DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
NAVAL AIR STATION
NORTH ISLAND
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IN REPLY REFER TO :
3100
SerNBD/399
23 Oct 07

Ms. Billie Blanchard
Project Manager for Sunrise Powerlink Project Energy Division,
CEQA Unit Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3298

Dear Ms. Blanchard:

Thank you for your letter of Jul 18, 2007 requesting DON comments on potential alternatives for the proposed Sunrise Powerlink Transmission Project. DON appreciates the opportunity to continue our dialogue with BLM, CPUC and the project proponent regarding compatibility between our Navy training and operations and the proposed project.

Specifically, CPUC/BLM has requested review of the "Modified Route D Alternative" on BLM lands currently under consideration for withdrawal by the Navy for the La Posta Mountain Warfare Training Facility. DON evaluation provided below is based on revised SDGE Modified Route D alternative maps provided to us August 20th, 2007 (attachment 1). These revised maps reflect discussions at our 30 July 2007 Sunrise Powerlink team meeting.

In addition, per our meeting on 13 September, 2007, CPUC also requested Navy review for compatibility with Navy helo training routes for three specific locations along the entire proposed SDGE southern alignment for Sunrise Powerlink Transmission Project. These maps were provided to us September 18th, 2007 (attachment 2).

Navy comments on LaPosta MWTF and the three southern alignment locations are as follows:

1. LaPosta MWTF alignment

The alignment avoids significant impacts to critical DOD training. This routing still has impacts to training requiring work-arounds but they are less than significant.

The revised alignment will place the power line at or below the west side of the ridge line located northwest of LaPosta MWTF. As we discussed, this area is commonly used for helicopter low level access flights between Camp Morena and La Posta MWTF in support of unique Naval Special Warfare training, therefore, there will be minor impact to Navy aviation. However, as long as the power lines are located on the down slope west of the ridge, the lines would not pose a significant impact.

2. Lyons Valley alignment (page 1)

This proposal has a minor impact to Navy aviation. Specifically this area is commonly used for helicopter low level, terrain following flight paths. Hauser Canyon, running from Barrett Lake east to Cotton Wood Creek south of Lake Morena, is frequently used by rotary-winged aircraft for critical terrain following flight operations. It appears that the current proposed power line route parallels Hauser Canyon. As long as the power lines are not installed in or bisect Hauser Canyon, they will not significantly impact tactical helicopter training. Power lines paralleling the canyon will add an obstacle for aircraft to avoid as they enter and exit the canyon. However, training work-arounds for similar obstacles are currently implemented, so this would not pose a significant impact to naval aviation training.

3. Peutz Valley Alternative (page 2)

This proposal has significant impact to Navy aviation. Specifically, the unique topography of the Peutz Valley is used for helicopter low level, terrain following flights. Peutz Valley is used by the Navy to train helicopters to use terrain to camouflage their transition to/from tactical situations. Installing power lines down this valley will have significant impact on this valuable training. To avoid impacting this training, the Navy recommends installing the power lines to the west, along the Interstate 8 Alternative.

4. Eagle Peak/San Diego River alternative (page 3)

This proposal has minimal impact to Navy aviation. If it can be ascertained that the Route D Alternative stays east of any known training areas, there is no recognizable impact.

The Navy appreciates the excellent working relationship established with the CPUC/BLM Sunrise Powerlink project team. We continue to be available to meet with you to provide Navy input. In addition, we are also available to provide technical review of DON information in the screen check version of the Draft EIS/EIR prior to public review.

My point of contact for this project is Sheila Donovan who can be reached at (619) 532-1253.

A. E. GAIANI