

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

In the Matter of the Application of San Diego
Gas & Electric Company (U 902-E) for a
Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity
For the Sunrise Powerlink Transmission Project

Application 06-08-010
(Filed August 4, 2006)
Application 05-12-014
(Filed December 14, 2005)

PROTEST OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS FOUNDATION

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Pursuant to Administrative Law Judge Steve Weissman’s Ruling Setting Date for Prehearing Conference Statements and Extending Time for Filing Protests dated August 25, 2006, the California State Parks Foundation (the “Foundation”) submits this timely Protest to the San Diego Gas & Electric Company’s (“SDG&E”) Amended Application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity For the Sunrise Powerlink Transmission Project (the “Project”), for the following reasons:

1. SDG&E’s Application Proposes Expanding the Existing Easement Through Anza Borrego Desert State Park into Protected Wilderness Areas.

The existing easement in Anza Borrego Desert State Park (“ABDSP”) ranges from 24 to 100 feet in width. SDG&E requests an expansion of the easement to 150 feet. This proposed widening will encroach on Wilderness Areas designated by the State of California as protected from any development or disturbance. Wilderness Areas are particularly significant in value because they support protected habitat and species and therefore, by their very definition, are not meant for development, infrastructure or human habitation. Intruding into designated Wilderness Zones has never previously been allowed in California and would create significant negative

impacts for the ABDSP that cannot be adequately mitigated. The Foundation protests any proposed expansion into protected Wilderness Areas.

2. Impacts to Habitat and Wildlife Will be Significant and Have Not Been Adequately Analyzed.

SDG&E's application does not adequately analyze the extent or full impact of the Powerlink project on either habitat or wildlife. The application concedes that there is the potential for "significant impacts" to sensitive plant species, to raptors, reptile and amphibian species, avian species, small mammals, and Peninsular Bighorn Sheep. It dismisses a range of impacts to other species and plant communities as "less than significant," including impacts to wildlife corridors. The analysis does not adequately address migration patterns, wildlife corridor disruption, exotic, non-native species invasion impacts, permanent impact to sensitive and protected plant communities, the interdependence of habitat and wildlife, and a host of other issues. The Application focuses heavily on construction activities, and fails to fully address permanent impacts or mitigation. The Foundation protests this analysis as inadequate and insufficient.

3. The Application Does Not Adequately Address Impacts to the Viewshed and Recreational Uses of ABDSP Created by the Proposed 130-foot Tall Lattice Poles.

The poles along the current easement are made of wood and are 40-50 feet tall and contain a single line. SDG&E proposes metal lattice poles that are more than double in height, carrying multiple, tiered lines. The visual and noise impact of these poles would be extremely significant for park visitors who are traveling through the park, and even more so to visitors camping there at Tamarisk Campground or elsewhere in the Park. Even SDG&E admits that of the 17 Key Observation Points identified in the Application, visual change would be moderate to high in at least 12 cases, and that visual impacts would be adverse to significant in 14 cases. The Application concedes that the larger poles would "conflict with the natural background of many recreational resources."

SDG&E dismisses the extreme nature of the visual impact by arguing that because fewer poles would be needed, they would be further apart and therefore less impactful. Moreover, they assert that visitors would become accustomed to the larger size-poles and therefore "over time, the presence of the larger line would be expected to become common to the visitor as the (existing small wooden poles have) been."

The Foundation emphatically disagrees with these assumptions and protests SDG&E's conclusions as to the impact of the proposed poles on the viewshed and recreational uses.

4. The Proposed Powerlink Lines Would Significantly Impact Protected Archeological and American Indian Sites and Cannot Be Adequately Mitigated.

According to its General Plan, ABDSP contains 4,322 archeologically and culturally sensitive sites; SDG&E has identified only 39 of these thousands of sites in its preferred alignment. SDG&E concedes that construction could significantly impact both known and previously unknown cultural resources, but asserts, without any evidentiary support, that said impacts can be limited through project design. The Foundation protests both the number of sites identified and, more importantly, the ability of SDG&E to adequately control and limit irreparable impacts to these historic, sacred archeologically and culturally sensitive sites.

5. SDG&E Has Not Adequately Analyzed Alternatives to the Sunrise Powerlink Route Through Anza Borrego Desert State Park.

In its Application, SDG&E failed to put forth any alternative route that did not run through Anza Borrego Desert State Park. Alternatives that avoided the ABDSP were eliminated prior to even being carried forward for public consideration. The Foundation strongly protests this failure on the part of SDG&E to adequately consider alternatives to running 23 miles of 130-foot tall lattice towers with multiple high voltage lines through protected State Park Lands and Wilderness Areas.

Dated: September 8, 2006

By: /s/ Sara Feldman
Sara Feldman

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PROOF OF SERVICE

I declare that, pursuant to the California Public Utilities Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, I served the California State Parks Foundation's Protest upon all parties of record in A.06-08-010 by e-mail where available or by placing true copies in a sealed envelope with first-class postage prepaid and deposited in the United State mail.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on September 8, 2006, in Los Angeles, California.

/s/Sara Feldman

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