

## ***SUMMARY For WARNER MEETING on POWERLINK***

1/11/06, contact Mary Aldern, Ranchita resident and Ramona Patron 760-782-9036

### **Trust/Doubt**

**\* The information contained in Mr. Crider's presentation was actually unanimously rejected as unmeaningful, unhelpful, and misleading.**

\* In a report written on 10/14/05, Professional Engineer Bill Powers revealed glaring problems in the Sunrise Powerlink, including:

1. A clear misunderstanding of near-term Imperial Irrigation District (IID) transmission plans;
2. The questionable availability of geothermal power in the timeframe suggested;
3. The weakness of SDG&E's congestion cost arguments;
4. The existence of reasonable and lower-cost alternatives;
5. The many flawed assumptions as to when this transmission line is needed by SDG&E.

\* Crider mentioned on several occasions that "his thunder was stolen," by better arguments and information delivered by Jim Bell and Bill Powers, particularly on points regarding congestion, route selection, and alternative solar energy design, route placement so close to the border and at a Sempra terminus substation and far from San Diego, and the safety and need for transmission of energy in this case.

**\* The SDG&E statement made at the meeting is that their primary reason to build Powerlink has now shifted to reliability, since the issue of congestion was revealed to be fraudulently caused by Sempra itself, in the news of last week.**

**\* It was noted that Sempra has behaved in such a way as to lose public trust.**

**\* Our State Attorney, along with the state's two largest power companies, PG&E and Southern California Edison, broke away from the class action settlement with Sempra last week, and still pursue lawsuits against Sempra in this matter, as they believe that the actual value of the class action settlement was far and vastly overstated by Sempra, and believe that consumers are being misled.**

\* The map that Mr. Crider presented did not have accurate State Park Boundaries drawn into it; indeed, it did not have ABDSP boundaries at all.

\* The white portion of the map did not represent the park, though it appears that way.

\* There are no community names on the map, nor are the numbers on the roads readable.

\* There is no EIR, as the utility has requested that the EIR be submitted after the project receives approval, based on need.

\* There is no route, cost, or landowner contact being submitted either.

\* There is, then, no way to weigh the actual cost of the project, both on a monetary basis, nor in what we will be asked to give up, as the utility has requested that the project be approved before these aspects are revealed.

\* It was implied that Sempra or SDG&E could be into a real estate investment.

\* The development of the Salton Sea seems to have undergone some kind of real estate development scheme, which could take place here as well.

\* The northern link of the project through Valley Center was taken off the table, for no apparent reason, though at one time rate-payers were told that the most important reason Powerlink was necessary was to bring power to North San Diego County.

\* A similar project was recently refused in that northern part of the county, and there are many community groups up there who still hotly oppose such energy transmission line development. They cited no need as their defense, and they won. They will most likely have to continue to fight if Powerlink goes through. They might be the reason the northern link was mysteriously taken off the table at this time.

**\* It is believed by many power professionals that SDG&E will also later develop a “re-interest” in developing a high voltage transmission line through the communities of Valley Center, Lake Henshaw/76, and/or Temecula if the Powerlink goes through, as it will forge a great deal of electric power to the Warner Valley.**

**\* This was the way that Freeway 56 was finally approved and built; ends first, then middle, at the cost of the consumer.**

**\*The cities of Murrieta, Hemet, and Temecula have filed formal Protests to the Sunrise Powerlink, in fear of a “phase 2” of future development.**

\*It was noted by the audience that if SDG&E were a true member of San Diego community and society, it would have valued the state park and recreational lands as much as the general public, and would have examined a more creative alternative, that aligned with the stated goals set by SD 2030, to produce at least one alternative that did not bisect the state park and off-road vehicle recreation area.

\* It seems that SDG&E work crews have trespassed on private properties to place survey markers without property owner’s consent.

\* The Grapevine Canyon Road, in Ranchita, was graded into the Anza Borrego State Park without an approved permit.

\* SDG&E Public Relations director, Scot Crider, stated that Julian had not been removed from the official options list, even after residents in Julian were led to believe that their route was unsuitable because of excessive restraints.

## **Cost**

\* The apparatus to **harness solar energy** would have to be paid for by consumers in either local or Imperial Valley contracts, **a local plan needing less transmission.**

\* The price of the Powerlink would be paid for by the entire state, San Diego ratepayers would pay 10% of the total price. This price would be paid by us, whether the transmission line was here, or in any other part of the state.

**\* The issue then becomes whether we want to put it here, as it would cost the same no matter where we put it, if it were necessary.**

**\* Older powerplants in San Diego could apparently be re-built in a completely modern way for perhaps 1/3 the cost of Powerlink.**

\* Mr. Crider refused sympathy at the meeting, for having a crowd unanimously opposed to his project, as he indicated that **he is getting well paid for his services to SDG&E.**

## **Risks**

\* The line cannot be buried under ground because of the high amount of heat associated with it. Everything on top dies. It is more dangerous. One such line that was buried underground had to be unearthed and strung up above because it was not safe.

\* The military would be notified of a new no-fly area, however one such no-fly area near Fort Irwin, CA still reported two collisions with aircraft within a ten year period.

- \* SDG&E stated that they could not be responsible for mistakes of pilots.
- \* The issue of fire came up, as well as fire insurance for local homes as well as the transmission line and substation themselves.
- \* EMF area of affect for a 500kV line is 300 feet, or 100 yards, to either side of the line.
- \* This sort of radiation is feared by many to be of significant health risk.
- \* The line runs 120 miles through areas abundant in plants and animals.
- \* This is a very expensive project, and future costs for consumers will be based the unguaranteed future prices of natural gas and coal, which support the “cheaper energy markets” mentioned in the proposal’s argument for increased reliability.

## **Future Impact**

- \* Future unrestrained growth is a huge concern for all San Diegans.
- \* The Cal-Tech Palomar Observatory, which is building a new telescope, had not been contacted by SDG&E as of 1/11/06.
- \* Some fear that tankers carrying natural liquefied gas will someday be sitting off the coast of San Diego, if Powerlink is built, to bring fuel to Mexican Powerplants in Imperial Valley.
- \* A pipeline may be appropriate for conducting this liquid fuel. In fact, Mexico is constructing such a pipeline right now.
- \* Powerlink would then bring this energy back to us, at night, from Mexican power plants, through the Anza Borrego Desert State Park, and the ORV recreation area.
- \* The line would compromise the beauty of ABDSP and all views along its length.

## **Purpose: Reliability, Congestion, Offset Costs**

- \* The solar plant named as the reason for the transmission line (as per mandate to meet solar energy requirements by the year 2017?) has not been built yet, nor has its location been secured. This proposal puts the transmission line more important than the actual energy that it will bring.
- \* **The line would compete with one currently being built along the IV-Palm Springs corridor (a non-Sempra project), “The Green Path.”**
- \* Geothermal energy in the Imperial Valley is actually limited and spoken for.
- \* The price of fossil fuels, to run the Sempra plants, named as the “cheaper” energy markets which Powerlink will connect with, cannot be guaranteed in the future.
- \* Congestion on the San Diego grid was caused by Sempra at the height of the 2001 energy crisis.
- \* Another reason that they say this is necessary is to offset costs of other projects.

## **Design**

- \* The powerlink will only transmit solar power when the solar plant can produce that energy... 5 hours a day. After that, the line will be clear, and we cannot keep Mexican or Arizonan energy produced in areas of lower regulation off.
- \* The placement of the solar plant is conveniently located for those other servers, and unusually far from us, the end consumer for the solar energy.
- \* The amount of solar energy produced there could fit on the existing line.

- \* The meeting at which options were discussed was a non-meeting where the utility came to the table with the choices already printed, ready to sign off.
- \* The starting terminal for the Powerlink is a Sempra Owned Facility, where Mexican and Arizona energy is delivered.
- \* The County has not turned down all alternative energy projects, although Mr. Crider alleged that to be true. There is a new windfarm near Campo. This subject was brought up when Mr. Crider was asked why SDG&E was not developing the solar farm closer to the end consumer.
- \* This is the bottom line for SDG&E... their model accommodates unrestrained growth.

## **Process/Public Involvement**

- \* There are many communities who were not informed that the proposal directly affected them.
- \* There are many communities who still don't know.
- \* SDG&E's plan for submitting their application involves a two part submission of facts (bifurcation), which does not follow specified procedure, and delays important information such as specific route, notification of affected communities and individuals, cost, environmental impact, and future economic impacts, yet seeks an initial approval, which severely handicaps the ability for the public to make meaningful comments.
- \* The California Public Utilities Commission approval process for SDG&E's application includes public comment. Yet, the public involvement has been severely limited by the lack of information available.
- \* The comment period ends 2/17/06, however comments must be received well before that date, so that they can be entered into the record.
- \* The Prehearing Conference is a meeting at which the topics of the public hearings are set and given weight, according to comments received.
- \* The PHC is scheduled for 1/31/06, in Ramona, CA, which is before the close of the comment period. To effectively make your comments heard, then, a brief outline of the main comments should be sent to the CPUC asap, and send a more detailed version to meet the other deadline of 2/17 (which would logically mean 2/07, so that it can be entered into public record).
- \* The PHC was originally scheduled to take place in San Francisco, however its location has been moved to Ramona, CA, due to public comments received from concerned citizens and groups since 1/11. However, it is not clear that the rest of the hearings were moved here. Public comment may sway them to be moved here.
- \* The Honorable Kim Malcolm is the judge in charge of this case, she can be reached at [kim@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:kim@cpuc.ca.gov).
- \* The political process includes sharing your concerns with the County Supervisors, especially the one that represents you. You can ask your supervisor to oppose this project, and give reasons why.
- \* The State Senator Hollingsworth was quoted in the newspaper 1/13/06 as saying that we desperately need infrastructure in our state and that "environmental laws are crippling the California economy," so these projects should be put on a fast track to get them approved, asap; Hollingsworth has not heard enough from people who value environmental laws!
- \* This proposal is what environmental laws were designed to prevent.

- \* Planners did not realize that the landowners in Grapevine Canyon are part of the community of Ranchita (linguistic confusion at the meeting and in the newspapers).
- \* Indian lands are held in trust by the US Govt., meaning the Indians do not actually own the land, the government does. They are required to mitigate all government issues pertaining to them.
- \* There is an Indian Heritage Council that oversees the proper treatment of Indian remains when and where ever they are discovered.

## **Protest**

- \* Formal Protests have been filed by consumer advocate groups to protect consumers from paying unfair costs for a transmission line that is unnecessary (the **Utility Consumer Action Network and the Department of Consumer Advocates--an internal CPUC division.**)
- \* Protests have been filed based on the fact that Powerlink is not needed; There are already existing energy facilities that can create energy cheaper, new energy in San Diego, and transfer energy from Mexico to LA (**Imperial Irrigation District, "The Green Path," and the South Bay Power Plant**).
- \* Environmental groups: **Center for Biological Diversity, the Sierra Club, and the Environmental Health Coalition**, have come out opposing the entire proposal.
- \* Individuals and communities from across the county and even beyond have filed formal and informal protests, including several San Diego communities do not want Powerlink in San Diego, **Warner, Ranchita, Lake Henshaw, Santa Ysabel, Julian, Mussey Grade Road (Ramona), Borrego Springs, Ocotillo Wells, Shelter Valley, Canebrake, Ocotillo, Aguas Caliente, Mason Valley, Rancho Penasquitos, Valley Center, Temecula, Murrieta, and Hemet**

## **Support for Protest**

- \* A solar energy design for the county would not cost any more than a design such as Powerlink, however it would not require fuel to run any of it, as solar energy is FREE. This alone releases us from the cost of Liquid Natural Gas, or Coal, which are fuels for conventional power plants.
- \*The "Million Solar Rooftops" initiative passed on 1/12/06, making California an instant leader in the solar energy industry. It is expected to eventually create enough energy in California within the next 10 years to equal the output of 6 fossil fuel burning energy plants, while maintaining a very high air quality at the same time.
- \*These programs could lead to a better economy here in California, and wean us off of fossil fuel dependence, while cleaning up the air.
- \* Opponents hope to gain a statement of opposition from the County Board of Supervisors, using public comment to drive the issue.
- \* Opponents also have begun to put pressure on State and U.S. elected officials to force the CPUC to force SDG&E to do the right thing (this is the political process).
- \* **Jim Bell outlined a strong plan to make San Diego "renewable energy self-sufficient."**