springs, CA 92004	(760) 767-5761
Campo-Morena Village Branch Library	31356 Highway 94, Campo, CA 91906	(619) 478-5945
Carmel Valley Branch Library	3919 Townsgate Drive, San Diego, CA 92130	(858) 552-1668
Descanso Branch Library	9545 River Drive, Descanso, CA 91916	(619) 445-5279
El Cajon Branch Library	201 East Douglas, El Cajon, CA 92020	(619) 588-3718
Jacumba Branch Library	44605 Old Highway 80, Jacumba, CA 91934	(619) 766-4608
Julian Branch Library	1850 Highway 78, Julian, CA 92036	(760) 765-0370
Lakeside Public Library	9839 Vine Street, Lakeside, CA 92040	(619) 443-1811
Pine Valley Branch Library	28804 Old Highway 80, Pine Valley, CA 91962	(619) 473-8022
Potrero Branch Library	24883 Potrero Valley Road, Potrero, CA 91963	(619) 478-5978
Poway Branch Library	13137 Poway Road, Poway, CA 92064	(858) 513-2900
Ramona Public Library	1406 Montecito Road, Ramona, CA 92065	(760) 738-2434
Rancho Peñasquitos Library	13330 Salmon River Road, San Diego, CA 92129	(858) 538-8159
San Diego City Central Library	820 E Street, San Diego, CA 92101	(858) 484-4440
Scripps Miramar Ranch Library	10301 Scripps Lake Drive, San Diego, CA 92131	(858) 538-8158
Spring Valley Branch Library	836 Kempton Street, Spring Valley, CA 91977	(619) 463-3006
Riverside County - Public Libraries		
Grace Mellman Community Library	41000 County Center Drive, Temecula, CA 92591	(951) 600-6262
Lake Elsinore Branch Library	600 W Graham Ave, Lake Elsinore, CA 92530	(951) 674-4517
Other Government Offices		
BLM - Palm Springs South Coast Field Office	690 West Garnet Avenue, No. Palm Springs, CA 92258	(760) 251-4800
CPUC - Los Angeles Office	320 West 4th Street, Suite 500, Los Angeles, CA 90013	(213) 576-7000
CPUC - San Francisco Office	505 Van Ness Ave., Rm 2103, San Francisco, CA 94102	(415) 703-2074

Table 3: Contents and Organization of Draft EIR/EIS		
Volume 1	• Executive Summary and Impact Summary Tables • Section A, Introduction • Section B, Project Description • Section C, Alternatives • Section D.1, Introduction to Environmental Analysis • Section D.2, Biological Resources (Sections D.2 through D.15 have the following sub-sections) o Environmental Setting o Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures for the Proposed Project o Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures for the Northern Route Alternatives	
Volume 2	• Section D.3, Visual Resources • Section D.4, Land Use • Section D.5, Wilderness and Recreation • Section D.6, Agriculture • Section D.7, Cultural and Paleontological Resources	
Volume 3	• Section D.8, Noise • Section D.9, Transportation and Traffic • Section D.10, Public Health and Safety • Section D.11, Air Quality • Section D.12, Water	• Section D.13, Geology • Section D.14, Socioeconomics, Services & Utilities • Section D.15, Fire and Fuels Management • Section D.16, Policy Consistency • Section D.17, Plan Amendments
Volume 4	• Section E.1, Interstate 8 Alternative • Section E.2, BCD Alternative • Section E.3, Route D Alternative	• Section E.4, Modified Route D Alternative • Section E.5, New In-Area Renewable Alternative
Volume 5	• Section E.6, New In Area All Source Alternative • Section E.7, System Alts – LEAPS Alternatives • Section E.8, No Project Alternative • Section F, Other CEQA/NEPA Requirements • Section G, Cumulative Analysis	• Section H, Comparison of Alternatives • Section I, Mitigation Monitoring • Section J, Public Participation • Section K, Index • Section L, Glossary
Volume 6	<u>Appendices Printed in Hardcopy</u> • Appendix 1, Alternatives Screening Report • Appendix 2, Policy Screening Report • Appendix 4, Persons and Organizations Consulted • Appendix 5, Preparers of this Document • Appendix 6, Recipients of the Draft EIR/EIS • Appendix 11, Detailed Route Maps (Proposed Project and all Alternatives) • Appendix 12, Mitigation Measures – Full Text	<u>Appendices on CD Only</u> • Appendix 3, Fire & Fuels Management • Appendix 7, SDG&E's EMF Field Management Plan for Sunrise • Appendix 8, Biological Resources (Habitat Maps; MIS Report) • Appendix 9, Cultural Resources and Native American Consultation • Appendix 10, Air Quality • Appendix 13, Contamination Database