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January 26, 2006

Commissioner Dian Grueneich
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue, Fifth Floor
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Commissioner Grueneich:

On behalf of San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E), let me thank you for your deep interest in electric transmission infrastructure development in general and the Sunrise Powerlink in particular.

You have been contacted recently by a number of residents and groups expressing concern about the public outreach process for the Sunrise Powerlink. I wanted to take this opportunity to provide you with information about SDG&E's outreach to-date and assure you that we will continue to aggressively seek public input.

As you well know, the formal public process was initiated with our filing of A.05-12-014 in December. None of the outreach previously undertaken by SDG&E or upcoming over the next few months is intended to replace the outreach that will be sponsored and conducted by the Commission in considering our application. In addition to the pre-hearing conference scheduled in Ramona next week, there will be many opportunities for customers, residents and other stakeholders to provide input during the proceeding through public purpose hearings, written comments, direct participation in evidentiary hearings and other venues.

From the outset of the planning process for the Sunrise Powerlink, SDG&E made a firm commitment to seek public input well beyond what is required to site and license a transmission line. SDG&E's public outreach was initiated months before the project was officially announced and continues today.

Our outreach strategy has five segments: preliminary outreach, Community Working Groups, open houses, additional meetings and public communications. Each segment

was designed to include all points of view, including potential project opponents. Let me run through each segment to give you an idea of the depth of this effort.

Preliminary Outreach

Months before the project was announced, SDG&E hosted two moderated discussions with community leaders to gain feedback about developing a public outreach program for a major transmission line project. SDG&E also conducted anonymous interviews with more than 30 community leaders, environmental groups, business representatives and elected officials to gain input and perspective on key issues.

Community Working Groups

SDG&E invited over 150 community and regional stakeholders to participate in structured workshops on planning a route for the Sunrise Powerlink. SDG&E has held two series of these Community Working Groups in San Diego and Ramona, with a third planned for late February or early March 2006.

Open Houses

To give members of the public an opportunity to speak one-on-one with members of the project team, SDG&E hosted eight open houses throughout the study area and more are planned for March 2006. To-date, open houses have taken place in Scripps Ranch, Valley Center, Borrego Springs, and Ramona.

SDG&E advertised the meetings by:

- Sending over 80,000 meeting notices to property owners. Mailings were sent to addresses obtained from public records in each zip code within the study area.
- Placing advertisements in 21 newspapers.
- Posting informational posters in highly traveled areas such as libraries, community centers and post offices.
- Notifying all local news media.

Additional Meetings

SDG&E has accommodated any group or individual that has requested a one on one or town hall meeting. SDG&E has made presentations to over 120 community groups and individuals, including elected officials and governmental bodies in San Diego and Imperial Counties. We made presentations at town hall meetings and to community groups in Julian, Ranchita, Ramona and Borrego Springs with other community meetings scheduled.

Public Communications

SDG&E has and continues to make every effort to provide thorough information to the public. The project website, www.sdge.com/sunrisepowerlink, contains SDG&E's filings, project maps and descriptions, presentations and other information. Visitors can find the project hotline number (877.775.6818), sign-up for email updates and provide direct feedback.

SDG&E also produced and distributed an informational DVD, project brochure, fact sheet and news releases. We have conducted interviews with both major and community media outlets, many of which have reported on the project. Attached are several such stories for your information.

Some opposition is to be expected for a project of this nature and magnitude. Let me reiterate our commitment to a comprehensive public outreach effort above and beyond the Commission's own public process. We appreciate the many people who have already given us their input and welcome what more is sure to come.

The Sunrise Powerlink is a critical project that will provide substantial reliability, renewable energy and economic benefits to our customers and to the state. We will make every effort to make sure our customers, and you, are fully informed.

Sincerely,



Debra L. Reed

cc: President Michael Peevey
Commissioner Geoffrey Brown
Commissioner John Bohn
Commissioner Rachelle Chong
ALJ Kim Malcolm
Service List A.05-12-014

attachments

SDG&E plans an east-west power line

Proposed for reliability, plus tap new resources

By Craig D. Rose
STAFF WRITER

September 1, 2005

San Diego Gas & Electric proposed yesterday to build a major east-west transmission line that it said would ensure regional electric reliability and allow it to tap renewable energy resources.

The new line would extend about 120 miles – its exact route remains undetermined – and could carry 1,000 megawatts, enough to power about 650,000 homes, SDG&E said.

The utility said the line, dubbed the Sunrise Powerlink, would be needed by 2010 or 2011 to bolster reliability in a region with growing electricity demand and would be essential for the utility to meet a state goal of deriving 20 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2010.

Edwin Guiles, chief executive of SDG&E, said those potential renewable resources lay largely to the east of San Diego in the form of geothermal, solar and wind power.

Tapping those green power sources would improve reliability and the environment, he said. In addition, the utility said the power line could reduce costs for ratepayers by providing cheaper electricity from outside the region.

Guiles said the Aug. 25 blackout in Southern California was a "sharp reminder of just how fragile" the state's transmission system is. That 45-minute outage affected about 450,000 customers of SDG&E and Southern California Edison, just to the north.

"If the Sunrise Powerlink had been in service, it would likely have helped avoid last week's transmission emergency," Guiles said.

California's Independent System Operator, which oversees power grid reliability, characterized the event as an isolated episode caused by a single sensor failure.

After failing to win approval for a new north-south power line two years ago following community opposition, SDG&E this time said it had decided only on a general route for the line in order to work out details in consultation with others.

"We want to work with community groups, elected officials, local, state and federal agencies and members of the public in an open and collaborative process," Guiles said.

The utility hopes to file complete plans for the line by the middle of next year with the California Public Utilities Commission. Construction would take two years, Guiles said.

He declined, however, to put a price tag on the new power link. Projects of this scale typically cost hundreds

of millions of dollars, with expenses paid by ratepayers of SDG&E and other state utilities.

For comparison, the utility's failed Valley Rainbow interconnect proposal called for a roughly 30-mile power line from North County to areas farther north and had a price tag of \$360 million. The PUC in 2003 decided it was too expensive and unnecessary.

Community groups argued that the line would affect sensitive areas and would benefit SDG&E's parent company, Sempra Energy, more than local customers. The opponents said Sempra wanted the link to move power from its power plants in Mexico and Arizona to areas north of San Diego.

A local consumer advocate said he had similar concerns about the latest transmission proposal from SDG&E.

Michael Shames, executive director of the Utility Consumers' Action Network, said consultants hired by his group found that renewables in East County could be tapped by building a power line of more modest capacity and size.

"The real goal of SDG&E's proposal is not so much to bring renewables here as it is to move power from Sempra's plants in Mexico and Arizona to the north," Shames said.

He also said that an existing power line in the region – which offers one possible route for the new line – was strung on conventionally sized telephone poles. The proposed new power line would be strung on single-posted towers about 100 feet high.

"The proposal would be the equivalent of putting a freeway where there had once been a hiking trail," he said.

Debate over new transmission lines also involves questions about how best to spend ratepayer money, including whether to invest in links to outside sources of electricity generation or to develop local power sources.

SDG&E is building a new power plant in Escondido and hopes to contract for electricity from a second proposed plant on Otay Mesa.

The utility held a news conference yesterday announcing its proposal at Scripps Memorial Hospital in La Jolla, where it was joined by Chris Van Gorder, chief executive of Scripps Health.

Van Gorder, who said he was there "representing the general business community," said even brief electrical brownouts in the past had disrupted research at Scripps, despite its backup generation resources.

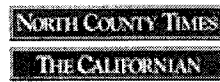
"It is critical for us to have another power link," Van Gorder said.

■ Craig Rose: (619) 293-1814; craig.rose@uniontrib.com

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Friday, January 27, 2006

Last modified Friday, September 30, 2005 7:13 PM PDT

SDG&E promoting proposed Powerlink

By: KATHY DAY - Staff Writer

NORTH COUNTY ---- San Diego Gas & Electric Co. is launching a road show Monday to tell the story of its proposed Sunrise Powerlink, a power line it wants to build that could cross the Ramona and backcountry areas.

The company has proposed a transmission line that could carry power from Imperial County and Mexico, where energy would be produced from alternative sources such as solar energy farms, geothermal plants and natural gas generators, to customers in the San Diego region. The line, which could take five to seven years from proposal to completion, could move enough power for 1 million homes.

Although company officials say no route has been identified, they have set up a series of "working group sessions" and "neighborhood open houses" to get people talking about what the line would accomplish and where it might go. The first meetings will be held Monday in Rancho Penasquitos and on Wednesday in Ramona.

"We want to get input on a route beforehand," said SDG&E spokeswoman Stephanie Donovan.

Utility officials have said they want to present the plans to the state's Public Utility Commission by the middle of 2006.

They say the link is needed to improve reliability of electricity transmission in the region and would help reduce costs for consumers by providing access to renewable energy sources. Cleveland National Forest, Anza-Borrego State Park, several American Indian reservations and Bureau of Land Management properties are all in the prospective path of the project.

Officials representing those lands as well as community leaders and representatives of groups such as the Sierra Club and the Utility Consumers Action Network have also been invited to next week's workshops.

The public is also welcome, although the second set of meetings will be directed more to residents in areas likely to be affected if the power line is built, Donovan said.

The meetings, announced in a press release late Thursday, are also being advertised in newspapers, including the North County Times, and via notices at libraries and community centers. About 150 invitations were mailed out.

Next week's meetings will include presentations from Laura McDonald, project manager, and Jim Avery, senior vice president for SDG&E electricity operations. They will discuss the preliminary plans and lead an interactive session, Donovan said, adding that if necessary they will break into smaller discussion groups.

At meetings later this month, to be held in Ramona, Valley Center, Borrego Springs and Scripps Ranch, SDG&E will set up stations with information ranging from environmental to engineering issues that will give details on the process and maps showing options. Donovan said residents will also have an opportunity to get a map printed out that will show, through global positioning information, where their homes are located in relation to the proposed route.

Another round of meetings is slated for November.

Michael Shames of the utility consumers group said he will attend and plans "to focus on why they want to build a 500-kilovolt line through Anza Borrego State Park." He said he wants to know why alternatives are not being pursued.

SDG&E Sunrise Powerlink Meetings

Working Group Sessions

- * Monday, 8-11 a.m.

Doubletree Golf Resort, 14455 Peasquitos Drive, Rancho Penasquitos

- * Wednesday, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Ramona Elementary School multipurpose room, 415 8th St., Ramona

Neighborhood Open Houses

- * Oct. 7

Scripps Miramar Ranch Library, 10301 Scripps Lake Drive, Scripps Ranch

- * Oct. 18

Valley Center Community Center, 28246 Lilac Road, Valley Center

- * Oct. 20, 3-7 p.m.

Borrego Springs Resort, 1112 Tilting T Drive, Borrego Springs

- * Oct. 26, 3-7 p.m.

Ramona Community Center, 434 Aqua Lane, Ramona

Those who cannot attend can call (877) 775-6818 for information or to give their opinions on the project.

Contact staff writer Kathy Day at (760) 740-5417 or e-mail kday@nctimes.com.



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SDG&E exploring power line options

By Andrew Good

October 5, 2005

A new power line that could be routed through local areas underwent scrutiny during a community workshop held by San Diego Gas and Electric this week in Rancho Penasquitos.

During the workshop, SDG&E officials said congestion on the city's power grid has made the project necessary.

Officials hope the project, dubbed Sunrise Powerlink, will be under way by 2010. No route has been selected for the line, which is expected to span 120 miles from an Imperial Valley substation to the San Diego border.

Several workshops will be held throughout the areas affected by the proposed project. The meetings' primary focus will be to discuss routing to find the least obtrusive alternative, said Jim Avery, senior vice president of SDG&E's electricity operations.

"We're trying to identify what the impact (of Powerlink) is on every possible alternative so we can pick the one that has the least impact on everyone," Avery said. "That's our objective; to come up with a line that is the least offensive and in the best interest of our customers."

But some audience members at Monday's meeting questioned whether the least offensive route would be a nonexistent one.

Geoff Smith, who chairs the Los Penasquitos Preserve Citizen's Advisory Committee, said environmental risk often goes hand in hand with new power lines.

"Running any voltage through habitats, away from transportation corridors, you're just running a risk of fire danger if the lines go down there," Smith said. "Also, if there is a fire, firefighters have to avoid the lines, and they have to shut them down."

Poway Chamber of Commerce Chairman John McIver, sounded more receptive to Powerlink, but added that a great deal of discussion is required before any major actions are taken.

"With a power line that will affect the community and citizens on a whole number of different levels, obviously there needs to be a lot of dialogue. I'm thrilled they're going out to the community and its leaders at this early point in time."

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Gordon Shackerford, a planning board member for Lakeside, said his concerns about the project stem from the "hodge-podge" of power lines running through his community. He said in the past, a single line tends to become a right-of-way for future ones, creating a layering effect that creates radio interference and is an eyesore.

Currently, only 6 percent of the electric company's power comes from renewable energy. Officials hope that with Powerlink that number will jump to 20 percent, allowing the company to meet a renewable energy requirement set by the California Public Utilities Commission.

"Our transmission system is just like a highway system," Avery explained. "At peak times, you have congestion on the system."

Avery said if Powerlink were available today, it could save SDG&E customers about \$450 million a year from its potential to cut costs on congestion management. The line would control congestion by connecting San Diego to the state energy grid, and provide 650,000 customers with power.

Power line alternatives like photovoltaic (solar) cells, which can line roofs and provide the most energy at the hottest times of the day, are another solution that needs to be examined, Smith said.

Avery said photovoltaic energy is a welcome solution if new developments or entire communities add them to their property, and SDG&E would be willing to buy their output. He added, however, that this would have to be done on an aggregate basis, as it would be difficult to negotiate with individual homeowners and businesses.

The next Powerlink workshop will be held at the Scripps Miramar Ranch Library, 10301 Scripps Lake Drive, from 3 to 7 p.m. on Oct. 17. For more information, call (877) 775-6818 or visit <http://www.sdge.com/sunrisepowerlink>.

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Friday, January 27, 2006

Last modified Saturday, December 3, 2005 12:46 AM PST

SDG&E holds power line meeting in Ramona

By: GIG CONAUGHTON - Staff Writer

RAMONA ---- Ramona residents who want to find out if part of a proposed 120-mile string of high-power electrical lines from Imperial Valley might run through their community can get information about the plan at a meeting from 4 to 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Ramona Community Center.

The meeting is second to last "open house" arranged by San Diego Gas & Electric, which wants to build the power line ---- dubbed the "Sunrise Powerlink" ---- to bring "badly-needed" electrical power to the county from a substation in Imperial Valley.

SDG&E spokeswoman Stephanie Donovan said Friday that the open house would give Ramona residents a chance to ask engineers and consultants where the lines might be located, although the specific power line sites haven't been chosen. The state's Public Utility Commission still must approve the project, and whatever power line routes might be identified.

The agency unveiled a wide, triple-headed "corridor" in November that they have identified as the possible area for the massive power lines and an 80-acre substation that are part of the project. The lines would run from Imperial Valley, through North County to the SDG&E substation in Rancho Penasquitos.

Donovan said the corridor now is still "several miles wide," and that the company does not plan to determine the exact routes for the proposed lines until early next year.

Interest in the open houses and the project, Donovan said, has picked up in the last two months.

"Attendance is picking up, as we expected it would," she said. "Not surprisingly, people have also had some concerns."

SDG&E managers said in November that they were hoping to head off some of the eventual "not in my backyard" protests that could arise over the project by including input from the public and local officials in the planning process.

Jim Avery, SDG&E's senior vice president, said in November that San Diego County desperately needs the electricity that the new power-line system would bring. He said the county's power demands are growing while its reliable supply is shrinking.

He said the fossil fuel and nuclear power plants that have sustained the county ---- Carlsbad's Encina Power Plant, Chula Vista's South Bay Power Plant and the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station ---- are growing older, producing higher-costing electricity than new power stations, and are too expensive to upgrade.

Meanwhile, the new Sunrise Powerlink would bring clean, cheap, "renewable" electricity ---- created by

geothermal steam, wind and solar power.

The Ramona Community Center is at 434 Aqua Lane.

Contact staff writer Gig Conaughton at (760) 739-6696 or gconaughton@nctimes.com

Borrego Sun

(USPS 061-260)  a Coplay Newspaper 50¢

Vol. 54, No. 25 Borrego Springs, California December 15, 2005

SDG&E pitches 500-kV power line

San Diego Gas & Electric spared no expense to pitch its proposed 500-kilovolt Sunrise Powerlink transmission line to desert-region residents Dec. 1.

task force of 17 SDG&E employ-

ees and consultants at eight stations equipped with maps and displays answered questions for the 30 to 40 desert-area residents who attended the 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. open house at Borrego Springs Resort Hotel.

Most of the visitors live in areas that could be impacted by high-tension Powerlink lines carrying electricity from the Imperial Valley to San Diego or north into Riverside County.

Routes being studied for the transmission system could add networks of single poles or lattice-work towers up to 130-feet tall to parts of the back-

country that have remained relatively pristine up until now.

Similar open houses and community working-group sessions also took place in Ramona, Valley Center, Penasquitos and Scripps Ranch.

"I'm concerned about birds striking the lines," said Hal Cohen at the Borrego Springs open house.

Others, such as the 17 homeowner members of the Canebrake Improvement Association from the community near Agua Caliente, expressed

See SDG&E, Page 11

concerns that a proposed route along county highway S2 could create visual blight and environmental degradation.

"It would be devastating to our community to have this line," said Jay Price, president-elect of the Canebrake group.

Carolyn Miller, who was on a fact-finding mission for her colleagues at the Fox Outdoor School near Palomar Mountain, said she was concerned about health and visual impacts because proposed routes along state highways 78 and 79 would run near her home and workplace. "This would be another obstacle to exposing kids to nature," Miller said.

"I'm here for information," remarked educator Jared Aldern of Ranchita. "I have all kinds of questions about towers and their impacts environmentally and on our community in terms of property values. I'm looking forward to when they select a route."

Selection of a route, due in the first quarter of next year, will be the crux of all future considerations for the massive power line, according to Edward Van Herik, communications manager for SDG&E.

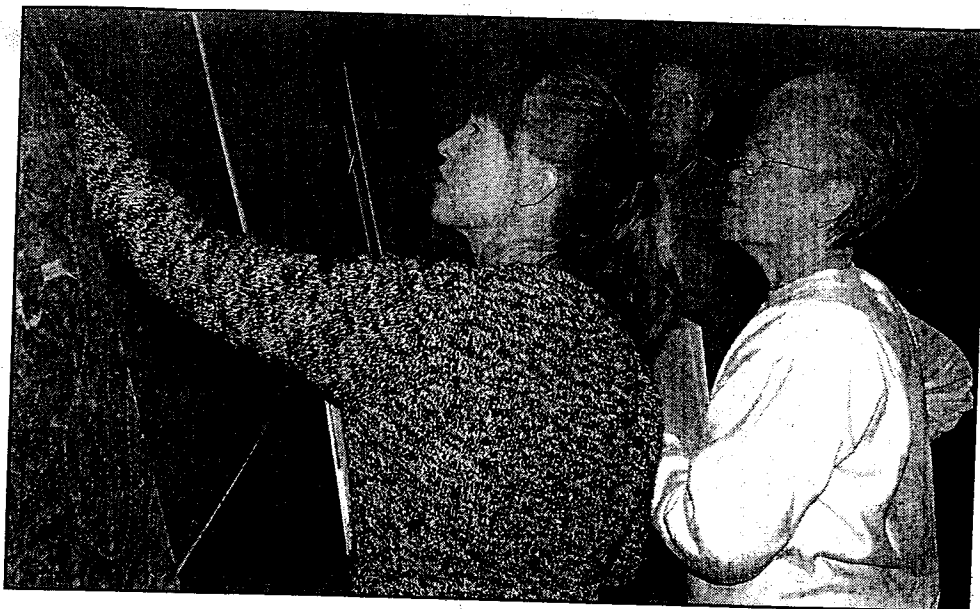
Another major preliminary step will occur later this month when SDG&E files a statement with the California Public Utilities Commission showing why the project is needed, Van Herik said.

That statement will be followed up by formal project application to the CPUC early next year, a process that ultimately will require an environmental impact report and compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

SDG&E officials say their customers will need more energy by the year 2010 than can be produced locally or imported on existing electric transmission lines. The utility now has two connections to the statewide energy grid, and those links have reached "energy gridlock," according to Edwin Guiles, SDG&E chairman and chief executive officer.

"The Sunrise Powerlink will improve the reliability of our system, provide access to renewable energy resources and help reduce costs for our customers in the future," Guiles said.

Many local residents, however, view the project skeptically as more



SUN photo by TOM GORTON
SAN FELIPE resident Judy Paquin, foreground, views a possible route for the 500-kilovolt Powerlink line that could impact the aesthetic and environmental quality of the area near her home. Also viewing the site map is Shirley Withers of Borrego Springs.

growth and progress for the urbanized coastal region at the expense of the unspoiled backcountry.

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park Superintendent Mark Jorgensen, who attended the Dec. 1 open house, said the park is making an effort to cooperate with SDG&E to comply with California's goal of increasing energy sources and stabilizing the future integrity of California's transmission grid.

At the same time, the park is committed to protecting and preserving its own resources, Jorgensen pointed out.

"We are not proponents or opponents of the proposal, but are trying to be team players for the people of California," Jorgensen said.

Consequently, the park has been talking with SDG&E for the past year about several options for locating the

500-kV line on the southern edge of the park, parallel to interstate Highway 8, where a 69-kV line was built in 1924.

That line, with its existing right-of-way already in place, possibly could be rebuilt with half as many poles as

the 250 to 300 wooden ones now located on park land, according to Jorgensen.

However, the 60-foot wooden poles now used for the 69-kV line would probably be replaced by larger lattice-style steel towers to accommodate both the 69-kV and 500-kV lines.

SDG&E engineers consider the possibility of combining both lines along the I-8 corridor a threat because a single disaster could disrupt power from El Centro to San Diego.

Another possibility is to run the 500-kV line along the state Highway 78 corridor and up Grapevine Canyon to a Central Substation Interconnection Area at Warner Springs. The Highway 78 corridor is identified in the park's master plan as the future route for all utilities.

Jorgensen sees Powerlink as one of many future projects that will be proposed to carry utilities, high-speed transit, airports and other systems across the desert to and from the inland area. Highway 78 has been earmarked as a likely route for those innovations, he said.

- Tom Gorton

December 15, 2005

RAMONA

SENTINEL

Plans for 120-mile power line attract 100 to open house

By **CHUCK PREBLE**
Ramona Sentinel

A third open house offered by San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E) to discuss developments in the Sunrise Powerlink project brought close to 100 Ramonans to the Ramona Community Center.

The proposed new electric transmission line will run between San Diego and Imperial counties. Once built, the Sunrise Powerlink could import enough power for close to 650,000 SDG&E customers in Southern California.

"This has been the largest turnout for a Ramona open house yet," said Kenda Pollio of Greystone Environmental Consultants. The firm has been working closely with SDG&E on developing the route for the powerline and conducting workshops with the community.

Pollio believes one of the reasons for the large turnout was the pre-Thanksgiving mailing of 100,000 postcards announcing the date, time, and location.

"I also believe that word of mouth between neighbors has been very beneficial," said Pollio.

Individuals had the opportunity to view a computer ARCMAP of their home.

"These are aerial pictures taken of the community and surrounding areas," said Derrick Berg, who provided the computer printouts for those in attendance.

Berg typed in a resident's address and the computer generated an aerial view of the neighborhood showing where existing power lines were located and where potential powerlines could be placed.

"It is a very helpful aid to see your home and the potential placement of the powerlink," said Berg. "Each individual has a much better perspective of how, or not, the powerlink will affect them."

SDG&E engineers, planners, and representatives were on hand to answer questions and listen to concerns and use the numerous grids, charts, maps, and proposed routes for the Sunrise Powerlink to explain the project to the public.

As with the previous two open houses, participants were encouraged to ask questions and make suggestions. The maps have been updated to reflect input from the

community.

As for the large towers to hold the lines, several scale models were on display including the large "erector-set" style of tower that many Ramonans dread.

"I am concerned with how this will affect real estate in the community," said Realtor Doreen Smith. "No one wants to purchase a house or property if there is to be a huge tower outside their window."

"Larger towers could be used outside of the community," said Pollio. "We are leaning toward the standard straight pole as we enter populated areas."

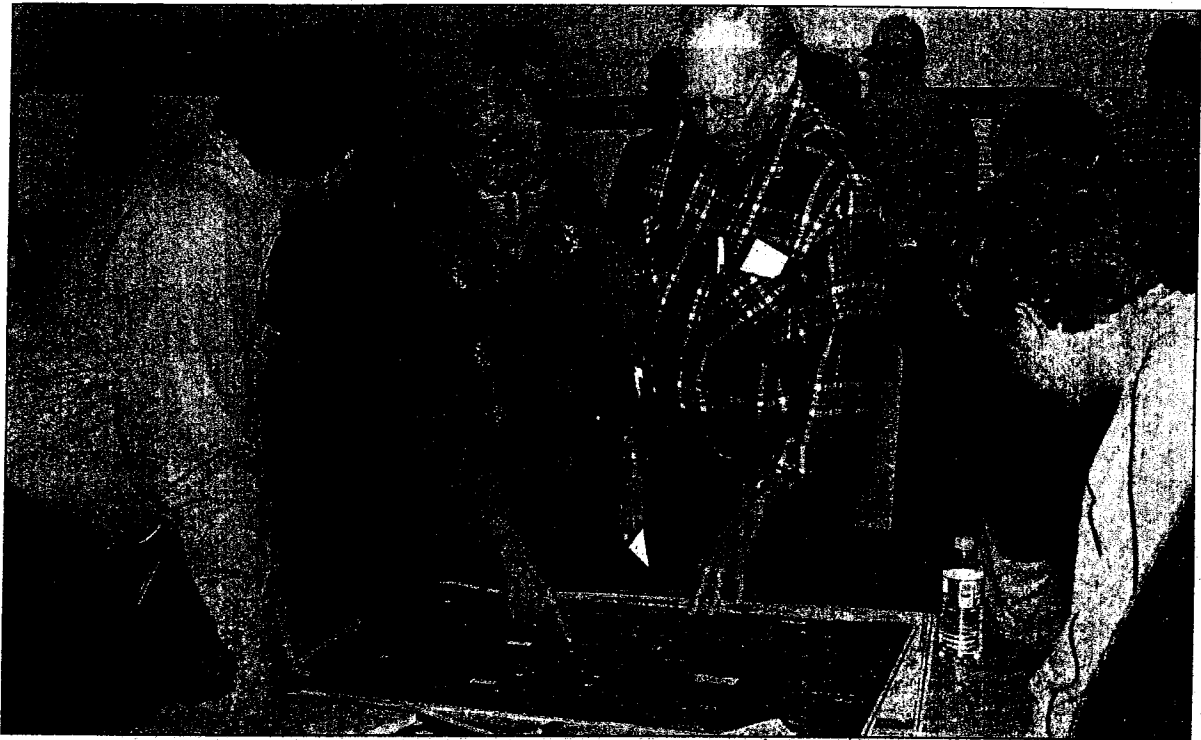
"We take all information provided and work it into the plan," said SDG&E Communication Manager Stephanie Donovan. "People need to realize that they are the ones with the knowledge of the land, terrain, and environmental information. If they do not let us know of those issues, we are unable to establish a route which can address those concerns."

"We need that information from the public."

Also on hand was Kevin Pender, founder of the Ramona Fire Safe Council. Pender was seeking signatures for a petition to present to the County Board of Supervisors to require SDG&E to maintain a 100-foot fuel reduction program under the power lines.

In his cover letter, Pender states that, when fire breaks out during a Santa Ana condition, there will be absolutely no way that Ramona's air attack command will work with the proposed 500 KV power poles.

"They can't drop on it or below it," Pender said. "Most people don't realize that to fight a fire, you have



Sentinel photo/Chuck Preble

Ramona residents study one of many maps showing possible routes for SDG&E's proposed 120-mile transmission line.

to have water and diesel fuel for the fire trucks. Firefighters would not have water or diesel fuel as it takes electricity to pump them."

According to Capt. John Francois of the Ramona Air Attack Base, the height of the proposed towers, which could reach 150 feet, pose a situation, but not necessarily a problem.

"We adjust our tactical approach to compensate for all issues," said Francois. "We never want to drop directly on high voltage cables, but can drop in the immediate area to contain a fire."

One of the tools used by the base is an Aerial Hazard Map.

"This map shows us where all high poles and even Ham radio antennas are located," said Francois. "Should smoke obscure those hazards, we are able to pinpoint their location on the hazard map to alert the pilots."

In regard to fuel, Francois stated that the Air Attack Base is fully self-contained.

A similar situation exists with all Ramona California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) Departments.

"Should the electricity go out, we have generators on site and large tanks of diesel and water available," said CDF Capt. Jack Wethey.

According to Wethey, in terms of fighting a fire near or under power lines, CDF, like the Air Attack Base, adjusts its tactics.

Pender passed out his petitions in the parking lot outside the open house.

"I don't think they want me in there," he said. "I'll just stay here and collect signatures."

According to Pender's cover letter, "GreyStone Environmental Consultants have been paid a very large amount of money to outflank and outwit us during this holiday season."

Pender concludes his letter by saying, "I promise you that I am putting them on notice."

Approximately 500 people have signed the petition, Pender said Friday.

"We have also brought the petition to Julian for signatures," Pender said.

Tim Knowd is the vegetation program manager for SDG&E as well as a Ramona resident.

"The fire code states we must clear brush, trees, and vegetation in a 10-foot radius at the base of our utility poles," said Knowd.

The utility poles Knowd refers to are the standard poles along the highways and countryside.

"As the voltage gets higher, we clear further," said Knowd.

This clearing allows crews to inspect, maintain, and repair the poles as well as provide ease of access to do so.

Phase three of the Sunrise Powerlink community workshop will be scheduled for February or March. Even after the final phase three workshop, the Sunrise Powerlink still has a long way to go before final approval, SDG&E representatives said.

SDG&E hopes the line can be energized by 2010 to avoid any potential energy shortfalls.

SDG&E holds workshops on proposed power line

By **CHUCK PREBLE**
Ramona Sentinel

Thirty members of the community met with representatives of San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E) and Greystone Environmental Consultants (GEC) on Wednesday, Oct. 5, for a roundtable discussion about the Sunrise Powerline proposed by SDG&E.

"We are holding these meetings with the community to gain your input for a proposed route for the new system," said Kenda Pollio of GEC.

The proposed electric transmission line will run between San Diego and Imperial counties. Once built, the Sunrise Powerlink could import enough power for close to 650,000 SDG&E customers in Southern California.

According to Jim Avery, SDG&E senior engineering vice president, the goal of the public meetings is to provide information about the project, validate data, receive input and

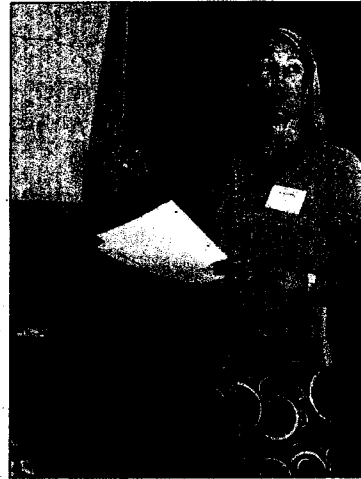
comments from the community, and keep the community informed regarding the progress. This is all in the first phase of the project.

"The link is needed to meet the growing demand for electricity and improve overall reliability as well as renewable energy sources such as wind and solar," said Avery. "When too much energy tries to get onto the grid at once, we have congestion."

SDG&E believes the new powerlink is necessary to avoid future congestion.

"With the increased growth in San Diego County, there will be a higher demand for energy," said Avery. "This new line will help relieve the congestion on the system."

While the energy company is upgrading existing transmission lines, the fact remains that San Diego has only two major transmission links to the statewide grid, said Avery. Adding the new line is expected to help provide the flexibility for future growth and integrate the transmission system across the



Sentinel photos/Chuck Preble
Kenda Pollio of the Greystone Environmental Consultants explains the importance of public feedback for the San Diego Gas and Electric's proposed power line.

western United States.

Community members were given a brief task to perform during the meeting. Groups broke up with maps of a fictitious town which required a power supply.

"Your task is to determine the best site route for the powerline while considering public and private land, wildlife property, endangered or historical locations," said Pollio.

The three community groups came back with their plans and agreed it is no easy task to establish a powerlink through property, terrain, lakes, and historical sites.

"Now, you get an idea of what you're up against every time we try to establish a new power source," said Pollio.

The issue was brought forth that a major section of the Sunrise line will pass through the Anza Borrego Desert which many said contains areas of critical environmental concern.

"These are the type of issues you need to know about," said Avery.

Various constraints exist for the planners including environmental routing criteria, critical habitat, traditional cultural properties, and historic landmarks.

Pollio passed out a form for attendees to fill out prioritizing constraint areas in order of importance from 1 to 31. She hopes members will bring these forms to the next public meeting/open house scheduled for Oct. 26 from 3 to 7 p.m. The information will be added to SDG&E's findings and help improve the proposed map for the Sunrise Powerlink.

"It is important to us to incorporate your comments into the siting process," said Pollio.

Later this year, SDG&E will file its case with the California Public Utilities Commission for the need to build the Sunrise Powerlink. A formal application and environmental report will be filed by mid-2006.

The line must be energized by 2010 to avoid any potential energy shortfalls, the representatives said.



Community members design a route for a powerlink during a workshop exercise prepared by San Diego Gas and Electric.