

## PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE

SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



**To:** State Clearinghouse, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Property Owners, and Interested Parties

**From:** Billie Blanchard, Environmental Project Manager

**Subject:** Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Informational Workshops for San Diego Gas & Electric's Sycamore—Peñasquitos 230-Kilovolt Transmission Line Project (A-14-04-011)

**Date:** September 17, 2015

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for consideration of the San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) application to build and operate the Sycamore—Peñasquitos 230-Kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line Project (Proposed Project).

### Draft EIR Availability

This Draft EIR is being released for public review on September 17, 2015 and comments on the Draft EIR are due on or before November 2, 2015. It is also available for review at numerous area libraries (see list at end of this Notice) and for review and download on the project website:

[http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/Environment/info/panoramaenv/Sycamore\\_Penasquitos/index.html](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/Environment/info/panoramaenv/Sycamore_Penasquitos/index.html)

A limited number of additional copies of the complete multi-volume Draft EIR document or a stand-alone executive summary with a CD of the entire document are available upon request by email at [sycamorepenasquitos@panoramaenv.com](mailto:sycamorepenasquitos@panoramaenv.com) or by phone (650-373-1200) or fax (650-373-1211).

### Description of the Proposed Project

As illustrated on Figure ES 1-1 (see page ES-3 of the Executive Summary), the Proposed Project would construct a transmission line and modify several substations. The majority of the proposed transmission line would be located in the City of San Diego with small portions in the City of Poway and the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar east of Interstate 15 (I-15). Ancillary proposed activities would occur within the Cities of Carlsbad and Oceanside at existing facilities. The Sycamore—Peñasquitos transmission corridor traverses numerous land uses including residential, open space, military (MCAS Miramar), vacant land, urban, commercial/shopping, industrial/energy facility, park, transportation, and light industrial/business park uses.

The Proposed Project includes the following major components:

- Construction of three overhead segments (Segments A, C, and D) and one underground segment (Segment B) of 230-kV transmission line between Sycamore Canyon Substation and Peñasquitos Canyon Substation
- Modifications at Sycamore Canyon and Peñasquitos Substations to facilitate the connection of the new 230-kV transmission line
- Minor modifications including adjusting relays and upgrading protection on remaining lines at Chicarita, Mission, and San Luis Rey Substations

- Removal or reconfiguration of existing transmission lines at the Encina Hub to open a position for the new 230-kV line in Segment C
- Reversal of positions of existing 230-kV line phase components between the Mission Substation and the Peñasquitos Junction (intersection of Proposed Project Segments C and D) in order to accommodate the bundling of power lines within Segment C

## **Project Objectives**

The CPUC has defined three Basic Project Objectives for the Proposed Project:

1. To maintain long-term grid reliability in the absence of San Onofre Nuclear Generating System (SONGS) generation
2. To deliver energy more efficiently to the load center in San Diego
3. To support deliverability of renewable resources identified in SDG&E's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) portfolio

These objectives have guided the development of alternatives to the Proposed Project.

## **Contents of the Draft EIR**

The Draft EIR contains over 2,600 pages in three volumes (see Table 3 at the end of this Notice for a list of the contents of each volume). It includes the analysis of the environmental effects of the Proposed Project and of the five alternatives to all or part of the Proposed Project. The Draft EIR identifies the impacts that could be significant, and presents mitigation measures, which, if adopted by the CPUC, could avoid, reduce, or minimize these impacts.

**Impacts of the Proposed Project.** The Proposed Project would have eight significant and unavoidable impacts in one or more segments in the following resource areas: aesthetics, transportation and traffic, noise, and recreation. Eleven resource areas would have significant impacts that can be mitigated to a less than significant level or are less than significant without mitigation. The Proposed Project would not have an impact to land use or population and housing.

**Alternatives to the Proposed Project.** An intensive alternatives screening process culminated in the identification and preliminary screening of 41 potential alternatives. These alternatives encompass both physical routing and system alternatives. Thirty-six alternatives were eliminated from analysis after screening, and five alternatives were retained for full EIR analysis. The five retained alternatives are:

- **Alternative 1: Eastern Cable Pole at Carmel Valley Road.** Alternative 1 is a cable pole relocation alternative along the Proposed Project route that would eliminate the impacts associated with the proposed installation of a tubular steel cable pole north of Carmel Valley Road at the northern end of Black Mountain Ranch Community Park.
- **Alternative 2: Eastern Cable Pole at Pole P40 and Underground Alignment through City Open Space or City Water Utility Service Road.** Alternative 2 is a cable pole relocation alternative along the Proposed Project route that would eliminate the impacts associated with the proposed installation of a tubular steel cable pole north of Carmel Valley Road at the northern end of Black Mountain Ranch Community Park.
- **Alternative 3: Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve-Mercy Road Underground.** Alternative 3 is a routing alternative along the Proposed Project route that would install 5.9 miles of underground transmission line that avoids the northern portion of Segment A and all of Segments B and C. Alternative 3 would start where the existing SDG&E right of way

crosses Ivy Hill Road and end approximately 550 feet west of the Peñasquitos Junction (i.e., where Proposed Project Segments C and D meet).

- **Alternative 4: Segment D 69-kV Partial Underground Alignment.** Alternative 4 is a routing alternative along the Proposed Project route that would eliminate the impacts from new tubular steel pole installation along 2.8 miles of Segment D. This alternative would construct a double-circuit 69-kV underground power line starting at two new cable poles in Proposed Project Segment D near existing lattice tower E17.
- **Alternative 5: Pomerado Road to Miramar Area North Combination Underground/Overhead.** Alternative 5 is a routing alternative located within an entirely new alignment from the Proposed Project. Alternative 5 would underground the majority of the transmission line along a new route with the exception of the east and west ends where the transmission line would be overhead within existing SDG&E rights of way.

**Submitting Comments on the Draft EIR**

Written comments on the Draft EIR must be postmarked or received by fax or email no later than **November 2, 2015**. Please be sure to include your name, address, and telephone number with your comments. Written comments on the Draft EIR should be sent to:

**California Public Utilities Commission**  
**c/o Panorama Environmental, Inc.**  
**1 Embarcadero Center, Suite 740**  
**San Francisco, CA 94111**

**Fax:** 650-373-1211

**E-Mail:** [sycamorepenasquitos@panoramaenv.com](mailto:sycamorepenasquitos@panoramaenv.com)

**Informational Workshops**

In order to help affected communities understand the Proposed Project, alternatives, and the Draft EIR, and to explain how the public can participate in the CPUC decision-making process, the CPUC will hold informational workshops as shown in Table 1 below. These informal workshops are an opportunity to speak with the specialists who contributed to the Draft EIR and ask questions. At the start of each workshop, a brief presentation will summarize the EIR process, the Proposed Project and alternatives evaluated, the conclusions of the Draft EIR, and the decision-making process. Copies of presentation sides will be available at all workshops, so attendance at the presentation 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.

Details on the informational workshops are shown in Table 1. Table 2 lists the public repository sites at which project documents may be reviewed, and Table 3 presents the organization of the Draft EIR.

<b>Table 1. Informational Workshops on the Draft EIR</b>		
<b>Day &amp; Date</b>	Monday, Sept. 28, 2015	Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2015
<b>Time(s)</b>	7 to 9 P.M.	2 to 4 P.M. and 7 to 9 P.M.
<b>Address</b>	DOUBLETREE GOLF RESORT SAN DIEGO Heritage Ballroom 14455 Peñasquitos Drive San Diego, CA 92129	DOUBLETREE GOLF RESORT SAN DIEGO Heritage Ballroom 14455 Peñasquitos Drive San Diego, CA 92129

For additional information or to read the Draft EIR online, please go to the website presented on page 1 of this Notice.

**Table 2. Project Document Repository Sites**

Carmel Mountain Ranch Library	12095 World Trade Drive, San Diego, CA 92128
Mira Mesa Library	8405 New Salem St., San Diego, CA 92126
North University Community Branch Library	8820 Judicial Drive, San Diego, CA 92122
Oceanside Public Library	330 N. Coast Highway, Oceanside, CA 92054
Poway Branch, San Diego County Library	13137 Poway Road, Poway, CA 92064
Rancho Peñasquitos Library	13330 Salmon River Road, San Diego, CA 92129
Scripps Miramar Ranch Library	10301 Scripps Lake Drive, San Diego, CA 92131
University Community Library	4155 Governor Drive, San Diego, CA 92122

**Table 3. Contents and Organization of the Draft EIR**

<b>Volume 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Notice of Availability</li> <li>▪ Acronyms and Abbreviations</li> <li>▪ Glossary</li> <li>▪ Executive Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Impact Summary Tables</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Chapter 1: Introduction</li> <li>▪ Chapter 2: Project Description</li> <li>▪ Chapter 3: Alternatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chapter 4: Environmental Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Section 4.1: Biological Resources</li> <li>- Section 4.2: Aesthetics</li> <li>- Section 4.3: Cultural Resources</li> <li>- Section 4.4: Paleontological Resources</li> <li>- Section 4.5: Geology, Soils, and Mineral Resources</li> <li>- Section 4.6: Hydrology and Water Resources</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chapter 4 (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Section 4.7: Transportation and Traffic</li> <li>- Section 4.8: Noise</li> <li>- Section 4.9: Land Use and Planning</li> <li>- Section 4.10: Recreation</li> <li>- Section 4.11: Hazards and Hazardous Materials</li> <li>- Section 4.12: Fire and Fuels Management</li> <li>- Section 4.13: Air Quality</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Section 4.14: Greenhouse Gas Emissions</li> <li>- Section 4.15: Agriculture and Forestry</li> <li>- Section 4.16: Population and Housing</li> <li>- Section 4.17: Utilities and Public Service Systems</li> <li>▪ Chapter 5: Cumulative Impacts</li> <li>▪ Chapter 6: Comparison of Alternatives</li> <li>▪ Chapter 7: Other CEQA Considerations</li> <li>▪ Chapter 8: Report Preparation</li> <li>▪ Chapter 9: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Volume 2</b>	<b>Appendices</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ App A. Detailed Project Route Maps</li> <li>▪ App B. Proposed Project Pole Details</li> <li>▪ App C. Magnetic Field Management Plan</li> <li>▪ App D. Alternatives Screening Report</li> <li>▪ App E. Detailed Alternative Route Maps</li> <li>▪ App F. Aesthetic Resources Supporting Information</li> <li>▪ App G. Biological Resources Supporting Information</li> <li>▪ App H. Cultural Resources Supporting Information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ App I. Draft Fire Prevention Plan</li> <li>▪ App J. Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Supporting Information</li> <li>▪ App K. City of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan Consistency Analysis</li> <li>▪ App L. SDG&amp;E Best Management Practices Manual</li> <li>▪ App M. Transportation and Traffic Supporting Information</li> <li>▪ App N. Hazards and Hazardous Materials Supporting Information</li> </ul>
<b>Volume 3</b>		