

Comment Set B0015  
Descanso Planning Group

April 1, 2008

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

To Whom It May Concern:

The Descanso Planning Group continues to oppose the entire Sunrise Powerlink Project.

B0015-1

We would like to thank the California Public Utilities Commission for recognizing that the SDG&E Sunrise Powerlink proposal is not the best way to go.

There are several viable and much smarter alternatives to meeting our region's energy needs. We are not experts in the field of energy. We would like to have it noted; however, that there are experts who are offering clean, green and much more cost effective alternatives. They are available for review and can be accessed through their respective internet sites; CUSP, UCAN, etc. We ask that these proposed alternatives be given as much consideration as SDG&E's Sunrise Powerlink Proposal.

The Sunrise Powerlink Project would make us more dependent on imported power and will increase our energy costs. Power should be generated with diverse sources as close to the urban basin as possible to avoid unnecessary line loss of energy on long transmission line and all the negative impacts they carry to rural communities.

It will permanently scar our backcountry communities, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, and the Cleveland National forest. Scenic vistas will be forever ruined. Wildlife corridor and habitat throughout the entire backcountry will be interrupted and adversely impacted by this project. It will change rural communities to industrial zones, causing negative visual impacts, conflicting land uses and increased fire risks.

The proposed transmission lines run through some of San Diego County's most rugged terrain; it is difficult to access during the best weather conditions. This project would inhibit firefighters to slow the spread of flames. It is simply unconscionable that SDG&E is willing to put our firefighters and our homes at risk! There is no justification for putting our firefighter's lives at risk by proposing they try to fight wildfires while working around 500kV transmission lines and towers.

B0015-2

This project will destroy the value of homes and property. The transmission towers and the accompanying Right of Way will severely encroach upon private lands. Consideration should be given to property owners regarding the noise and obstruction of view generated by the transmission towers and lines.

B0015-3

Comment Set B0015, cont.  
Descanso Planning Group

**Please reject this damaging proposal! Please respect the findings of the Draft Environmental Impact Report-vote NO on this polluting, damaging, unnecessary project that threatens our quality of life and our great open spaces.**

B0015-3 cont.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

The Descanso Planning Group  
PO Box 38  
Descanso, CA 91916

Jo Ellen Quinting, Chairperson  
619.445.7462

## Responses to Comment Set B0015

### Descanso Planning Group

- B0015-1      The commenter's opposition to the Proposed Project and support for non-transmission alternatives is acknowledged. The visual impacts, habitat effects, and fire risks of transmission alternatives are adequately disclosed in the Draft EIR/EIS, both for the Proposed Project and for the Southern Alternatives. Sections D.3, E.1.3, E.2.3, E.3.3, and E.4.3 address the visual impacts of the Proposed Project and Southern Alternatives. Sections D.2, E.1.2, E.2.2, E.3.2, and E.4.2 address the biological resources impacts of the Proposed Project and Southern Alternatives. Sections D.15, E.1.15, E.2.15, E.3.15, and E.4.15 address the fire impacts of the Proposed Project and Southern Alternatives. Sections 2 to 4 in the RDEIR/SDEIS also includes an updated discussion of visual impacts, habitat effects, and fire risks of transmission alternatives.
- B0015-2      The Descanso Planning Group's concern that the project would put firefighters and homes at risk is acknowledged and analyzed extensively in the Draft EIR/EIS Fire and Fuels Management sections (Section D.15 for the Proposed Project, and Sections E.1.15, E.2.15, E.3.15, and E.4.15 for the Southern Route Alternatives.) It is also addressed for the Sempra Presidential Permit and facilities in Section 2.15 of the RDEIR/SDEIS. Please also see General Response GR-9 regarding fire and fuels management.
- B0015-3      Please see General Response GR-11 (Transmission Line Effects on Property Values). Note that noise and visual effects are also evaluated for each transmission alternative (see Section D.8 and D.3 for the noise and visual impacts for the Proposed Project, Section E.1.8, E.2.8, E.3.8, and E.4.8 for the noise analysis for the southern route alternatives, and Section E.1.3, E.2.3, E.3.3, and E.4.3 for the visual analysis for the southern route alternatives.) Visual and noise impacts are also addressed for the Sempra Presidential Permit and facilities in Sections 2.3 and 2.8 of the RDEIR/SDEIS, respectively.

Comment Set B0016  
SAVE POTRERO

SAVE POTRERO  
25607 Potrero Valley Road  
Potrero, CA 91963

March 31, 2008

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

Re: Sunrise Powerlink Draft EIR/EIS

The organization "SAVE POTRERO" was formed by a large group of Potrero residents to preserve the peaceful, rural, community character of Potrero by protesting developments that we feel will damage the "quality of life" of Potrero residents.

**We oppose the Sunrise Powerlink because:**

1. It will destroy a beautiful view corridor. The giant towers will be visible for 2 to 4 miles. They are ugly and commercial looking and do not belong in such a lovely, ruggedly beautiful, backcountry area. The line of huge towers marching over the mountains and through the valleys will be hideously out of place.
2. The high voltage lines produce a constant obnoxious buzzing noise.
3. High voltage lines can interfere with TV and Radio reception.
4. The effects of electro-magnetic fields have not been proven to be safe for human health. There is much anecdotal evidence that these electro-magnetic fields are in fact very dangerous to human health.
5. The tall towers will be a huge risk for helicopters and low flying aircraft in our area. Because Potrero is so close to the Mexican Border we have heavy Border Patrol and DEA helicopter traffic. An accident between a helicopter and a tower or power line could start a fire in our dry backcountry which could be devastating.
6. The fire danger from the Powerlink is enormous. Any accident with the Powerlink from earthquakes to vandalism or terrorism could start a catastrophic fire which could burn all the way to San Diego.
7. The environmental damage from the Powerlink will be unacceptable. We have many endangered and sensitive species of plants, animals, birds, reptiles

B0016-1

B0016-2

B0016-3

B0016-4

B0016-5

B0016-6

Comment Set B0016, cont.  
SAVE POTRERO

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and insects in the path of the Sunrise Powerlink,

B0016-6 cont.

9. Our area is extremely arid and the physical damage to the land during construction will take many, many years to heal.

10. The area under the lines and around the huge towers will be cleared and kept clear by mechanical and chemical means - further damaging the environment.

11. The Sunrise Powerlink is too close to the Southwest Powerlink. In the recent October wildfires both lines would have failed. The Round Potrero property where the Sunrise is proposed to go through burned and so did the area South of Highway 94 where the Southwest Line is located.

B0016-7

12. The Powerlink will bring dirty power from the Sempra Plant in Mexicali because there is little "green energy" being produced in the Imperial Valley. It is morally and ethically reprehensible...polluting another Country to bring cheap energy to San Diego, Orange and Riverside Counties in order to increase SDG&E's profits. The polluted air will certainly blow across the Mexican border into California.

B0016-8

13. The Sunrise Powerlink Modified Route D Alternative will have a negative impact on the low income communities of Potrero, Boulevard, Campo and Barrett. The Powerlink will reduce property values and is an unfair burden on these economically depressed areas.

B0016-9

14. The Sunrise Powerlink will not really increase the amount of "green energy" being produced. The proposals for "green energy" from the Imperial Valley are "iffy" at best. The energy from the Sempra Plant is even dirtier than from normal gas-fired plants. Why would anyone even consider this plan now that we know so much about the effects of global warming?

B0016-10

We feel that the Sunrise Powerlink is a bad idea for San Diego County and it is a terrible idea for our rural community.

**Our suggestion is:**

1. The existing Southwest Powerlink should be used to bring in "green energy" from the Imperial Valley as well as from windmills in La Rumarosa.

2. Additional "green energy" should be produced by requiring SOLAR on all new buildings and on all buildings that are remodeled.

B0016-11

3. Micro wind turbines should be installed on roof tops where possible.

Comment Set B0016, cont.  
SAVE POTRERO

Save Potrero - page 3

4. New, less polluting, generating plants and peaker plants that burn cleaner gas should be built close to their "point of use" that will not require extensive, expensive, environmentally damaging transmission lines.

B0016-11 cont.

5. Harness the methane from landfills like the Sycamore Canyon and Miramar Landfills.

6. If in the future there is so much "green energy" being produced in the Imperial Valley that the existing Southwest Powerlink cannot handle it ... then we suggest that another line be added to the existing towers or that the 500kV line be exchanged for a higher voltage line.

**Conclusion:** The proposed Sunrise Powerlink is an unnecessary waste of ratepayers' money that will not do what SDG&E claims it will. We hope that you will consider the cumulative negative effects of the proposed Sunrise Powerlink and deny it in its entirety.

B0016-12

Sincerely,



Mr. Robin M. Simmons, Member  
SAVE POTRERO  
25607 Potrero Valley Road  
Potrero, CA 91963

## Responses to Comment Set B0016 SAVE POTRERO

- B0016-1 The Modified Route D Alternative would cause significant (Class I) visual impacts along the route segment extending from Buckman Springs Road east of Potrero to Lyons Valley Road to the west. Key Viewpoint 67 was established on Buckman Springs Road and Key Viewpoint 68 was established on Lyons Valley Road. Please see pages E.4.3-11 through 13 for a discussion of visual impacts in those areas. Two additional key viewpoints have been established north of Potrero — one along the Pacific Crest Trail near the southeast corner of Hauser Wilderness and a second viewpoint just north of Hauser Wilderness (see Response to Comment A0009-38 for the analysis and images of the key viewpoints). The new key viewpoint analyses also concluded that significant (Class I) visual impacts would occur along the east-west segment of the Modified Route D Alternative, south of Hauser Wilderness and north of Potrero. The RDEIR/SDEIS gives details regarding the Western Modified Route D Alternative Reroute near the Hauser Wilderness. The visual impacts of the Western Modified Route D Alternative Reroute would be similar to those addressed for the Modified Route D Alternative. Section E.4 of the Draft EIR/EIS has been updated to include the PCT Route Options. The original Modified Route D Alternative PCT crossing, also called PCT Option A, has been retained in the Final EIR/EIS as part of the Final Environmentally Superior Southern Route Alternative.
- B0016-2 The comment identifies the audible corona noise impact as a concern. This impact is identified in the Draft EIR/EIS (initially in Section D.8.4.3 and also in Section E.1.8, E.2.8, E.3.8, and E.4.8 as Impact N-3).
- B0016-3 Regarding potential interference with radio and television reception, please see Draft EIR/EIS Sections D.10.23 and D.10.25. This impact (Impact PS-1) is found to be significant, but mitigable to a less than significant level with implementation of Mitigation Measures PS-1a (Limit the conductor surface electric gradient) and PS-1b (Document and resolve electronic interference complaints).
- B0016-4 The commenter states that the Modified Route D Alternative would create a risk for helicopters flying near the border. Given the increase in use of aircraft to patrol the southern border of the United States with Mexico as stated in the National Border Patrol Strategy as outlined by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the text of Section E.4.9 of the Draft EIR/EIS has been revised to include the following impact discussion. The text of Mitigation Measure T-11b can be found in Appendix 12 of the Final EIR/EIS.

**Impact T-11LE: Construction of the transmission lines would penetrate airport influence area (Class II)**

The Modified Route D runs near the existing SWPL transmission line and U.S.-Mexico Border from MP MRD-8 to approximately MP MRD 23. According to SDG&E two incidents have occurred involving aircraft flying into the existing SWPL transmission line.<sup>1</sup> Both these incidents occurred shortly after the SWPL was built and since then SDG&E has worked to ensure such incidents do not occur again. While it is unlikely that any such incident would occur, transmission lines and towers would potentially

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<sup>1</sup> “Performance Category Upgrade Request.” SDG&E, December 19, 2007. [http://www.wecc.biz/documents/meetings/PCC/2008/March/Sunrise\\_Powerlink\\_Double\\_Line\\_Outage\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](http://www.wecc.biz/documents/meetings/PCC/2008/March/Sunrise_Powerlink_Double_Line_Outage_Final_Report.pdf) Accessed March 2008.

present a substantial obstacle to be avoided, and require additional attention from pilots.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure T-11b would ensure that border patrol staff would be notified of the project location and components in order to educate pilots to significant dangers that would exist as a result of development of the project.

***Mitigation Measure for Impact T-11LE: Presence of the transmission lines would penetrate airport influence area and/or create a hazard to aircraft***

**T-11b Consult with and inform U.S. Customs and Border Protection.**

- B0016-5 The Save Potrero organization's concern that the project poses a large fire risk is acknowledged and analyzed extensively in the Draft EIR/EIS Fire and Fuels Management sections (Sections D.15 and E).
- B0016-6 The environmental impacts of the transmission line alternatives are disclosed in the Draft EIR/EIS in the D Sections for the Proposed Project and in the E Sections for the southern route alternatives. The commenter is correct that these impacts include significant and unmitigable effects on plant and animal communities.
- B0016-7 The organization notes that, in the recent October 2007 fires, both the Southwest Powerlink and the Sunrise Powerlink would have failed. This comment is accurate. Please see General Response GR-3 on reliability in relation to fire.
- B0016-8 Regarding the potential for the Sunrise Powerlink to import power from Mexico, please see General Response GR-7 (Sunrise Powerlink Project Connection to Mexican Generation and/or Mexican LNG Import).
- B0016-9 Please see Response to Comment A0006-3 regarding environmental justice issues along the northern and southern route alternatives. Please see General Response GR-11 (Transmission Line Effects on Property Values).
- B0016-10 The commenter's opposition to the Sunrise Powerlink Project is acknowledged. Please see GR-5 (Status of Development of Renewable Generation in the Imperial Valley, Eastern San Diego County, and Northern Mexico) regarding the potential for renewable facilities to be constructed in the Imperial Valley.
- B0016-11 The comment advocates a high level of in-area renewable and conventional generation, which are included as part of the development scenarios of Non-Wires Alternatives in Sections E.5 and E.6 of the Draft EIR/EIS.
- B0016-12 The commenter's opposition to the Sunrise Powerlink Project and its cumulative effects are acknowledged.

Comment Set B0017  
The Committee for Responsible Growth

**THE COMMITTEE FOR RESPONSIBLE GROWTH  
25607 Potrero Valley Road  
Potrero, CA 91963-1505**

April 1, 2008

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

**RE: Sunrise Powerlink Draft EIR/EIS**

Dear California Public Utilities Commissioners,

B0017-1

We hope that you will evaluate the proposed Sunrise Powerlink (SP) and come to the same conclusion that we have come to. The SP is not good for San Diego. It will have terrible negative consequences for the environment and for the people who live in the area near the transmission line.

Just the fire danger and close proximity to the existing Southwest Powerlink make the new transmission line unacceptable.

The stated purpose that the SP is being built to transport Green Energy from the Imperial Valley to San Diego is not believable. There is not enough Green Energy being produced in the Imperial Valley to justify the billions of dollars that this new transmission line will actually cost. It is obvious that the SP will actually be bringing energy from the Sempra plant in Mexicali, Mexico to San Diego, Riverside and Orange Counties.

B0017-2

As you are aware, the Sempra plant burns dirty imported gas which produces high levels of pollutants that lead to lung diseases and global warming. These high levels would not be allowed in California and it is wrong that an American Company should be allowed to do it in Mexico.

The idea of using Green Energy is extremely noble and worth pursuing. Why not use the existing Southwest Powerlink to satisfy the need to bring in clean Green Energy from the Imperial Valley and rural Eastern San Diego County? Increase the capacity of the Southwest Powerlink by adding additional lines or increase the size of the line as more Green Energy is produced.

Encourage more solar by requiring solar on rooftops of all newly constructed homes and buildings. This will take time but it is certainly the cleaner,

B0017-3

Comment Set B0017, cont.  
The Committee for Responsible Growth

cheaper, less environmentally damaging way to fulfill the Green Energy requirements.

B0017-3 cont.

Encourage all forms of Green Energy from recovering methane in landfills to installing micro-wind generators on roof tops.

If more energy is needed for San Diego's future then more gas fired plants should be built using new technology which allows for much cleaner burning plants. Build the new plants where they are actually needed. If this means that SDG&E needs to build new plants in Northern San Diego County or Orange or Riverside Counties, then that is what they should do. This would increase reliability, reduce outages, and be less expensive and be considerably less environmentally damaging then constructing the 150 mile SP transmission line.

Here in Potrero we believe that the Sunrise Powerlink will have many negative impacts: it will be a fire hazard, it will damage the wildlife including threatened and endangered birds, reptiles, insects and animals, it will damage our view corridor with the tall towers and multiple lines, there is danger from EMFs, high voltage lines are noisy, and it will reduce property values.

B0017-4

We find it extremely disconcerting that placing the lines underground in wealthier communities is suggested but not for our very beautiful, very scenic area.

We would like you to please consider carefully the alternate possibilities for increasing Green Energy in San Diego and say **NO** to the expensive, unnecessary, environmentally damaging Sunrise Powerlink.

Sincerely,



Barbara Chamberlain, Chairman  
The Committee For Responsible Growth  
25607 Potrero Valley Road  
Potrero, CA 91963-1505

## Responses to Comment Set B0017 The Committee for Responsible Growth

- B0017-1        The commenter's opposition to the Proposed Project and support for non-transmission alternatives is acknowledged. The fire risks of transmission alternatives are adequately disclosed in the Draft EIR/EIS, both for the Proposed Project and for the Southern Alternatives (Section D.15 for the Proposed Project, and Sections E.1.15, E.2.15, E.3.15, and E.4.15 for the Southern Route Alternatives.) Please also see General Response GR-9 regarding fire and fuels management.
- B0017-2        The comment identifies a concern of potentially increased generation at existing Mexican power plants and advocates for Non-Wires Alternatives. See General Response GR-7 for information on how the potential for increased Mexican generation is handled in the Draft EIR/EIS. Please see General Response GR-5 (Status of Development of Renewable Generation in the Imperial Valley, Eastern San Diego County, and Northern Mexico) regarding the potential for renewable facilities to be constructed in the Imperial Valley.
- B0017-3        The comment advocates a high level of in-area renewable and conventional generation, which are included as part of the feasible and viable development scenarios of Non-Wires Alternatives in the Draft EIR/EIS.
- B0017-4        The effects stated by the commenter are consistent with the range of impacts disclosed in the EIR/EIS. The transmission line and alternative routes would have significant visual impacts, habitat effects, noise, and fire risks; these impacts are adequately disclosed in the Draft EIR/EIS, both for the Proposed Project and for the Southern Alternatives. Sections D.3, E.1.3, E.2.3, E.3.3, and E.4.3 address the visual impacts of the Proposed Project and Southern Alternatives. Sections D.2, E.1.2, E.2.2, E.3.2, and E.4.2 address the biological resources impacts of the Proposed Project and Southern Alternatives. Sections D.8, E.1.8, E.2.8, E.3.8, and E.4.8 address the noise impacts of the Proposed Project and Southern Alternatives. Sections D.15, E.1.15, E.2.15, E.3.15, and E.4.15 address the fire impacts of the Proposed Project and Southern Alternatives.