

Comments Received from Individuals

Part 4

From: Donna Tisdale [mailto:tisdale.donna@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2010 3:43 PM
To: ECOSUB; catulewind@blm.gov; john.rydzik@bia.gov
Subject: ECO Sub, Tule Wind and ESJ scoping comments

Hello,

Please find the attached scoping comment letter for the ECO Substation, Tule Wind, and Energia Sierra Jaurez from the Boulevard Planning Group with 4 attachments.

My apologies that the letter is not better organized. There is just too much going on here and not enough hours or days to properly or thoroughly address each and every detail the way it should be addressed.

I had to send these comments with my backup e-mail due to problems with my Hughesnet service.

Please confirm that these comments were received in timely manner.

Sincerely,

Donna Tisdale, Chair
Boulevard Planning Group
PO Box 1272
Boulevard, CA 91905

691-766-4170

This footnote confirms that this email message has been scanned by
PineApp Mail-SeCure for the presence of malicious code, vandals & computer viruses.

BOULEVARD PLANNING GROUP

PO BOX 1272, BOULEVARD, CA 91905

California Public Utilities Commission

February 15, 2010

Attn: Iian Fisher

c/o Dudek

605 Third Street

Encinitas, CA 92024

BLM California Desert District Office

Attn: Greg Thomsen

22835 Calle San Juan de Los Lagos

Moreno Valley, CA 92553-9046

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Attn: John Rydzik

2800 Cottage Way

Sacramento, CA

VIA E-MAIL: ecosub@dudek.com, catulewind@blm.gov & john.rydzik@bia.gov

RE: EIR/EIS SCOPING FOR ECO SUBSTATION, TULE WIND & ENERGIA SIERRA JUAREZ

Dear Mr. Fisher, Mr. Thomsen, and Mr. Rydzik,

These comments are submitted on behalf of the Boulevard Planning Group which is an elected advisory land use group for the County of San Diego and their various departments.

Our group has been actively involved in this and other related energy and transmission projects proposed for and through our planning area since 2004-05 when Pacific Wind (PPM Energy / Iberdrola) received a categorical exemption from the BLM EI Centro office for their first MET Towers--which we objected to. We have voted unanimously to oppose each of these projects based on the significant and cumulative negative impacts they represent to the following issues and more:

- rural community character and quality of life
- natural environment, intact habitat and wildlife resources

- surface and groundwater resources (including impacts to the blue Tule Creek and 100 year floodplain and La Posta Creek watershed, groundwater quality and quantity)
- public health and safety (wildfire ignition, noise & vibrations, blade throw and tower collapse, air quality)
- visual, historic, cultural and recreational resources
- property values and insurance rates
- Tourism and recreation based economy (Environmental Justice)

We strongly resist current efforts to transform our quiet rural and natural communities, public wildlands, scenic vistas and recreation resources, into sacrifice areas with whirling blinking groaning and blighted industrial energy zones—especially when better, cheaper, and less destructive alternatives are available, viable, and economically competitive. See Alternatives section pages 29-31.

Please see the list of documents that we have previously submitted on the ECO Substation, Energia Sierra Juarez (ESJ), and the underlying flawed BLM approvals for the Sunrise Powerlink and Eastern San Diego Resource Management Plan which are the subject of several legal challenges. If the legal challenges are successful in overturning the flawed approvals that included downgrades to allow for industrial wind and geothermal energy generation and the new utility corridor for Sunrise Powerlink, the three projects that are subject of this review may no longer be allowed uses. Each document and all issues raised are hereby incorporated by reference.

Our most recent comments on the ECO Substation and ESJ applications are attached along with previous comments on the Eastern San Diego County Resource Management Plan that address our concerns with Tule Wind and other impacts.

Additional Issues of Concern:

On September 9, 2008, The PUC's acting Energy Director, Kenneth Lewis, approved SCE's withdrawal request for their Baja Wind Power Purchase Agreement, stating, "SCE's request in AL 2143-E-C to withdraw the consideration of the Baja Wind power purchase Agreement from AL 2143-E, 2143-E-A and 2143-E-B is approved, effective August 26, 2008." Unless another Power Purchase Agreement has been approved that we are unaware of, this means there is no power purchase in place for Sempra's ESJ project. What impact does this have on the ESJ cross-border project?

Please note the reasonably foreseeable potential for Sempra to construct a new gas-fired power plant in the Jacume, Jacumba border area, to facilitate use of their multi-billion dollar investments in their Energia Costa Azul LNG receipt terminal and existing Gasoducto Baja Norte gas line. See the February 15, 2010 article on the Energia Sierra Juarez project in the High Country News at <http://www.hcn.org/issues/42.3/cross-border-winds>. Please confirm or deny that Sempra's ESJ project will qualify for renewable energy credits for energy produced outside the country. This provides even more incentive for Sempra to construct backup gas-fired power plants in the Jacume project area and should not be allowed. How will State agencies be able to confirm the amount of energy produced in Mexico, and if ESJ is in full compliance with California law as is required?

The photo below (Tisdale 8-27-08) shows the new waterline that was being installed at the time along the old road through El Hongo, just west of the Jacume area and Sempra's ESJ lease area in Baja.



The Gasoducto pipeline map below is from Sempra's website. The ESJ lease area is west of Sempra's Termoelectrica La Rosita gas-fired plant and is located in the area just over the blue box showing the GB Mainline section of the pipeline



No fast tracking for CEQA Litigation Protection Program or ARRA funding

The extent of the significant and cumulative impacts from the current projects under review, related projects, and the public health and safety threats they represent, should preclude any participation in the Governor's fast track selection under the California Environmental Quality Act Litigation Protection Pilot Program and / or the Secretary of Interior's fast track for ARRA funding. We are strongly opposed to any state or federal subsidies, credits, waivers, fast tracks, or other benefits they may otherwise qualify for.

A Formal PUC/BIA investigation is requested into the catastrophic failure at Kumeyaay Wind--before any more turbines are approved or installed here.

As publicly stated at the January 28th PUC/BLM hearing on the project noted above, we are requesting a formal investigation by the PUC and the Bureau of Indian Affairs into the catastrophic failure suffered at the Kumeyaay Wind facility on Campo Kumeyaay Nation lands during the December 7, 2009 storm. The extended loss of generation and increased costs of risk / insurance and bonding should also be investigated and applied to the projects under review. Were shortcuts taken during construction that influenced the apparent electrical failure? Is the turbine design flawed? Do other turbines have the same or different flaws? What is the failure rate for that turbine model and others? Where were the 75 blades, that were removed from the 25 turbines, disposed of and at what cost? It is our understanding that composite turbine blades are difficult to recycle and are generally landfilled. Since the construction of the Kumeyaay Wind facility, blade replacement seems to take place on a very frequent basis. **What is the rate of blade and other turbine component failure and the average production rate of energy for California's existing industrial wind turbines? How much energy do they produce on an average? We have read that they produce an average of only 10-30% of the installed capacity. However, when they are out of service for repeated and extended repairs how does that impact their average production rate and costs? Kumeyaay has been out of service for 70 days as of today.**



January 12, 2010 | Photo by John Gibbins

The photo above from the San Diego Union Tribune shows the removal of the blades from all 25 Kumeyaay wind turbines. The article reported that winds topped 70 mph, causing the extensive damage,

despite the report that the turbines were turned off due to the high winds. A previous article quoted the project manager that a lightning strike caused the damage. That suspected lightning strike was later denied with the damage attributed to 70 mph winds. Local resident, Ken Daubach, witnessed the catastrophic failure event on December 7th as he was creeping along I-8 at 5 mph behind a snow blow. He stated that he saw an electric blue light ball near the center of the row of 25 turbines which then appeared to arc between all of the turbines in both a north and south direction. Nearby residents say there was no lightning present but strong winds were blowing at the time. If this apparent electrical discharge /meltdown event had occurred during a dry wind event, a massive wildfire could have been ignited--in an area with limited emergency services.

It is a matter of public health and safety that both the PUC and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), who approved the Kumeyaay Wind project, the reconductoring of our only 69 kV distribution line, and SDG&E's Power Purchase Agreement, now investigate what caused the catastrophic failure and the potential for a reoccurrence of a similar event in the future. A full investigation with full disclosure is warranted. It is important to note that the BIA approved this massive project with a Finding of No Significant Impact. There was no EIS. And the PUC originally denied but then approved the project without informing our impacted communities, or the County, that we would be taken off-grid and placed on emergency generators for weeks on end while the single 69kV line was reconductored. That information showed up in the final documents. We suffered through black outs, brown outs and surges. No one we know of who filed a claim for lost equipment received any compensation. As testified to at the January 28th PUC/BLM hearing, there are other problems with Kumeyaay Wind that are felt off-reservation, including noise, vibrations and night time illumination from malfunctioning strobe lighting. See this linked article for more information on witness reports on Kumeyaay Wind's catastrophic failure and photos of leaking oil down the sides and damaged blades: <http://castcountymagazine.org/taxonomy/term/3045>. Where is the oversight on this federally approved project? Enforceable protections need to be part of any state/federal/local approval process.

Following a catastrophic failure of two Vestas wind turbines on Feb 22 and 23, 2008, the Danish energy agency requested an investigation into the events. A report was produced by engineers at Riso DTU. Below is the report translated into English. A video of one of the failures can be seen here: <http://www.windaction.org/videos/14294> . *It is important to note that the debris from the first turbine failure which occurred on February 22 spread as far as 700 meters (2200 feet) away.* Riso DTU is formerly a government research institution under the Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation.

Combined recommendations from the Danish report:

- It is recommended that the Consulting Committee for the Secretariat looks at these events soon, and provides guidelines to ensure that the certification of models and projects more precisely shows the required maintenance.
- It is further recommended that requirements for ongoing service and maintenance of wind turbines are very soon considered by the Consulting Committee for the Secretariat. Together with the industry, they should work to ensure that all wind turbines receive the necessary qualified service and maintenance.

Here is a link to the final investigative report: <http://www.windaction.org/documents/21858>

Here is a link to a short 2007 GE Energy document, "Extreme wind speed: risk and mitigation" <http://www.windaction.org/documents/13914>. It explains the risk in the event of extreme wind conditions including hurricane or tornado and any mitigation. *Note, the document acknowledges the risk of blade*

throws and tower collapse. Also note that the proposed project area is subject to extreme wind events, including hurricane and gale force winds and large twisting dust devils which can be hundreds of feet wide and extend several thousand feet high. Local barns and massive oak trees have been damaged by these twisting wind events. Hurricane Kathleen, in the late 70's took out I-8 and the railroad in the Mountain Springs /Ocotillo area. Boulevard was hit hard with torrential rains and high winds.

Local Earthquake history and turbine stability issues:

The San Diego Union Tribune's front page article (2-7-10) reports that industrial wind turbines have never been studied for seismic stabilities. We find this alarming, especially since Tule Wind is proposed for the McCain Valley National Cooperative Land and Wildlife Management Area that is one of the most visited recreational areas in the BLM's Eastern San Diego planning area, with turbines proposed inside the Lark Canyon OHV Park and campground and near Cottonwood Campground--family oriented use areas. The wind turbine that was subjected to the recent test is only 80 feet tall. Here, the turbines will be close to 500 feet tall which represents a potential for increased structural failure and the crashing down of multi-ton nacelles, blades and hundreds of gallons of oil per turbine. See: <http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2010/feb/07/wind-turbine-getting-seismic-shakedown/>

In February 1892 a 7.8 (or 7.3 depending on which report you read) earthquake occurred with reported ground fissures in McCain Valley and Jewell Valley and rockslides in Mountain Springs, Carrizo and Jewel Valley areas,

Here is Link to USGS page: http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/states/events/1892_02_24.php . A more detailed report of ground cracking open in McCain Valley, earth appearing sifted several feet deep in Jewel Valley, and rock slides in Mountain Springs and Jewel Valley, is included at page 103 of Memories of the Early Settlements by Ella McCain (1955). Ella reported that:

"My husband and I were living in McCain Valley at the time, he was plowing to plant grain. In the field where he was plowing, the ground cracked open and the crack remained there for several years. At Jewel Valley, then Church Dome, the ground opened and closed again near where my nephew, Johnny Williams was playing. He ran to the house, told his father and uncle, they dug down to see and the earth looked like it had been sifted for several feet down. Rocks rolled from hillsides. I was visiting in Potrero at the time and I have never felt another quake as severe as that one, in Potereo. It kept shaking four or five days, it was said that there were one hundred sixty two shocks in the next two days..."

The map below from the California Geological survey shows locations of where the 1892 earthquake was reportedly felt, including McCain Valley. This earthquake has reportedly been associated with a 20 foot displacement on the Laguna Salada fault in western Imperial County near where the Imperial Valley Substation is located, near the proposed SES Stirling Solar Two project site at Plaster City, and near the Sunrise Powerlink route. Go to this link to use the interaction feature for the map shown below: http://redirect.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/rghm/quakes/historical/events/18920224_0720/18920224_0720.html



How will the Tule Wind, the Energia Sierra Juarez and the Kumeyaay Wind I (existing) and Kumeyaay Wind II & III (proposed) turbines withstand another quake the size of the 1892 quake or larger? What will be the result in the event of collapse of multiple turbines and related power lines, at the same time, and the release of hundreds to thousands of gallons of oil/fluid onto the ground surface and into the groundwater? What would be the potential for fire in a similar event and how would it be handled?

High cost & low value of electricity from wind

Wind industry officials and lobbyists, who have gained a strong foothold through political action and significant donations, continue to understate the full and true cost of electricity from wind, creating a false "popular wisdom" that is parroted by decision makers without independent research. This linked report from an energy analyst explains the real story behind wind energy's price and how its high cost fails to match the value of the energy produced: <http://www.windaction.org/documents/25496>. The PUC and BLM need to address this reality and the cradle to grave costs that are involved with large-scale remote wind energy projects, including the cost and GHG impacts of backup base load generation, the high cost of frequent turbine maintenance, downtime, and blade replacement, early retirement based on poor performance or failure, full decommissioning, and attempts to re-vegetate arid lands after they have been scarred and denuded.

The June, 2009 report, **Calculating wind power's environmental benefits** includes this excerpt:

"It's commonly believed that new wind power generation will displace coal and natural gas-fueled power plants and thereby avoid all their associated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), nitrous oxide (NO_x) and sulfur dioxide (SO₂). The benefits of these avoided emissions have become a major factor in wind developers gaining public support for their plans to site wind farms. These purported benefits also are the reason for the large subsidies governments have provided to offset wind's higher power production costs. Unfortunately, some of these environmental claims are built upon incorrect assumptions about how U.S. environmental regulations actually work and the type of generation a new wind project will displace." Here is a link for the full report: <http://www.windaction.org/documents/22493>

Here are some questions that need to be answered:

- What local, state and federal grants, credits, subsidies, waivers, exemptions, reduced fees/costs and other benefits are available to the owners of Tule Wind, ECO Substation and Energia Sierra Juarez?
- What are the dollar amounts of these benefits for each project?
- What is the per acre BLM land cost for Tule Wind?
- What is the cost of BLM Right-of-Way easements for these projects?
- As a foreign owned corporation, is Iberdrola Renewables subject to federal and state taxes or are they exempt?
- Will Sempra be eligible for US /California green tag credits and/or other tax payer and rate payer funded subsidies for wind energy imported from Mexico?
- If applicable, what is the dollar amount of accelerated depreciation that wind farm owners are permitted by the IRS in order to recover the capital costs from their otherwise taxable income, thus shifting these costs to ordinary taxpayers?
- Will these projects be eligible for the "5-year double declining balance accelerated depreciation"?
- What other tax breaks and subsidies will be available for these projects and their owners?
- What amount of money will be owed/paid to the local, state, and/or federal government for the Tule Wind, Energia Sierra Juarez and / or the ECO Substation projects?
- How will these payments off-set the negative impacts and burdens placed on local communities?
- If private land is purchased for mitigation will it be taken out of the tax base? What is the impact to the County?
- How will expected property value reductions and reassessment for surrounding properties impact the County tax base?
- In the event these turbines and/or related transmission infrastructure spark a massive wildfire, will they be held liable for the associated costs? What is the estimated potential cost of lost homes, habitat and type conversion?
- What benefits will the local impacted communities realize?
- Previously, BLM informed us that the downgrading changes to the Eastern San Diego Resource Management Plan would not result in any local benefits. They also informed us that most of their law enforcement was directed at the OHV areas in Imperial County. Is this information still valid?

Our rural community and tax and rate payers deserve an unbiased complete and objective cost /benefit analysis for these current projects under review, and the related projects, that takes into account the economic and environmental value of conserved lands and recreation.

Ecosystem Services and their economic value and place in land use planning:

A recent report published by Wild Connections is intended for use by the BLM and other agencies as a resource to more adequately represent the value of ecosystem services in land management planning such as the ECO Substation, Tule Wind and Energia Sierra Juarez projects under current review. These critical ecosystem service values are generally ignored or vastly undervalued. Here is the **Conclusion and Recommendations** section of the Wild Connections report:

"In the past, ecosystem services were left out of the economic analyses when land use planning was conducted. There are likely two reasons for this, first, the economic models used were based on neoclassical economic assumptions that gave little value to the environment and the services it provides; and second, ecosystems services were difficult to quantify economically. Over the last thirty years both of these reasons have been challenged and are no longer valid. Numerous studies point to the importance of ecosystem services for human survival and numerous studies have also been conducted to economically quantify the value of these services. This study has analyzed the problems inherent in the present economic models and has established conservative economic values for a wide range of ecosystem services. These economic values have been applied to the Pika San Isabel National Forest as a demonstration that the value of these services can be established and therefore incorporated into the land use planning process. It is no longer possible or prudent to ignore the enormous benefits ecosystems provide for humans.

The following conclusions can be reached from the material presented in this paper.

- 1. Traditional economic models used in land use planning are flawed and therefore their results should be interpreted with great caution.*
- 2. The economic value of ecosystem services has been ignored in the land use planning process.*
- 3. Ecosystem services do have economic value.*
- 4. The economic value of ecosystem services can be measured and is available in the professional literature (Appendix A).*
- 5. The total economic value of ecosystem services is substantial (Tables 5 and 6)*

Recommendations:

- 1. Land use agencies must create new economic models.*
- 2. These models must deal with the flawed assumptions and statistical problems inherent in input/output models.*
- 3. The new models must also include the economic value of ecosystem services.*
- 4. Recursive models are necessary to assess the long term impact of land use change. Models that simply reflect the present, fail to anticipate the long term consequences of land use decisions.*
- 5. Appropriate negative multipliers must be established and used when they will accurately reflect the long term impacts of land use change.*
- 6. Models that can result in economic values that are less than \$0 are necessary in order to show the possible impacts of land use change on ecosystem services and therefore show the true costs of losing and replacing those services.*

The importance of these recommendations cannot be underestimated. Unless the changes outlined above are incorporated in the land use planning process, economic analyses conducted in the future will continue to be inaccurate. These recommendations are not only academically important, they are critical to the decision making process because if ecosystem services are ignored, human survival is compromised."

The full report is available in electronic format (PDF) at www.wildconnections.org/library.html

The BLM and the PUC should review this report and address the real true value of what will be lost if this transitional cross border area, already scientifically identified as globally significant and rare habitat, in the Las Californias Binational Conservation Initiative, with diverse species and critical binational wildlife corridors, is approved for industrialization, destructive habitat fragmentation, and potential type conversion.

ARRA stimulus funding creating more jobs overseas than in US

The promise of green jobs for our community is a ruse. The few jobs that may go to locals would not cover the lost value of community character, quality of life, resources, public access, and property values. See the linked investigative watchdog report that shows over \$2 billion in federal stimulus money has gone to for wind energy, with the vast majority going to foreign companies and foreign jobs. <http://abcnews.go.com/WN/wind-power-equal-job-power/story?id=9759949&page=3>

There is no "buy American" requirement for the massive amounts of money being spent on these projects, many of which are proposed for our public lands at bargain basement prices. Iberdrola has received over \$557 million of those funds so far and expects to receive another \$200 million or more this year. The existing Kumeyaay Wind farm was built with imported labor and foreign workers were even imported to change the oil/hydraulic fluid on the turbines. Another \$30 million in stimulus funds has reportedly been approved for Kumeyaay Wind II even though no project description or environmental review has been presented to the decision makers or the public. How can this be?

Proponents tout a property value impact report that has been discredited

Iberdrola, SDG&E, Sempra and other pro-wind advocates claim that the introduction of industrial wind turbines do not impact property values. Ed Clark of Iberdrola actually had the gall to tell our Planning Group and community that their turbines can increase property values. They all tout the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) report on *The Impact of Wind Power Projects on Residential Property Values in the United States: A Multi-Site Hedonic Analysis*.

However, the LBNL report, that cost taxpayers a reported \$500,000, has been challenged and criticized by several experts including certified real estate appraisers: See the linked press release, <http://www.windaction.org/releases/25672>, which includes the following excerpt:

"NEW HAMPSHIRE (February 15, 2010) -- Real estate appraisal experts are challenging the scientific credibility and accuracy of a recent US Department of Energy ("DOE") report on the effect of wind power projects on property values. A new paper asserts that well known flaws in the methodology used in the study raise serious questions concerning the credibility of the results, and the DOE report's authors failed to follow well-developed and tested standards for performing regression analyses on property sales."

Here is a link to Alan R. Wilson's challenge to the LBNL report entitled WIND FARMS, RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY VALUES, AND RUBBER RULERS©:

<http://www.arwilson.com/pdf/newpdfs/WindFarmsResidentialPropertyValuesandRubberRulers.pdf>

Michael McCann, another certified real estate appraiser sent a multi-page Certified Review letter to the LBNL report authors included the following statement:

"With all due respect, the final Report falls short of being a truly objective and reliable real estate value study of the issue at hand, in my professional opinion, the reasons for which I will begin to describe in this follow up review..."

Here is a link to the entire McCann letter (12-14-09) discrediting the LBNL report:
<http://www.windaction.org/documents/24637>

Here is a link to another report: Impact of wind turbines on the value of Texas rural land:
<http://www.windaction.org/documents/20145>. The impacts are similar to impacts we expect on our own rural lands

Property Value Protection Plans should be required.

Numerous properties located in neighborhoods along McCain Valley Road, Ribbonwood Road, Jewel Valley Road, La Posta Truck Trail and Thing Valley Road neighborhoods will be the most significantly impacted from the Tule Wind and ECO Substation projects, especially when the Sunrise Powerlink and new 138kV transmission line impacts are included. They should be provided with an enforceable Property Value Protection Plan that will provide for a buyout at fair market values in the event the new turbine/transmission projects result in reduced values and/or lost sales. In the past, the Department of Interior required Property Value Protection Plans for properties impacted by the 600 acre Campo Landfill proposed to be sited on Campo tribal lands. That PVPP was made part of the Record of Decision which was approved in 1993 by Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt.

Turbine noise, vibration & EMF impacts on health

The organized wind energy industry, and many decision makers, are in denial that problems with industrial wind energy complexes exist. However, the new information is emerging on a daily basis, from around the world, that very real impacts result from industrial wind energy do in fact exist. Significant setbacks for occupied buildings, public use areas, sensitive wildlife habitat, high-fire danger zones, non-participating property lines, and more should be mandated. New guidelines recommend a setback of at least 2 miles or much more. In our community, residents that are several miles away from the Kumeyaay Wind facility are still negatively impacted by noise, vibrations and light pollution.

This linked KPBS story includes comments from impacted resident Jerry Yops who already complains of noise and visual impacts from the existing Kumeyaay Wind project which is several miles to the west. Yop's says his property will be approximately 1/2 mile from Iberdrola's Tule Wind project. Yops has studied the issue and believes his property values will go down at least 20% due to the cumulative impacts of multiple wind farms. Other reports note up to 50 % and more. In the KPBS story, Iberdrola's Ed Clark downplays the noise impacts with a lame statement that the freeway noise drowns out the turbine noise. Most of those impacted do not live right next to the freeway and the turbine noise, low frequency vibrations, and strobe lighting invade their homes and lives, often to an intolerable level that disrupts their sleep patterns and well being.
<http://www.kpbs.org/news/2010/jan/27/community-opposition-proposed-energy-projects/>

What about stray electricity and EMF impacts from the turbines, substations and transmission lines? How will these impacts affect humans and sensitive wildlife? We believe there is a cancer risk to humans. Animals can sense electromagnetic fields and may be displaced from critical foraging and nesting areas. Horseback riding groups that frequent the McCain Valley area may no longer be able to, or no longer

want to, use the area for trail riding and endurance events. This will create not only a loss of recreation value it will also create a loss of business for businesses that rely on that extra income to survive.

The linked 2009 **Summary of recent research on adverse health effects of wind turbines** <http://www.windaction.org/documents/23709> includes the following excerpt:

"Contrary to the claims of the industry, there is a growing body of peer-reviewed research substantiating these health claims. This report attempts to catalogue the most recent.

A generally acknowledged major concern about wind turbine disturbance centres around the low frequency noise projected from this heavy industrial machinery. Until recently measurements of this type of noise have seldom been carried out near wind turbines.

There is already ample scientific evidence that low frequency noise is a cause of sleep disturbance in humans. The evidence also suggests that long term exposure normally leads to serious health problems.

Reinforcing this body of knowledge is the research that has been conducted on animals. Long term studies by European biologists indicate that habitat disturbance and abandonment takes place around wind turbine developments. Further research on animals indicates that basic survival functions such as hunting, self protection and reproduction are interrupted by low frequency noise exposure.

The only effective mitigation is to adequately separate wind turbine developments from sensitive wildlife habitats and human dwellings. "

Wind Turbine Syndrome: Dr Pierpont and others have researched complaints of the very real impacts of industrial wind energy on human health. Pierpont's book is available via her website at www.windturbinesyndrome.com. Peer reviews of Dr. Pierpont's book (which some wind energy proponents claim don't exist) and lots of other important information and links are available at that site. Here is an excerpt from Dr. Pierpont's testimony to the New York State Legislature Energy Committee in March 2006:

The symptoms start when local turbines go into operation and resolve when the turbines are off or when the person is out of the area. The symptoms include:

- 1) Sleep problems: noise or physical sensations of pulsation or pressure make it hard to go to sleep and cause frequent awakening.
- 2) Headaches that are increased in frequency or severity.
- 3) Dizziness, unsteadiness, and nausea.
- 4) Exhaustion, anxiety, anger, irritability, and depression.
- 5) Problems with concentration and learning.
- 6) Tinnitus (ringing in the ears).

Chronic sleep disturbance is the most common symptom. Exhaustion, mood problems, and problems with concentration and learning are natural outcomes of poor sleep

The 2008 "how to" **guide for criteria for siting to prevent health risks from sound** by George Kamperman and Rick James can be found at <http://windaction.org/documents/17229>. They recommended

1.5 km setback which has now been changed to 2 km setback based on Dr. Nina Pierpont's research. They recommend testing prior to approval to establish ambient noise / vibration levels in order to create enforceable contracts and mitigation requirements.

Here is a link to a british article (Sunday Times 12-13-09) regarding a cover up of wind turbine noise issues in a government report : <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/environment/article6954563.ece>

In his **Sleep disturbance and wind turbine noise**, Dr. Christopher Hanning (May 2009) stated that: "In my expert opinion, from my knowledge of sleep physiology and a review of the available research, I have no doubt that wind turbine noise emissions cause sleep disturbance and ill health". Find the full report at: <http://www.windaction.org/documents/22602>

Pre-project noise measurements need to be taken, by an unbiased third party, in these residential neighborhoods, at the impacted campgrounds, and in the surrounding Wilderness Areas and Areas of Environmental Concern. Significant setbacks, a minimum of 2 miles, enforceable noise and vibration restrictions, along with dark sky protections, need to be included in any project approvals.

Another issue is documented in this linked **2006 DOD report on The Effects of Windmill Farms on Military Readiness**: <http://www.windaction.org/documents/5439>. The results of testing demonstrated that the rotating blades of an industrial turbine do have an impact on radar target tracking and the ability to discriminate the turbines from aircraft. Other reports note that turbine disturbance impacts weather radar as well and cannot distinguish storm events from the turbine generated turbulence. Tule Wind is proposed in major air traffic corridor used by military, commercial and private planes and helicopters. The area is also frequented by the US Border Patrol. How will their operations and communication equipment be impacted by interference from these turbines and multiple powerlines?

Historic resources

Historic & Cultural Resources will be impacted by Tule Wind project, the related 138kV transmission line and the Sunrise Powerlink, including the McCain Tule Ranch house located on McCain Valley Conservation Camp property owned by the Department of Corrections and the 1865 wagon route/ express trail through McCain Valley and Thing Valley (See 1865 Map 37 page 251: The Historic Backcountry, by Chris Wray, 2004-2009, tierrablancabooks.com). Many other historic and cultural resources will be impacted by the related Sunrise Powerlink including historic the Desert View Tower, Bankhead Springs, Wuest Ranch, La Posta Ranch and more. Tule Ranch house photo below is by Bill Parsons.



Native American sacred sites and geographic viewsheds:

It is our belief that the PUC/BLM have ignored significant and cumulative negative impacts from these energy and transmission projects and the related Sunrise Powerlink project on cultural resources including visual impacts and geographic landscapes that are sacred to Native Americans. Please refer to the testimonies from Carmen Lucas (Kwaaymii, Laguna Band of Indians) and Preston Arrow-weed (Quechan) in the transcript of January 28th PUC/BLM hearing and the excerpt below taken from Carmen Lucas's comment letter, via Courtney Ann Coyle, Attorney at Law (11-4-08), to the BLM El Centro office on **Changes to Eastern San Diego County RMP:**

"Regarding changes to renewable energy locations, we do NOT agree that additional lands should automatically be opened up for wind or other renewables. Potential impacts to the environment, most significantly those related to tribal values as set forth in our comment letter of May 31, 2007, would be too great. Many of these impacts to sacred places, burial/cremation areas and traditional cultural properties, in our view, cannot be mitigated.

Regarding changes to Visual Resource Management Proposals/Classifications, we do NOT agree with the proposed downgrading of visual resources to lower classes to allow for more utility locations or mineral entry. Potential impacts to the environment, most significantly those related to tribal values as set forth in our comment letter of May 31, 2007, would be too great. The management area is rich in cultural landscapes and the views to and from them are unique to the region and retain significance to living tribal peoples. Many of these impacts to landscapes, sacred places and traditional cultural properties, in our view, cannot be mitigated.

Utilities can also interfere with the flow of the landscape and viewsheds in the San Felipe, Banner Grade, Oriflamme, Sawtooth and McCain Valley areas. This can affect not just federal lands, but also State lands, such as nearby California State Park lands and their cultural preserves (existing and potential). My client asks that BLM NOT ruin what remaining landscapes and viewsheds we have left in San Diego

County. Moreover, there are the cremated remains of thousands of tribal people in the study area, as this was one of the last strongholds for local tribes. The cumulative impacts of the proposed changes with other renewables projects in our local deserts is simply too great to tribal cultural values. Please work with DPR and local tribes and rethink your proposal."

There are untold numbers of cultural resources in the McCain Valley and Jacumba areas and north and south of Old 80. This entire region was one of the last strongholds for Native Americans before and after the arrival of the Spaniards and other settlers. Many of the separate sites, which have been identified, are most likely part of larger complexes that have either not been fully identified or have been segmented to reduce their true value and significance. Virtually every property in the McCain Valley area on both sides of Old 80 and I-8, that has been developed in the last decade or so, were required to do cultural surveys that documented numerous sites for each property. The resources are virtually everywhere

Wildlife impacts



Bighorn sheep like those in the photo above near Mountain Springs, provided by the Border Patrol Public Lands Liaison, occupy the areas impacted by Tule Wind, ECO Substation with new 138 kV lines, Energia Sierra Juarez wind energy project and cross border powerline and the Sunrise Powerlink.

2003 Recovery Plan for the **Quino Checkerspot Butterfly**: Figure 17 (page 85) shows QCB Recovery Unit extending north into McCain Valley and west towards the Jewel Valley / Tierra Del Sol area. Quinos have been documented on the Campo Landfill site and at the La Posta Warfare Training facility, and elsewhere throughout this area.

Arroyo Toad habitat is in the area as well. We have seen maps showing the Walker Canyon wetland / creek area near I-8 and McCain Valley Road and the La Posta Creek watershed as Arroyo Toad habitat.

by prop wind turbines: <http://www.eastcountymagazine.org/node/2740>. Here is an excerpt of Wiegand's comments:

"Every day at wind farms across America threatened or endangered species are killed from collisions with blades of the prop wind turbine. This is considered legal because the offending wind farms either hold the "incidental take permit" or were not required to have one because they did not fully disclose environmental impacts of their activities. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services requires the procurement of an incidental take permit for any individual or private industry if threatened and endangered species will be killed in a project. This killing is referred to as "take" -- and the permit holder has immunity from prosecution.

Currently the USFWS is not protecting America's rare and endangered species, nor is the agency enforcing the law. The number one cause of death for golden eagles in our state is the prop wind turbine. There are dozens of California condors and whooping cranes that have disappeared in recent years. Many (including myself) believe they are dying at wind farms and are not being reported as required by the USFWS"

Attached is report on the Condor reintroduction program in Baja which includes a map of a tracked condor flying along the Sierra Juarez and McCain Valley area where hundreds if not thousands of 400-500 foot tall industrial wind turbines are proposed. It is no coincidence that Sempra donated a reported \$250,000 to zoo's condor program.

Many other sensitive plant and wildlife species, including mountain lions, bobcats, deer, kit foxes, kangaroo rats, black-tailed jack rabbits, a variety of horned lizards, snakes and other amphibians are present in our delicately balanced area. These transitional areas, and the diverse and abundant species that rely on them, may become even more at risk in the event of predicted climate change and the negative impacts and fragmentation created by these projects.

Fire threats & safety issues

The Final EIS /EIR for the Sunrise Powerlink, which will impact the same project areas that are under current review, reported a mere 49 significant and unmitigable impacts for the selected route. Fire and fuels management were one of those impacts. We later learned that there were actually over 100 significant and unmitigable impacts. The Sunrise Powerlink documents failed to include the proposed Tule Wind project on 15,000 acres in McCain Valley, even though the BLM had a Plan of Development in hand. CAL FIRE and the Cleveland National Forest, among others, have expressed concerns with increased threat of fire and

The Notice of Intent for Tule Wind does not even mention fire as a major issue of concern. Turbine fires do occur and should be addressed in this DEIR/EIS. Normal causes are lightning, overheating and/or lubrication failure, oil leaks and structural failure. As reported in the linked 2007 study from Bethany New York:

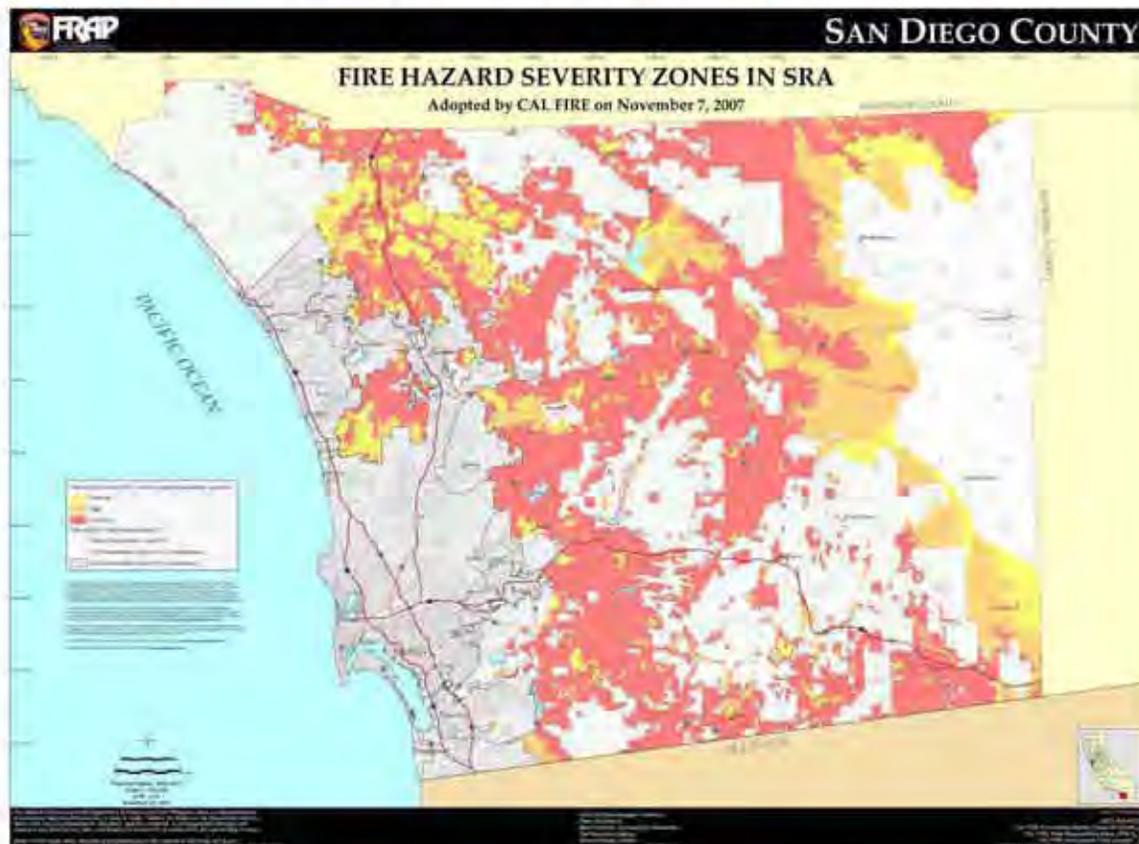
" in 1997 a 4 year old turbine overheated and caught fire inside the nacelle. Witnesses reported "balls of fire" coming from the turbine as burning parts flew out of the nacelle. The turbine's rotors were impossible

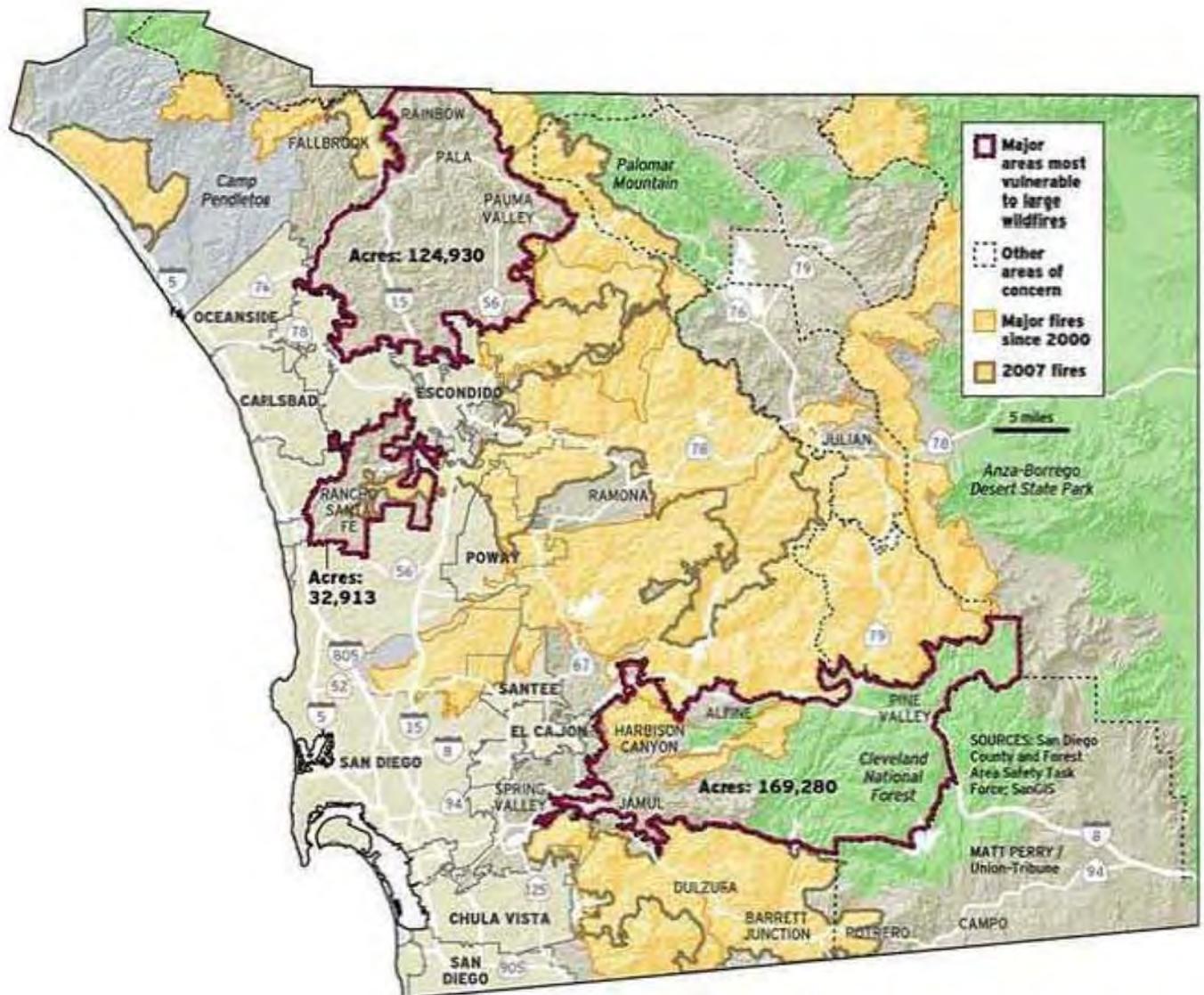
to stop as the brake controls were aflame. Rotating, burning debris was thrown 150m (495ft), setting the hillside and a public right-of-way on fire." This committee has been able to locate evidence of California fire departments actively fighting turbine fires – using helicopters designed to fight forest fires – such equipment is not currently available in Bethany and may be cost-prohibitive to acquire. Finally, in consideration of possible accidents at wind turbine locations, and the fact that these may or may not be near to any dwellings, concerns arise with the reporting of fires or other emergencies. The 911 emergency system in the US is keyed to postal addresses – as an example, help was delayed to the Atlanta, GA Olympic bombing site because the 911 operator could not find a physical address for the park in which the bombing took place. Each turbine, therefore, should be given a postal address compatible with the 911 emergency system and clearly labeled with that address against such necessity.

Here is the link to the Bethany report:

<http://www.wind-watch.org/documents/wp-content/uploads/bethany-windturbinesstudycommitteereport.pdf>

The CAL FIRE map below shows the Fire Hazard Severity Zones in their State Responsibility Area. Please note that the projects under review are proposed for area in the lower right corner, are ranked as High Fire danger. The map can be found at http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/webdata/maps/san_diego/fhszs_map.37.jpg





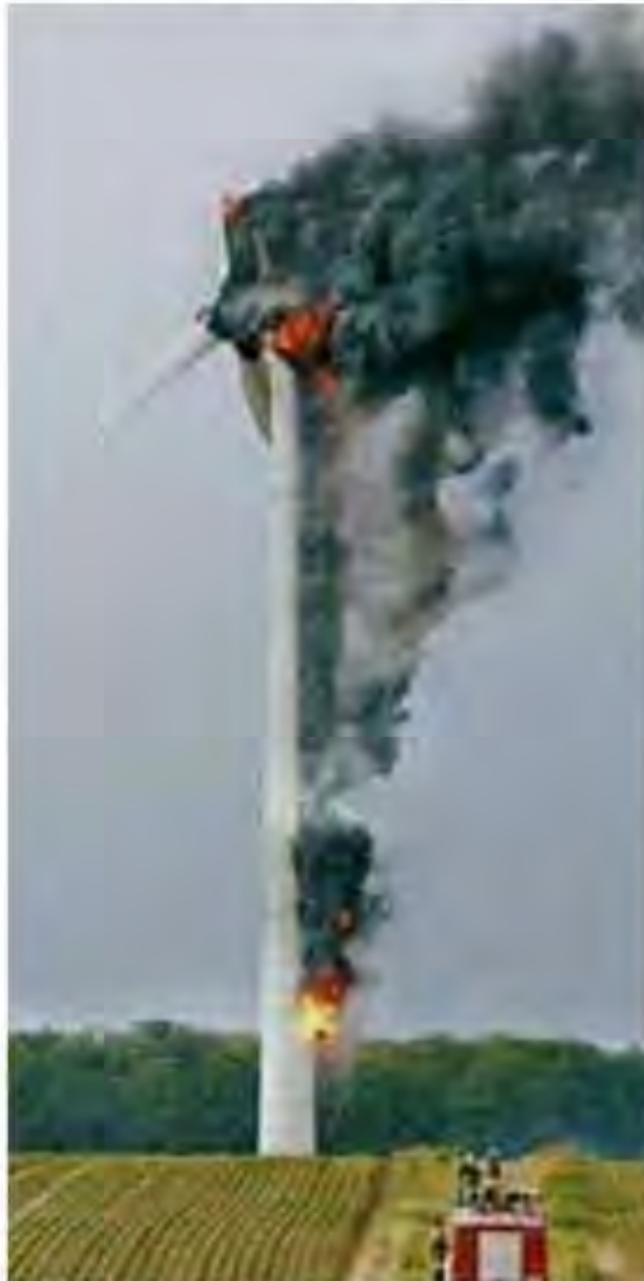
The map immediately above was taken from a San Diego Union Tribune story on 9-28-09. It shows this project area as an area of concern.

A fire sparked in this high fire danger zone during Santa Ana or other significant wind events would have the potential to burn some of the last intact Mediterranean mosaic habitat left in the County. This cross-border area has been identified as globally significant and rare. Note the areas and massive numbers of acres that have burned just since 2000. Some of those catastrophic fire storms were sparked by electric infrastructure.

Vicki Wood, BLM El Centro Field Office manager, in a news release dated 10-27-08, stated that McCain Valley was closed. The press release read: *"The extreme fire conditions currently in this area prompt us to issue this closure order in the interest of public safety."* Will the turbines and related power lines also be shut down during extreme fire conditions and red flag weather events?

**Photographic evidence of types of turbine failure / damage
that can be expected at Tule Wind and Energia Sierra Juarez:**

The series of photos and links below offer examples of the potential threat that wind turbine facilities represent to our human and natural communities in this high-fire danger zone. The higher the number of turbines and expanded related infrastructure--the higher the risk involved.







Burning wind turbine in Uelzen, Germany

Dec. 2, 2009 - A wind turbine, above, burns in the German city of Uelzen. The fire on the 130 meter tall turbine caused €750,000 in damage and is believed to have been caused by a technical defect. - DPA

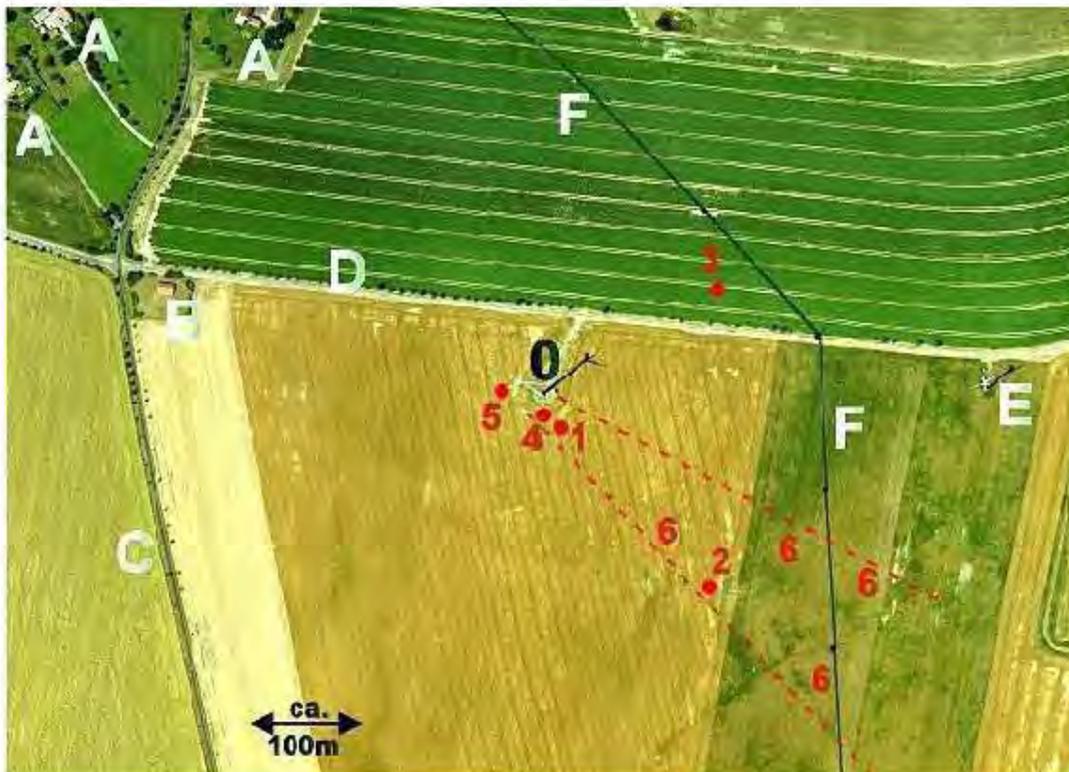


Tipped turbine, foundation and all.



December 2, 2008 Credits: Wausa News

In photo above, a 262 foot wind tower northwest of Bloomfield Nebraska burst into flames. Officials say three men were injured in the fire. One was sent by Life Flight to Sioux City with extensive burns.



The photo directly above, from the linked Bethany report, shows the debris field from a damaged turbine. The report also notes recorded debris fields with scattered turbine parts, which can include nacelles with rotors still attached, up to 1,650 feet from the turbine location. These failures are often the result of brake failure during high speed winds. All turbines, regardless of how state of the art they are claimed to be are, are subject to some degree of failure.

Here is a link to a video of a smoldering Iberdrola turbine in Spain dated 9-11-08:

<http://www.windaction.org/videos/17958>

Here is a link to an article regarding a wind turbine fire at an Iberdrola project at their Locust Ridge 1 project in Pennsylvania: <http://www.windaction.org/news/21321>

Here is a link to an article regarding a tower collapse and fatality at a PPM (Iberdrola) project in Oregon: <http://www.komonews.com/news/local/9383316.html>

Here is another news bite on an Iberdrola turbine fire in Spain dated 11-17-10:

<http://greenenergydirectory411.com/2010/01/17/wind-turbine-fire-in-spain.html>

Here is a slide show of wind turbine accidents:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ppLh5pGX3qQ&feature=related>

Turbine brake failure and explosion:

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=8174226968688178689#docid=504493202651338360>

2007 fire near Palm Springs: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4N4HQv-UyUo>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HKkTUY2sJYQ&NR=1>

Turbine fire in Solano County: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cH-2m4A_6NQ&feature=fvw

Turbine collapse in OK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbMO7ufATBc&feature=rela>

Compilation of wind turbine accidents and failures:

http://cc.bingj.com/cache.aspx?q=collapsed+wind+turbine+photos&d=5048858667516288&mkt=en-US&setlang=en-US&w=4c62376c_ad37e2dd

Visual Resources:

Our currently open and spectacular scenic resources will be forever changed and scarred by massive wind turbines and criss-crossing transmission lines, multiple substations, and miles of new access roads. There will no direction to turn to avoid these impacts. The following three photos, by Bill Parsons, show McCain Valley where, after heavy lobbying by PPM Energy (now Iberdrola), the BLM determined that the area was so visually degraded that they had to downgrade the Visual Resource Management Classification from pretty to ugly. The unjustified and unsupported downgrade conveniently allows for industrial wind energy and the new utility corridor for Sunrise Powerlink where no utilities now exist.

If the BLM's approval of the VRM downgrade and the Sunrise Powerlink through a new utility corridor survive the legal challenges, Sunrise will run just along the left side of McCain Valley Road (visible dirt road in photo below) with Tule Wind's industrial turbines to the left and the right side just out of range of the photograph immediately below. The first photo was taken in the vicinity of the Lark Canyon OHV Park looking south towards Mexico.





These stunning McCain Valley photos above were provided by Bill Parsons. More are attached.

Sempra's proposed 1,250 MW Energia Sierra Juarez (ESJ) cross-border wind energy and transmission project is proposed for this highly visible Baja ridgeline as viewed in the photo below showing the view from Tierra Del Sol Road in Boulevard:





The photo immediately above, shows another view of the Sierra Juarez Mountains where Sempra's ESJ project is proposed, with Boulevard's Jewel Valley in the foreground. The photo was taken from Tierra Del Sol Road on the Tecate Divide. The backcountry transitional area impacted by these wind and transmission projects has already been scientifically identified in the Las Californias Binational Conservation Initiative as globally rare and significant Mediterranean mosaic with diverse species and critical bi-national wildlife corridors.

The ECO Substation will require a new 138kV line to run north/south and east/west through private properties in Jewel Valley in the foreground and in Jacumba. The ECO Substation will be located at the base of the Sierra Juarez, east of Jacumba. The location is visible just over the left side of the sunlit boulder formation in the center of the photo above. The line visible over the same boulders is the US/Mexico borderline. The photo viewpoint is from Tierra Del Sol Road which runs along the Tecate Divide. Tierra Del Sol is also targeted for industrial wind energy. According to County Recorder documents, Invenergy Wind Development, LLC has easement grant agreements, signed in 2008, with property owners Larry Fossett, Joseph Norton and Jesus Calderon.



The photo above is the current rustic view of the future home for the new 2-acre Boulevard Substation from Historic Route 80. The home, in the rear, will be removed along with the outbuildings and potentially some mature oak trees. This residential use and view will change to an industrial use.



The photo above shows the existing 1/4 acre Boulevard Substation which sits off the road and is much less visible from Historic Route 80

What are the real GHG impacts and where is the backup generation for intermittent wind?

Where is the evidence that these wind energy projects will actually reduce GHG impacts? The CEC recently urged regulators to slow down implementation rules on green house gas emissions saying they could hurt plans to transform the system to run on more renewable energy forms like wind and solar. The CEC wrote to the USEPA that it would construct a fleet of highly efficient natural gas-fired power plants to address the sporadic power generation of proposed wind and solar. See the January 11, 2010 article at <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSN111649620100111>.

Where is the backup generation for the 1,450 MW of wind energy proposed at Tule Wind and Energia Sierra Juarez? What are the green house gas impacts and added costs from that necessary backup? The GHG impacts from the backup generation should counted towards the wind energy projects emissions.

Another report published in Power Engineering July 2009 (with charts graphics), **Calculating wind power's environmental benefits**, found at <http://www.windaction.org/documents/22493>, concluded the following:

"Any analysis of wind power's potential to displace fossil fuel generation must first correctly reflect current environmental regulations. Any air pollutant subject to a cap and trade program covering SO₂, NO_X and regional CO₂ may be displaced but not avoided. Emission levels will remain at the same capped levels with or without wind project development. With the eventual implementation of a federal cap and trade law regulating CO₂ emissions appearing likely, wind power will likely offer no future incremental greenhouse gas emission reduction benefit.

One must also distinguish between closed market states with renewable portfolio standards and those open market states without them. Those competing in these closed set-aside protected markets are competing against other renewable projects and not in the open market against lower cost conventional power sources. In these closed markets, no incremental carbon reduction benefits exist between competing renewable power projects. However, these closed power markets were established through regulation and/or legislation and their creation carved out a portion of the open market that reduced the demand for conventional power generation and non-capped fossil fuel emissions. In any case, any avoided emissions benefit is not attributable to a single wind developer, but to regulatory action that has created the closed market for wind and other renewables.

Creating a federal renewable portfolio standard would create a nationwide closed market for renewables, meaning wind projects would again offer no incremental emissions benefits given their direct competition with other renewables and not coal or natural gas. Unfortunately, many of the claims made regarding wind's supposed avoided air benefits are overstated."

Authors: Thomas Hewson Jr. is a principal with Energy Ventures Analysis of Arlington Va. where he directs the firm's environmental consulting practice. His experience spans more than 32 years evaluating environmental issues related to energy use for DOE, EPA, EPRI, major electric utilities, fuel suppliers, equipment vendors, utility commissions, investment firms and citizens groups. He holds a BSE in civil engineering from Princeton University.

David Pressman is an Analyst for Energy Ventures Analysts and holds a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Rochester.

Potential mitigation:

Our group, elected by the community to represent them on land use issues, strongly opposes these projects and others for a variety of fully justified reasons. It is also our strong position that the significant, cumulative, and varied impacts from all these projects can never be fully or properly mitigated. While we support the legal efforts to deny and overturn these projects, we understand that even well-funded legal challenges may not prevail to stop these projects and the real threats they represent. In that event, we believe our impacted human and natural communities should be compensated with some form of mitigation to help defray the heavy burdens placed upon us.

At a minimum, mitigation should include the purchase of property, approved by the County, and the construction and ongoing operation of a new fire station for Boulevard, with 24/7 paid staffing--to replace our current volunteer staffing and inadequate fire station and equipment. Fire-fighting equipment and ongoing maintenance for the station, staff and the equipment needed to fight fires related to 400-500 foot tall turbines, towering transmission lines, new substations, exploding transformers and vaults should be also part of the required mitigation. Ongoing training for the full-time paid staff should also be funded by these project developers/ owners. At least one 4-wheel drive rescue vehicle that can reach all 15-miles of Tule Wind turbines should also be included to address remote construction accidents and/or injuries to members of the public from self destructing turbines and/or turbine related fires, and other project related impacts. Funding for ongoing equipment maintenance and upgrading should also be included.

The current Boulevard Fire & Rescue Department facility, which is not structurally sound enough to qualify as a certified emergency shelter, should either beretrofitted or rebuilt to allow for use as an authorized public emergency shelter. That shelter should be fully outfitted and stocked to serve the Boulevard community and others in need during natural or man-made disasters. The developers/owners should be required to fund these ongoing services as long as their projects, which represent an ongoing significant and increased threat of fire, are operational in our rural low-income at-risk community.

Another mitigation measure should require that all new power lines be buried underground to reduce fire threats and visual resource impacts. Existing power lines should also be undergrounded.

Tule Wind and SDG&E should be contractually mandated to keep the public and private access roads in the McCain Valley, Jewel Valley, and elsewhere, that they will need to construct and access their projects, repaired and maintained--as long as their projects are in operation. McCain Valley Road nor Ribbonwood Road, and Jewel Valley road were never engineered or constructed to endure such heavy volumes of truck traffic with such excessive weight loads. Iberdrola has reportedly been sued over poor road maintenance related to another wind energy project.

The number of turbines should be significantly reduced in McCain Valley and moved much further away from the Wilderness and ACEA areas and the homes on McCain Valley Road and Ribbonwood Road and Lark Canyon OHV Park and the two campgrounds. Instead of installing turbines on the Hamann property, that land should be purchased for mitigation and placed in an ACEA or added to the adjacent Wilderness Areas. Other private land on the east side of McCain Valley should also be purchased and conserved in a manner that prevents future development of any kind.

All mitigation land purchased as mitigation for these projects should be required to be purchased within the same impacted areas. Purchasing property in another part of San Diego or Imperial County should not be allowed. The mitigation ratio should be at least 4:1

Property Value Protection Plans should be provided to impacted residents along McCain Valley Road, Ribbonwood Road, Jewel Valley Road and La Posta Truck Trail and Thing Valley.

Alternatives:

Energy Efficiency, Conservation & point of use generation

- Distributed Generation is the key to eliminating expensive and destructive large scale remote renewables and the extensive, expensive, and destructive transmission lines they rely on. Especially if those projects are slated for sensitive lands impacting intact habitat, endangered species, and rural low income communities.
- Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Representative Steve Cohen (D-TN) have introduced the 10 Million Solar Roofs and 10 Million Gallons of Solar Water Heating Act of 2010. This bill, modeled on California's Million Solar Roofs initiative, would deploy photovoltaic solar panels on 10 million rooftops nationwide and increase the capacity of solar hot water by 10 million gallons over the course of the next 10 years.
-
- December 2009 report by BerkeleyLaw/UCLA Law: In Our Own Backyards: How to Increase Renewable Energy Production on Big Buildings and Other Local Spaces. Contact Ethan Elkind at (510) 643-3701 or Eelkind@law.berkeley.edu or
-
- Distributed Generation article in NY Times: <http://greenline.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/02/04/a-boon-in-smaller-distributed-solar-projects/>
-
- More long-term local jobs will be created by investing in solar and other renewable energy projects on existing structures and already disturbed lands along with energy efficiency and energy conservation programs for government buildings and in low income urban and rural areas, including neighborhoods in Western Imperial County and South and East San Diego County. Retrofitting the many existing trailer homes in the rural areas with better insulation, cool roofing, dual pane windows, awnings and skirting would save a lot of excess energy required to heat and cool these modest homes while creating local jobs.
- A subsidized program to install solar PV panels, with transfer switches, on homes in impacted rural communities like, Boulevard, Jacumba, and Campo would increase reliability, help reduce energy costs, and reduce the potential for extended blackouts during SDG&E's proposed emergency power shut-offs during certain red flag wind events.
- The *San Diego Smart Energy 2020: The 21st Century Alternative* by Bill Powers of Powers Engineering, see <http://sdsmartenergy.org/smart.shtml>, was included in the record of the Sunrise Powerlink CPUC/BLM review process. *San Diego Smart Energy 2020* demonstrates an estimated 5,000 MW potential for in-basin retail/wholesale renewable energy.
- *San Diego Smart Energy 2020* and other public testimony throughout the CPUC's Sunrise Powerlink proceedings, and the resulting 11,000 page EIR/EIS, were the basis for the ALJ's proposed decision concluding that the Sunrise Powerlink was not needed and better cheaper, less destructive alternatives were available. The Sunrise Powerlink selected route ranked 4 out of 8 options.

- Ever-advancing technology and dropping prices make thin film PV even more cost competitive than just a few years ago when *San Diego Smart Energy 2020* was prepared. See Bill Power's scoping comments submitted on this current multi-project review with new lower PV costs.
- The USEPA in its comments on the Solar Energy Development PEIS (September 8, 2009) stated that wholesale and retail distributed generation deserves further consideration. It notes that an estimated 27,000 MW potential has been identified with small-scale projects near existing power substations throughout California. The EPA further states that distributed generation benefits include fewer environmental impacts than large scale projects, reducing generation costs through reduced line loss, reduced congestion, reduced peak demand loads, which enhance the efficiency, reliability and operational benefits of the distribution system and improve the overall security of our energy supply.
- The Department of Energy is advancing the Net-Zero Energy Commercial Building Initiative. See some examples, including the near zero Audubon Debs Park building at: http://www.1.eere.energy.gov/buildings/commercial_initiative/zero_energy_projects.html
- New Calgreen building codes require new energy efficiency. "CALGREEN will use the long-standing, successful enforcement infrastructure that the state has established to enforce its health, safety, fire, energy and structural building codes. Many of the mandatory provisions in the code are already part of the statewide building code, making verification of CALGREEN an easy transition for local building inspectors." (<http://gov.ca.gov/press-release/14186/>)
- The County of San Diego has plugged into the CaliforniaFIRST program to allow San Diegans to spread the cost of the rooftop solar electric systems over 20 years on the their property tax bill. The County also sponsored State legislation signed into law in October to compensate solar customers for surplus energy. The new County Operations Center will meet the US Green Building Council LEED standards. The County won the 2009 "Organizational Excellence Sandee" award from the California Center for Sustainable Energy beating out other regional governments.
- Solar PV panel systems can now be leased through several companies with or without upfront costs. Our research indicates that the cost for a 1,400 sq ft home (most of our rural homes are modest) and 20-year agreement with PV system maintenance included, would be approximately \$135 per month—with an option to buy the system outright. Organizations like One Block Off the Grid also offer ways for neighborhoods and communities to go solar at discounted prices.



- Landfill solar geomembrane covers like the one in the photo above from www.mswmanagement.com, can be installed on closed sections of landfills along with landfill gas-to-energy projects to generate renewable energy while reducing GHG emissions. These existing commercial sites generally have existing infrastructure. See <http://www.firestonesp.com/bmt/files/documents/A%20Solar%20Moment.pdf>
- Calpine Corp. is poised to build the first U.S. power plant with federal limits on greenhouse gas emissions in California after clearing a final regulatory hurdle. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District granted the Houston-based utility its final air quality permit, allowing the company to proceed with the planned construction of a 600-megawatt natural gas-fired Russell City Energy Center. The 15-acre project site is in Hayward, just east of the San Francisco Bay. See article at: <http://www.nytimes.com/gwire/2010/02/04/04greenwire-planned-calif-power-plant-would-be-nations-fir-73676.html>

Cumulative Impact Projects List:

Federal :

- BLM's Eastern San Diego County Resource Management Plan and 2008 ROD downgraded Visual Resource Management Classifications and opened up thousands of previously protected acres to development of industrial energy and mining operations. The BLM's controversial approval is under legal challenge.
- Sunrise Powerlink Final EIR/EIS & ROD is under legal challenge for violations of NEPA, CEQA, FLPMA, ESA, NHPA, APA.
- West Wide Energy Corridor approval impacts our BLM and Forest lands (under legal challenge)

- Kumeyaay Wind I: Approved by Bureau of Indian Affairs with a Finding of No Significant Impact (1-18-05) based on an Environmental Assessment only – no EIS. Noise, vibration and night light complaints from impacted off-reservation residents in the Boulevard neighborhoods of Ribbonwood Road and Tierra Heights. The project suffered recent unexplained catastrophic failure and extended outage which should be formally investigated.
- Kumeyaay Wind II & III: proposed 160-300 MW wind energy at Campo Reservation with SDG&E & Invenergy. This project should be included in this EIR/EIS scoping / review process. This linked article in the San Diego Union Tribune reports that the Campo Band has already received \$30 million in stimulus funds for their share of Kumeyaay Wind II--*without an EIS* or other studies on significant and cumulative impacts to the environment and surrounding communities and property owners: <http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2010/feb/12/tribes-lining-up-for-federal-stimulus-bonds/>
- Campo Nation's proposed Golden Acorn Casino Expansion EE 2007. A new hotel and other facilities are planned just southwest of the Kumeyaay Wind facility. No EIS is required due to the lack of a third party lease. The same UT article linked above states that the Campo Band wants to borrow money for an RV Park and sewage system upgrades which were previously included in the proposed Golden Acorn Casino Expansion.
- Campo Nation's proposed Campo Landfill (lease area 1,150 acres) in southeast corner of Campo Reservation. The original EIS and ROD were approved in early 1993 by Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt, but the project has never been built. The Draft Supplemental EIS for this project (started in 2003-4) was just announced by the Department of Interior. It was supposed to be published in the February 12 edition of the Federal Register but was delayed a week or so by inclement weather. The project website is listed as www.CampoDSEIS.com.
- Cleveland National Forest issued a January 2010 Categorical Exemption for Debenham Energy to install 3 wind energy testing MET Towers in Fred Canyon NW of La Posta Creek and La Posta Truck Trail. This is the precursor to industrial wind energy to be located just west of Tule Wind on the Ewiiapaiip tribal lands, near a known bat foraging area and Pacific Crest Trail.
- SDG&E's Master Permit EA for existing infrastructure is under review at the Cleveland National Forest. See the Cleveland National Forest (Descanso District) Schedule of Proposed Actions for an entire list of their projects at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/sopa/components/reports/sopa-110502-2010-01.htm>
- BLM: CACA 050485 & CACA 050636 wind energy applications in Eastern San Diego County, and other wind and solar projects are planned in Western Imperial County will transform an entire scenic corridor along I-8 to an industrial zone. See the California Desert BLM District Offices Renewable Energy Projects and Utility Corridors map.
- BLM's 2004 categorical exemption application for Iberdrola's MET towers in McCain Valley and pending application for several more in the McCain Valley area.

- BLM's FONSI for MET towers for Greenhunter wind in the Ocotillo area of western Imperial County will impact environmentally and culturally significant resources including Coyote Mountain Wilderness which is considered sacred to Native Americans. This project would also rely on Sunrise:
http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/ca/pdf/elcentro.nepa/2005.Par.11648.File.dat/FONS I_DR_EA_GreenHunter.pdf
- La Posta Casino started operation in 2007 on the La Posta Reservation, just west of existing Kumeyaay Wind facility; www.lapostacasino.com
- SES Solar Two project proposed for 6,500 plus acres of Limited Use BLM land in western Imperial Valley at I-8 and Dunaway Road. Bighorn sheep have been photographed onsite. The area is Flat-tailed Horned Lizard habitat it has significant cultural resources and recreational uses. The joint SA/DREIS was reportedly published in the February 12 Federal Register. See project site at: www.energy.gov/sitingcases/solartwo/documents/
- New Campo (La Posta) Border Patrol station, with heliport, built on BLM land on the edge of the La Posta Creek riparian area near the Sunrise Powerlink route at 32355 Old Hwy 80, Pine Valley http://www.cbp.gov/xp/egov/border_security/border_patrol/border_patrol_sectors/sandiego_sector_ca/stations/sandiego_campo.xml
- 32-acre Boulevard Border Patrol station proposed for residentially zoned land on Ribbonwood Road just north of I-8. Ribbonwood is the proposed access road for Tule Wind. One impacted lot is partially zoned commercial. Traffic, noise, groundwater, lighting, residential use conflict issues have been raised. Documents to be released in February. USCBP Contact: Charles Parsons, Environmental Program Manager 949-425-7081
- BLM / Navy: Environmental Assessment for the La Posta Mountain Warfare Training Facility expansion at La Posta Road Navy Seal facility. Previous expansion was approved several years ago. BLM land and perhaps some Forest land is involved in the same area that Sunrise Powerlink and will impact the Cameron Valley and surrounding areas.
- The US/Mexico Border fence was bulldozed through East County in final days of Bush administration with environmental waiver. The fence impacts the same cross-border Eastern San Diego areas that Sunrise Powerlink and ECO Substation impact.
- USFS's pending decision on the Sunrise Powerlink EIR/EIS and Forest Plan Amendment. See Cleveland National Forest SOPA with all pending projects at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/sopa/forest-level.php?110502>
- Campo Materials (existing sand mining and cement) located on Church Road, Campo Reservation. See Campo Kumeyaay Nation website at: <http://www.campo-nsn.gov/index.html>
- Manzanita tribal wind energy feasibility study for area near the Kumeyaay Wind facility : DE-FC36-02GO12111, A000

<http://www.osti.gov/bridge/purl.cover.jsp?sessionid=0741B112BCEFF42CF78B939CD76AA4DF?url=/841461-dlmoU5/webviewable/>

- Massive grading inside NE boundary of Manzanita Reservation for unapproved motocross park lands. Clear grading was stopped by BIA several years ago. Extensive damage.
- Massive brushing and grading for motocross track on Campo Reservation just north of I-8 and East of Canebrake Road. Noise and dust complaints from off-reservation residents from Ribbonwood Road area subdivision. If any environmental studies were conducted for this project, we are unaware of them.
- BLM EA: CA-670-2005-07 & CA-670-2005-14 Hamann Rights-Of-Way McCain Valley: CA-46624/CA-46660: Hamann Companies / family members reportedly misrepresented to the BLM and the County the need for ROW for residential use. Instead, they were working with Iberdrola and clear graded an area for sodar wind testing equipment without proper permits from County of San Diego. It is our understanding that a codes violation case was opened. Hamann Companies also apparently destroyed several old wood barns on their Rough Acres Ranch that were over 50 years old, including an old redwood barn that reportedly dated back to the late 1800's.
- BLM: Culver ROW; illegal grading for private access road near Sunrise Powerlink route and Tule Wind project footprint. Not sure of current status.

State:

- SDG&E Emergency Power Shut-off Plan (A-0812021) was denied but is still under review by the PUC. SDG&E proposes to shut-off power, during certain red flag weather events, to the same rural communities where they are proposing to install much more energy infrastructure. If the existing infrastructure poses such a fire threat in this high fire danger zone, why increase that threat and risk by installing more powerlines and industrial turbines which can spark wildfires? We have been advised that the energy will continue to run through our communities on the Sunrise Powerlink and Southwest Powerlink but will not run to our communities on the distribution lines.
- SDG&E wood to metal pole swap creates new visual impacts with much taller and more industrial looking metal poles which also have the potential to be upgraded to carry more lines in the future. SDG&E has already installed some metal poles in Jewel Valley and plan to install more along Historic Route 80 west of Tierra Del Sol Road. 34 poles is the number SDG&E provided upon our request for information.
- Zemer Energy Union Fenosa 1,000MW in Baja's La Rumorosa area (party status approved in December 2008 by PUC in Sunrise Powerlink CPCN case). RETI maps showed potential cross-border power lines to export energy to the US grid.

San Diego County:

- Big Country Ranch Specific Planning Area (SPA) located on 2,280 acres in McCain Valley at north end of Ribbonwood Road, currently owned by Lansing Companies. Greg Lansing has promoted plans for a master planned community named Rancho Milagros. A \$12 million wind energy development plan with SDG&E was also revealed in El Cajon Superior Court Case No. 37-2008-0006173. The old Big Country SPA has expired. Under the new General Plan Update, the area is designated at 1 dwelling unit per 80 acres to protect the rural character and reduce impacts on important resources. Tule Creek watershed and blue line stream run through the property.
- Rancho Finistierra 87- lot subdivision on 755 acres lies south of Old Hwy 80 in Miller Valley area just west of Golden Acorn Casino at I-8 and Crestwood Road. Previously known as Spring Mountain Ranch and Stage Coach Springs Ranch. TPM 4995-1. The project started construction around 2004-5. However, only a few houses have been built and word of water problems have circulated. Property includes a riparian area with a historic spring fed pond that served stage coach route. Wildlife corridors connecting parts of Campo and La Posta reservations, Cleveland National Forest, Sawtooth and Carrizo Wilderness Areas
- Jacumba Valley Ranch 2,100 homes proposed on 1,250 acres: Letters were sent to BLM from SunCal attorney William Schwartz protesting Eastern San Diego RMP (5-31-07 & 1-4-08) and Sunrise Powerlink. The Jacumba Valley Ranch proposed a green subdivision incorporating point of use energy production with energy efficiency and conservation aspects. Currently this area is prime agriculture land with prolific organic vegetable crops. Round Mountain, in the northwest corner is sacred to Native Americans.
- Star Ranch subdivision proposes 460 units on 2,150 acres on a historic Campo valley ranch. An even higher density promoted by the developer has been under review as part of the County's General Plan Update. The ranch is near Sunrise Powerlink route. Star Ranch includes wetlands, riparian areas, wildlife corridors, and Campo Creek. See maps and more details at: http://legacy.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20060413/news_6m13campo.html
<http://www.starrancho.com>
- Invenergy Wind's MET Tower application (# AD-0917) is located in a residential neighborhood for Tierra Del Sol Road, Boulevard, along the Tecate Divide.
- San Diego County's draft Ordinance Amending the Zoning Ordinance related to Solar power and Wind Power (POD 09-006) has the potential to open up more private lands for wind and solar energy projects. This is expected to go out for public review in late February. Project manager contact: carl.stiehl@sdcounty.ca.gov

There may be more projects than those listed above. Our time is limited and the lists are long.

Documents incorporated by reference:

BLM:

- November 11, 2005: BLM: Opposition to wind energy testing & development in East San Diego County
- October 6, 2007: BLM/CPUC RE: Sunrise Powerlink and Modified Route D Alternative
- May 31, 2007: Eastern San Diego County Draft Resource Management Plan and Draft EIS
- January 4, 2008: Letter to BLM protesting approval of the Eastern San Diego County Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final EIS dated November 2007.
- March 21, 2008: DOE PPA-334 for Baja Wind (Energia Sierra Juarez) comments
- August 25, 2008: Comments on the Sunrise Powerlink Recirculated DEIR/Supplemental DEIS & Request Recirculation of RDEIR/SDEIS Based On New And Significant Information
- August 27, 2008: (DOI/BLM # 4310-40) Objections to Significant Changes to FEIS/PRMP Eastern San Diego County And Response to PP-CA-ESD-08-05: BLM's response to Boulevard Planning Group's protest
- November 14, 2008: (DOI Control No. DES-07-58) Protest letter appealing BLM's proposed Land Use Plan Amendment to the Eastern San Diego Resource Management Plan and the selection of the Environmentally Superior Southern Route as their Preferred Alternative in the Sunrise Powerlink Project Final EIS/EIR
- November 14, 2008: Sunrise FEIR/EIS comments

CPUC:

- April 7, 2008: CPUC/BLM: Sunrise Powerlink DEIS comments
- August 18, 2008: CPUC RE: SUNRISE POWERLINK: SDG&E'S FAILURE TO DISCLOSE SIGNIFICANT NEW INFORMATION AND APPARENT CONFLICT OF INTEREST
- August 25, 2008: CPUC RE: Sunrise Recirculated EIS comments
- October 14, 2008: CPUC comments at fire hearing
- December 8, 2008: CPUC RE: SUNRISE POWERLINK DECISION: A06-08-010: SUPPORT FOR THE ALJs PROPOSED DECISION REJECTING THE PROJECT. REJECT TWO ALTERNATE PROPOSED DECISIONS.
- March 17, 2009: CPUC 08-011-05: OIR Comments made at public hearing on fire safety for electric utilities and communications infrastructure
- April 7, 2009: CPUC A.08-12-0212: SDG&E'S Proposed Proactive De-energization. Comments made at Public Participation Hearing Alpine Community Center
- September 4, 2009: CPUC Application No. 09-08-005:RE: SDG&E's ECO (Jacumba & Boulevard) Substation Request for full CEQA/NEPA EIR/EIS review and local hearings.
- September 8, 2009: Oppose: SDG&E Power Shut-Off Plan (A-0812021) It is discriminatory action against our low-income rural communities that are also being forced to bear an undue share of new energy infrastructure which represents new fire threats.

DOE:

- January 7, 2008: DOE / EIS 0386: Comment letter on the Programmatic EIS Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal land in the 11 western States

- March 21, 2008: OE Docket No. PP-334 comments: Application for Presidential Permit; Baja Wind US Transmission (AKA La Rumorosa Wind and Energia Sierra Juarez).
- September 3, 2008: Response to OE Docket NO-PP-334: Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment for Semptra Generation's Baja Wind, U.S. Transmission, LLC. & Request for a full Environmental Impact Statement.

Cleveland National Forest:

- September 11, 2009: Oppose: Wind energy MET tower proposal for Cleveland National Forest's Fred Canyon area.

County of San Diego:

- February 5, 2005: Board of Supervisors, 2-9-05 Agenda, Item # 13: 4995-1 Updated Groundwater Investigation and Water Well testing Report by John Peterson for Spring Mtn subdivision (Rancho Finis Tierra)
- February 20, 2007: Comments on County's Guidelines for Determining Significance and Report Format and Content Requirements for Groundwater Resources
- May 29, 2009: Request to San Diego County for public hearing for Invenergy LLC's MET tower application # AD 09-017 on Tierra Del Sol Road.

Other:

- February 23, 2006: Response to PPM Energy (now Iberdrola) letter regarding local stakeholder meetings for wind energy projects on BLM local land.
- September 9, 2009: Response/protest to US Border Patrol EA and FONSI for new Boulevard station.
- September 17, 2009: BIA: request for full EIS and local scoping hearings for Kumeyaay Wind II

Conclusion

Please take our well justified concerns to heart, regarding the unnecessary long-term significant impacts represented by these multiple industrial energy and transmission projects and other documented cumulative impacts to our low-income rural communities. The impacted human and natural communities, along with the general public good and public purse, are far better served by focusing attention and investments towards point of use energy production along with real energy efficiency and energy conservation efforts. This in turn will help protect important wildland and recreation resources for current and future generations of both people and wildlife. Real fair market Feed-In Tariffs are one of the fastest ways to spur point of use generation and provide added incentive to conserve energy so more is available to sell back to the grid.

Sincerely,

Donna Tisdale, Chair
619-766-4170

**Boulevard Planning Group
P.O. Box 1275
Boulevard, CA 91905**

Mrs. Ellen Russell
Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability
Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-0350

September 3, 2008
VIA E-MAIL

Response to OE Docket NO-PP-334: Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment for Sempra Generation's Baja Wind, U.S. Transmission, LLC. & Request for a full Environmental Impact Statement.

The Boulevard Planning Group is an elected advisory land use group serving the approximately 1,600 people who live in the rural Eastern San Diego County community of Boulevard, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, and various county agencies. At our regular meeting held on August 7, 2008, our group voted unanimously to submit this letter requesting a full EIS and addressing our serious concerns with the proposed project, and the numerous significant and cumulative impacts from other connected direct and indirect actions for multiple interconnected and related energy generation and transmission projects in our area. We also hereby submit and incorporate all previous comments submitted by our group to the DOE on this project. See attachments.

Project review is being improperly piecemealed

The proposed cross-border transmission project does not exist in a vacuum and cannot be treated as a singular, separate, unconnected action. Other projects with connected, related, direct, indirect, and/or cumulative impacts, and effects include the following:

1. Sempra Generation's proposed and highly controversial 1,250 MW Baja Wind/La Rumorosa Wind/Energia Sierra Juarez project, which has yet to complete environmental reviews or receive any permits from Mexican agencies SEMARNAT or CRE. It is important to note that this project is beyond review by local, state, or federal agencies on the US side.
2. Sempra's existing LNG line through project area leads to the reasonably foreseeable potential for gas-fired power plants to be built in the La Rumorosa/Jacume area and accessing the US grid via Sempra Generation's proposed cross-border transmission line. Again, the gas-line, and quality of gas, and emission standards is beyond review by local, state, and federal review on the US side unless and until it crosses north of the border.
3. SDG&E's existing 500kV Southwest Powerlink (SWPL). SDG&E, Sempra Generation, and CAISO report a remaining SWPL capacity of 80 MW. Others point to a Department of Water Resources contract expiring in 2011 that will free up to 1,200-1,600 MW of capacity.
4. SDG&E's proposed and highly controversial 500kV Sunrise Powerlink. This project is currently in the CPCN process and joint environmental review under California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The comment deadline on the recirculated DEIR/SEIS ended August 25, 2008. SDG&E, Sempra Generation, CAISO, and others say this new

line is needed to move energy from any project that exceeds 80 MW. Again, others disagree.

5. SDG&E's proposed and highly controversial 80 plus acre ECO Substation east of Jacumba, will need to undergo review by CPUC and San Diego County, and is needed to connect new energy generated at La Rumorosa (wind and/or "hot" gas) and/or highly controversial proposed wind energy generated on BLM land in Eastern San Diego County and/or Western Imperial County to SWPL, and then to the yet-to-be-approved and legally challenged Sunrise Powerlink. No application has yet been filed with CPUC for the ECO Substation.
6. SDG&E's proposed expansion of the Boulevard Substation from 1/4 acre to 3/4, onto private property, is reportedly needed to accommodate proposed and highly controversial wind energy generation on BLM land in Boulevard's McCain Valley. This is part of the ECO Substation proposal. No CPUC application filed.
7. SDG&E's proposed 14 miles of new 69 kV line between Boulevard and Jacumba including new and expanded easements up to 100' in width are needed to tie an expanded Boulevard Substation to SDG&E's proposed ECO Substation, then to SWPL, and then to the illusive Sunrise Powerlink. Again, this is part of the ECO Substation proposal. No CPUC application filed.
8. In late July, the BLM filed a Notice of Significant Changes for the Final EIS for the Eastern San Diego County Resource Management Plan, drastically downgrading Visual Resource Management Classifications and increasing the amount of wind energy access by over 13,000 acres just in Boulevard's McCain Valley Resource Conservation Area and National Land Cooperative alone. Added to the previously proposed 6,900 McCain Valley acres, the new total is 20,000 acres. Comment deadline ended August 27, 2008. This Planning Group and others are protesting the changes.
9. Another new substation and at least 7-10 more miles of new 69 kV line, on new and expanded easements, are needed to connect PPM Energy/Iberdrola Renewables' highly controversial proposed 200 MW wind project, on BLM land in Boulevard's McCain Valley, to the expanded Boulevard Substation. The proponent has not filed an amended Plan of Development with BLM, gone through the necessary NEPA/CEQA review process, or yet acquired the necessary access or easements for this new transmission line. The County of San Diego has determined that a Major Use Permit (MUP) will be required. No MUP application has been filed.

Recirculation of the revised Sunrise Powerlink DEIR/EIS document was based on CEQA/ NEPA requirements to address the new significant environmental impact; substantial increase in the severity of an environmental impact; and requirements to address significant new circumstances and environmental concerns related to "connected actions" analyzed in the Draft EIR/EIS. Sempra's expansion of their proposed Baja Wind/La Rumorosa project was the main trigger for recirculation. This alone is justification for a full EIS for the Presidential Permit Application for the proposed project. To see the Sunrise Powerlink documents, go to:

<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUC/hottopics/1Energy/A0512014.htm>

**A full and legitimate EIS/EIR is required by both NEPA and CEQA
Significant and cumulative bi-national negative impacts which need to be fully reviewed,
analyzed, addressed and mitigated, include but are not limited to the following:**

- Non-compliance with NEPA & CEQA

- Direct and indirect connected actions include multiple energy and transmission projects
- National Security / Acts of Terror
- Military and Homeland Security line of sight Radar
- US Customs and Border Patrol operations and radio communications
- Law Enforcement and Emergency Services radio communications
- Increased utility rates from heavily subsidized and intermittent wind energy and backup generation
- Public Interest
- Environmental Justice
- Community Character
- Non-compliance/conformance with local land use plan
- Non-compliance with local and state energy policies
- Introduction of industrialization and skylining of undeveloped landscape and ridgelines
- Visual Resources: high quality, geographically extensive, significant and uncluttered viewsheds
- Property values
- Noise
- Air quality / Green House Gas Emissions
- Groundwater and surface water
- Storm water runoff / erosion
- Health
- Tourism and tourism based businesses
- Recreational resources and experiences
- Growth inducement, for both energy and transmission projects, and related sprawl
- Grid reliability / Imperial Valley Substation is Achilles heel of multiple interconnections,
- Importation of power from generation sources that may not comply with state and federal law
- Reasonably foreseeable potential for “hot” gas-fired power plants to access new power line
- Cultural and Historical Resources
- Sacred indigenous sites / Table Mountain and more
- Condor reintroduction plan
- Bats & raptors
- Big Horn Sheep
- Quino Checkerspot Butterfly
- Designated Critical Habitat
- Binational wildlife corridors and habitat
- Binational ongoing conservation efforts for the Park to Parque
- Geographically extensive, significant, and uncluttered visual resources/viewsheds
- Anza Borrego State Park
- Wilderness Areas
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Multiple changes to project name and hearing dates obfuscate public scrutiny

The original name of the project as noted in the December 2007 Presidential Permit Application was *Baja Wind*. A packet handed to two members of our planning group (Tisdale& Parsons) on June 12, 2008 by Sempra Generation's Alberto Abreu, bore the title *La Rumorosa Wind Project*, now we are told the new name is *Energia Sierra Juarez*. It is difficult for interested parties and the public to keep track of, and comment on, a project when the name, and the project itself, keeps changing. The same is true for multiple hearing date changes. It was reported by a representative for the Highland Senior Center, where hearing was held, that the DOE first set a hearing date in March and never called to cancel it. After that so many more

dates were set and cancelled that they quit marking the dates on the calendar. The lack of timely communication regarding those changes is unsettling. The constant changing of names and hearing dates could be perceived as an attempt to evade or dilute legitimate public participation. Small rural communities do not have Sempra's budget or staff which makes it difficult to stay on top of all the changes and keep the community properly informed.

August 26th Jacumba DOE EA Scoping hearing: Issues and new information

We do want to express our appreciation for the DOE holding the EA public scoping hearing in the impacted community rather than downtown San Diego or Washington, DC. However, it was rather disappointing to see the degree to which DOE ran guard for Sempra. The obvious DOE defense of Sempra led one member of the public to directly ask if the DOE representative was acting as counsel for Sempra. Another citizen said he was lodging a formal complaint, on the record, that DOE has an improper relationship with Sempra and that improper communication was going on during the hearing—referring to when Sempra's Joe Rowley stepped up and whispered in DOE's Brian Mill's ear during the hearing, and other obvious interactions. It was also odd the way both two-hour hearings were broken up with long breaks in between public comment sessions. Some expressed concern that this was a well-known tactic used to distract folks and to diffuse the energy in the room by dividing the public up into separate little groups for individual, off-the-record conversations, and attempts to persuade them to support a completely undefined and questionable project.

Sempra's Joe Rowley did eventually answer some questions, on the record, after it became apparent that the lack of their participation was working against them. Sempra's communications guy, sitting next to Rowley had obviously carefully coached Rowley's weasel-worded statements. It is clear that one of the main issues: *Will there be gas-fired power at this location in the future?* is being ducked. Contracts, agreements, and presidential permits can and will be renegotiated and /or amended to accommodate any future change in plans.

New information: Sempra Generation's Alberto Abreu stated, on the record at both hearings that Sempra now has 314,000 acres under lease along the Sierra Juarez in Northern Baja. This vastly increased acreage represents the potential for vastly increased environmental and other impacts, including impacts to the US grid, and the potential for additional bi-national infrastructure and related and cumulative impacts, and needs to be addressed in a full EIS.

Public Interest rationale is exploited DOE / BLM are vastly understaffed /rely on proponents/conflict of interest

During research and review of this and other projects, and conversations with a variety of staff, it has become alarmingly apparent that the Department of Energy, the Bureau of Land Management, and other government agencies, are so overworked, understaffed, and underfunded, that they have become overly reliant on project proponents for much, if not all, of the technical, environmental, and legal review of their very own projects. This fox guarding the hen house approach seems to well serve the best interest of those who stand to gain financially while the public's best interest takes a very distant back seat. In our opinion, this not only represents a serious conflict of interest, it represents a failure on the part of our public agencies to protect, defend and uphold the public trust. The well entrenched "business as usual" is adverse to the public interest.

The failure to uphold the public trust and interest, in order to serve the demands of a foreign-owned proponent, was especially blatant in the July 2008 BLM Notice of Significant Changes to the Eastern San Diego County Resources Management Plan. By comparing the proponent's protest letter demanding the

unwarranted significant changes, it is obviously apparent to us that the proponent virtually wrote the self-serving changes and the BLM published them in Federal Register.

The Federal Register Notice for this project states that a Presidential permit may be issued after a finding that the proposed project is consistent with the public interest and after favorable recommendations from the US Departments of State and Defense. It further states that in determining consistency with the public interest, the DOE also considers environmental impacts of the proposed project under NEPA, determines the projects impacts on electric reliability, including adverse effects on the operation of the US power supply system, and other factors that DOE may find relevant to the public interest.

Failure to disclose two critical facts:

Sempra Pipeline and Storage's existing LNG line runs through project lease area and a new waterline is being installed.

Transmission+gas+water = gas-fired power plants

The proposed 1,250 wind energy project appears to be another green washed front to allow a much different and more controversial project to move forward under the radar. Sempra Generation withheld critical information, willfully or negligently, from the DOE and the public, thereby, creating the false impression that only wind energy would, or could, be generated at, and transferred from, the La Rumorosa/Jacume area. Sempra Generation failed to disclose that Sempra Pipelines & Storage's Gasoducto Bajanorte, the existing 30"- 140 mile long LNG pipeline, with the capacity to move 500 million cubic feet per day, crosses land leased, from Ejido Jacume, for their La Rumorosa /Baja Wind / Energia Sierra Juarez project. <http://www.semprapipelinesandstorage.com/bajaMap.html>, <http://www.gasducto-bajanorte.com/English/project.htm>

They also failed to disclose the fact that a new water pipe line (approximately 30-36") is currently being installed through the same area (see attached photo of water pipeline going in along Old Rt 2 in El Hongo). NEPA and CEQA requirements for a full discussion of the facts and any reasonably foreseeable direct and indirect consequences, in EIS/EIR documents. This type of new information triggered a recirculation of the Sunrise Powerlink DEIR/SEIS. Those same NEPA and CEQA requirements trigger the need for a full EIS/EIR for this project.

All three elements required for a new gas-fired power plant will be in place at La Rumorosa / Jacume; transmission, natural gas, and water. When you add a new cross-border transmission line and a new water line, to Sempra Energy's existing Gasoducto Bajanorte gas line, and Sempra Energy's brand new \$1 billion Energia Costa Azul LNG Facility on the coast south of Tijauna, the potential is clear. The 140-mile northern Baja LNG pipeline, is also reportedly undergoing an expansion and addition of a 45-mile spur to connect to the new Energia Costa Azul LNG receipt terminal, and looping and compression on the existing line. The combination of the above noted on-the-ground facts represents the reasonably foreseeable consequence of a gas-fired power plant at this site. This scenario is similar to Sempra Energy Resources' cross-border transmission line built to serve their 600-625 MW Termoelectricia de Mexicali, gas-fired power plant near Mexicali, Mexico, and Intergen's 750-900 MW gas fired power plant, which both connect to the Southwest Powerlink and the grid at the Imperial Valley Substation. We know that the DOE's approval of Presidential Permit Application for those cross-border powerlines, based on an inadequate EA, was successfully challenged. <http://www.power-technology.com/projects/mexicali/>

http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20080829/news_1b29lng.html

Increased reliance on expensive intermittent wind energy and importation of energy from out-of-country fails to justify project claims of public interest or grid reliability

Increasing reliance on importation of energy, wind or gas-fired, from Mexico, in a volatile and violent section of the US/Mexico border, does nothing to maintain reliability. Baja law enforcement officers have sought asylum in the US to escape the ongoing bloodshed.

The Mexican military has been installed to take charge of the border region due to entrenched, violent and well-organized and well-armed criminal cartels. Mexican law enforcement agents are given a choice to work with the cartels or die. It is routine to read about the discovery of drug/human smuggling tunnels, and decapitated and tortured bodies in the Northern Baja region. The violence and kidnappings has spilled over into the US. We live on the border and know this is not an issue to be taken lightly. We also know that the cartels and Mexican Mafia have infiltrated the border region and will not hesitate to smuggle in terrorists or hire out for acts of terror.

In the event of a leftist take-over or military coup, energy generation and transmission systems could be nationalized as has occurred in Venezuela under Chavez, and elsewhere.

Increasing reliance on intermittent wind energy, which requires backup generation of up to 90% of the name plate capacity, does nothing to maintain or increase reliability. It does however, provide a good excuse for Sempra Generation, or other Sempra relatives, to build gas-fired back up generation in the area.

Interconnecting all of the existing and proposed new generation and transmission projects to the same remote and vulnerable Imperial Valley Substation, again in the volatile US/Mexico border area, in an area subject to major earthquakes, significantly reduces overall reliability and fails the public interest test. Those projects include but are not limited to: the *existing* 500 kV Southwest Powerlink; Sempra Generation's 625 MW Termoelectricia De Mexicali power plant; Intergen's 750-1,000 MW La Rosita power plant (not sure how much is imported from Intergen) and the *proposed* 500 kV Sunrise Powerlink; Stirling Energy Systems 750-90 MW Solar Two; Sempra Generation's 1,250 MW Baja Wind/Energia Sierra Juarez; PPM Energy/Iberdrola Renewables 201 MW wind energy project on BLM land in Boulevard.

Increased reliance on intermittent, expensive, and imported wind energy will result in increased costs to rate and taxpayers

According to research conducted by WindAction.org, subsidies for wind dwarf most types of fuel at \$23.37 MWh, and due to their low rate of actual production (10-30% of nameplate capacity), they require up to a 90% backup from companion generation—usually natural gas. So, a 200 MW wind farm could require up to 180 MW of backup generation. Recent articles state that California has set a high Market Price Referent of around \$100/MWh and that has prices have been driven up. Analysts reported 2007 wind energy prices of \$85-100/ MWh. We have no doubt that Sempra will succeed in convincing the powers that be that their imported wind energy qualifies for full RPS, Green House Gas credits, and whatever else they ask for.

Sempra, and various subsidiaries, control the local gas market and will benefit from the need to provide gas-fired backup. Baja Wind/La Rumorosa/Energia Sierra Juarez will provide an excellent location for new gas-fired power with a new trans-border transmission line, an existing LNG line, and a new water line in the process of being installed. Sempra will benefit from all of the wind and gas energy revenue and SDG&E will benefit from all the new transmission infrastructure that will be needed to move that energy.

Wind energy is going for around \$100 /Mwh and represents increased costs for ratepayers: In the Sunrise Powerlink project CAISO'S Draft Preliminary Result's - Sunrise Economic Evaluation - Critical Assumptions Page 5 (per Aug 22 workshop handout) shows a RPS Value of 66 \$/MWh for wind which is far below California's Market Price Referral (MPR) which is around \$ 100 /MWh. This sets a high asking price for wind output regardless of what a project costs to build. A July 1, 2008 article (renewableenergyworld.com :Westward HO! US utilities scramble for wind) reported that: The increased pressure to comply with RPS mandates has created a volatile market which is putting upward pressure on wind prices. In 2006 levelized cost of wind was expected to be \$55-70/MWh. An analyst in Oregon stated that the delivered prices for wind power for 2007 ranged from \$85-\$100/MWh. California's RPS established a (MPR), of around \$100 /MWh, which is essentially the price below which utilities will likely be able to gain recovery from ratepayers. The MPR varies depending on the year a project comes on line and the project length. A spokeswoman for the California Energy Commission was quoted as saying the 2007 MPR ranged from \$92-111/MWh. This discrepancy, which represents significantly higher costs for wind energy, and the negative impact on ratepayers, appears not just a foreseeable consequence of a connected action, it is a new reality which we have asked to be addressed in another revised and recirculated Sunrise Powerlink DEIR/DEIS

Industrial scale wind energy also carries huge subsidies and tax benefits, including: Production Tax Credits, Advanced Depreciation, Investment Tax Credits ,the sale of Green House Gas credits, tax shelters, tax waivers, full RPS credit for less than full capacity production, a sale price of around \$100 per megawatt hour, plus the potential for the expense/cost of renewable energy, purchased to meet their mandated Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS), to be recovered from ratepayers. These benefits may provide even more largesse for companies, and /or their parent company and subsidiaries, when they own both generating capacity (including wind farms, and gas-fired back up generation for wind farms) and distribution operations as appears to be the case here with multiple Sempra entities. (California's 2007 Market Purchase Referent (MPR) ranged from \$92-111/Mwh (www.renewableenergyworld.com/rea/news/reworld/story?id=52691).

Other significant issues and questions

2007 tracked Condor flight along Sierra Juarez. The little town of El Condor near La Rumorosa was named for obvious reasons. Condors like to glide in the updrafts along the Sierra Juarez where the turbines are proposed. According to the linked article below, in April 2007, a tracked Condor, from the California Condor reintroduction program, flew along the Sierra Juarez project area and into Eastern San Diego County and back. The Condor was released in Baja in 2002.

http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20070408/news_1n8mexweek.html

How much acreage is really involved with Sempra Generation's proposal for up to 1,250 MW of industrial wind energy, 7,500 acres or 314,000 acres? If it is proposed for the approximately 7,500 acres as previously stated, it appears to either overstate the proposed installed capacity of the project or to

vastly understate the amount of acreage needed to accommodate a wind energy project of that size and scale. According to the California Energy Commission's "Overview of Wind Energy in California", the average wind farm requires 17 acres of land to produce one megawatt of electricity. If true, the 1,250 MW wind farm would require at least 21,250 acres, not the proposed 7,500 acres. If the project will be spread over the newly announced 314,000 acres under Sempra control, then this needs to be fully confirmed and analyzed in a EIS.

Where will the water come from? For turbine construction in La Rumorosa, the Sunrise Powerlink RDEIR/SEIS document states that about 6,000 gallons of water is needed for concrete for each turbine footing. While this issue is under Mexican jurisdiction, and should raise serious questions and concerns, there should be no manner of cross border water supply/transfer approved or allowed..

The 1,250 MW La Rumorosa Wind project is beyond US, California, and San Diego County regulation or control. Environmental studies are incomplete and lack approval from Mexican agencies SEMARNAT and CRE. At the June 12, 2008 meeting in Jacumba, Alberto Abreu, Director Project Development for Sempra Generation, and Kelly Prasser Regional Manager, Corporate & Community Relations, Sempra Energy, informed two Boulevard Planning Group members (D. Tisdale & B. Parsons) that they had nine anemometers in place and only one year of wind data for La Rumorosa, they are reportedly working with Mexican Ecology Institute on avian and bat surveys "in Mexico", they are trying to get the San Diego Zoo involved in Condor and Golden Eagle surveys, and they had not yet conducted micro-wave beam path study for radar impacts—which may end up reducing the number of turbines allowed. Radar impacts at Arborfield near the Heathrow airport recently resulted in a reduction of proposed turbines.

Phase I of La Rumorosa's proposed wind production was originally purchased by SCE and later withdrawn (8-4-08) after the Power Purchase Agreement was challenged by the CBD/Sierra Club in a letter to the CPUC (1-29-08), stating that the project appears likely to violate an international treaty, state, and federal environmental law. And yet, Sempra still displays the Southern California Edison (SCE) Power Purchase Agreement on their webpage.

<http://www.semprageneration.com/development.htm>

The Sempra PPA-334 application addendum (3-19-08) states that they have eliminated their initial activity described in their December 2007 application to install 10 MW of wind generation to be interconnected locally to the CFE electrical grid (Jacume project). Has Ejido Jacume been notified of this change, or would they be advised later that "the experimental turbines just didn't work out as we had planned—so no electricity for you".

Visual Resources / vast uncluttered vistas are treasured:

Residents and visitors alike, admire, enjoy and expect to continue to enjoy, our glorious sweeping and uncluttered vistas. There are numerous geographically extensive high quality visual resources and view sheds from the high points of Boulevard that straddle the Tecate Divide. The La Rumorosa project area of the Sierra Juarez is highly visible from many sections of Tierra Del Sol Road and general Tierra Del Sol area along the Tecate Divide, also from the Tierra Heights and Jewel Valley area of Boulevard. It is also highly visible from east bound Historic Route 80 as you crest the Tecate Divide at Tierra Del Sol Road, and from miles of I-8. Due to the extensive height of the turbines, in excess of 400 feet with blinking lights, they will also be visible from many parts of Anza Borrego State Park, Jacumba Wilderness Area, the Pacific Crest Trail, Table Mountain, Carrizo Gorge Canyon Wilderness Area, McCain Valley Resource Conservation Area, and from many other locations on both sides of the Sierra Juarez/In-Ko-Pah Mountains and from both sides of the US/Mexico border. These significant visual impacts and degradation of high quality view sheds become even more overwhelming when you add in the cumulative impacts from the increased wind energy access on

BLM lands in McCain Valley (PPM Energy/Iberdrola Renewables 200 MW Tule Wind Project), and on tribal and Ejido lands, and elsewhere. (See attached photos with panoramic views of the Sierra Juarez)

SDG&E's ECO Substation

The SDG&E project manager and the La Rumorosa representative have both stated, that the Jacumba/ECO Substation had been moved further to the west to avoid Big Horn Sheep Habitat, even though they expected USFW to move the BHS boundary to the north of I-8. After reading earlier testimony from Ester Rubin regarding BHS movement under and south of I-8, and knowing the pressure reportedly applied to various federal agencies, under the current administration, this raises concerns that undue pressure may have been applied to the USFW to benefit the proposed project. The area is also Quino Checkerspot Butterfly habitat and more.

The Sunrise Powerlink RDEIR/SEIS at Page 2-6: states that a 300,000 gallon water tank will be installed along with a fire-prevention system and hydrants. The entire San Diego backcountry is reliant on well water with no viable alternative or access to imported water. Where will that amount of water come from and how will it be delivered? If delivered by truck, have those additional vehicle trips/emissions been factored in? Emergency generators should be required to run on propane and not on diesel. There are also concerns with impacts on archeological, cultural, and historic resources, and on our dark skies. This area is one of the last dark sky areas in all of Southern California.

SDG&E Boulevard Substation demo, 14 miles of new 69 kV line and 100' easements, and a Wooden to Steel Pole project:

SDG&E's proposed ECO Substation includes 14 miles of new 69kV line between the ECO and Boulevard Substations, and expansion of the Boulevard Substation from 1/4 acre to 3/4 acre. This is yet another separate review by the CPUC and the County of San Diego. As of August 21, the SDG&E project manager, Darren Weim, stated they are close to having the Proponent's EA document ready and will attach it to Permit to Construct (PTC) application and file the package with the CPUC perhaps by September. S.D.G.&E has informed us that they will need a new 100' wide easement for the 69 kV line adjacent to SWPL. A majority of the segment running along the 12kV easement from Boulevard to SWPL will require also new right of way. The easements where they will over build the 12 kV with 69kV will need to be widened from around 30' to 100' to accommodate the transmission needs. Much of these impacts and intrusions will occur on private property. And those impacted property owners are not happy campers.

Previously undisclosed impacts from SDG&E's proposed Jacumba/ECO Substation and the recently disclosed demolition of their existing 1/4 acre Boulevard Substation to rebuild the new 3/4 acre Boulevard substation (to accommodate wind energy) will most likely result in a repeat of the 2005 situation when SDG&E's 69 kV line had to be recondored to accommodate the 50 MW Kumeyaay Wind Facility. Boulevard, Jacumba, and several tribal communities, were taken off-grid and placed on 2-3,000 HP diesel emergency generators approximately 2 months. (Boulevard Planning Group letter to SDG&E 3-16-05 & Meeting Minutes for 3-3-05). We suffered through repeat power outages, brown outs, and surges. Locals reported that they suffered damaged and lost equipment including well pumps, appliances, computers, an incubator and ostrich eggs. This time around, we want an independent monitor to record the power surges and brown outs so we have evidence to secure reimbursement from SDG&E for damaged equipment and other

losses.

The Sunrise Powerlink RDEIR/SEIS document wrongly states At page 2-24, 2-29, 2-50: that due to the substation expansion involving already developed land, no special status plants species have a potential to occur. According to the property owner whose property abuts the Boulevard Substation on the east, SDG&E made an offer to purchase her property for the substation expansion, reportedly stating they needed her property because the property to the northwest, originally proposed for the expansion, has some environmental issues that would prove problematic for them. As of August 22, SDG&E had not further pursued purchase of the property to the east. Neighbors have expressed alarm and concerns with extended disruptions and negative impacts from this proposed substation expansion new transmission lines, new and expanded right of ways, noise, light, dust, disruption of power, reduced property values health impacts and more.

SDG&E has also proposed a Wooden to Steel Pole project for their 69 kV line that runs west from the Boulevard Substation. While the project manager for the ECO Substation has stated the two projects are not related, yet, another SDG&E proposal to build a new substation in Jamul in addition to another Wooden to Steel Pole project there, has raised eyebrows. This new development may represent the initiation of a scenario put forward by SDG&E's Jim Avery at an April 28, 2006 meeting with myself (Donna Tisdale), Kelly Fuller, and Don Parent: *If Sunrise Powerlink is not built, SDG&E will have to upgrade two smaller transmission lines that connect Boulevard to San Diego. In 2003-4 the estimated cost was \$200-300 million dollars. On August 28th, Jim Avery confirmed in a phone conversation (w/Tisdale) that 200 MW of wind energy is needed to tap into the Southwest Powerlink. In 2003-4 the estimated cost was \$50-75 million. That \$50-75 million estimate does not include inflation related costs or include the new 10 miles or more of new 69 kV line from McCain Valley to the Boulevard Substation, or the private easements that need to be obtained and purchased by any wind energy developer.*

BLM Notice of Significant Changes/triples wind energy access & impacts:

The July 2008 BLM Notice of Significant changes for the Final EIS for their Proposed Resource Management Plan for Eastern San Diego County (DOI/BLM Notice # 4310-40, 7-28-08) significantly downgrades Visual Resource Management (VRM) Classifications in order to increase wind energy access from the previously proposed 6,900 acres to over 34,000 acres, including Lark Canyon OHV Park and Cottonwood Campground. PPM Energy /Iberdrola Renewables' proposed Plan of Development, for their Tule Wind project in McCain Valley Resource Conservation Area and National Land Cooperative, is currently being revised to address the significant increase in available acreage. The PPM Energy/Iberdrola wind energy project is the current reason for the proposed expansion of the Boulevard Substation and the 14 miles of new 69kV line to the Jacumba/ECO Substation. This does not include the new transmission line that will be needed to connect Tule Wind to Boulevard Substation. The tripling of wind energy access on BLM lands changes the dynamics of potential wind energy in the Boulevard/Crestwood area, including tribal projects, creating a multitude of cumulative negative impacts that need to be addressed in a full EIS.

Much of the ruggedly beautiful McCain Valley Resource Conservation Area and National Land Cooperative will be downgraded from VRM Class II to Class IV, which allows the most destruction and negative visual and other impacts possible, all at the request of one foreign energy corporation who is also the main beneficiary. The sole impetus for these new and significant changes is the January 2008 protest letter, from PPM Energy/Iberdrola Renewables, protesting that the proposed access to 6,900 acres of public land was not enough. While forcefully and greedily demanding more access, they failed to mention that they already have Right of Ways securing another 44,400 acres of BLM land, for wind and solar, within in the BLM's California Desert District, alone. How much public land and American taxpayer funded subsidies

and other benefits will our government give them? These unwarranted changes will result in a tripling of the already significant and cumulative impacts to our natural, cultural, and visual resources, to community character, and community disruption during construction and operation. The community of Boulevard, along with the tribal communities of Campo, La Posta, and Manzanita will bear the heaviest burden of these cumulative negative impacts.

Conclusion

The proposed project is so interconnected and intertwined with so many other projects that it cannot be considered a **stand alone** project. In fact, the proposed project is viewed by our group and others as a deceptively green-washed *driver* for approval of SDG&E's highly controversial and legally challenged Sunrise Powerlink project.

The significant and cumulative impacts from those multiple projects are staggering and far reaching. The proposed project does not by any means, or stretch of the imagination, meet any qualifications for approval with an EA. It is adverse to the public interest, energy reliability, energy costs, the environment, wildlife and more.

It is our strong opinion and belief that there is no way that the DOE can legally or ethically deny the increasing calls for a full Environmental Impact Statement for Sempra Generation's Presidential Permit Application for their 500 kV cross-border transmission line. All of the legitimate and significant issues raised by the CPUC in their Sunrise Powerlink RDEIR/SEIS, by our community planning group, by the County of San Diego, by the Center for Biological Diversity / Sierra Club and by many other citizens and interested parties, need to be fully and fairly reviewed, analyzed and addressed in a full EIS prior to any approvals for this controversial project or any of the other related and connected projects. We look forward to receiving the Notice of Intent to Prepare and EIS for this project.

Sincerely,

Donna Tisdale, Chair

CC: Interested parties

Attachments:

Photo of new Baja water line

Panoramic (1) photo/view of Sierra Juarez ridgeline from Old 80 and Tierra Del Sol in Boulevard

Panoramic (2) photo/view of Sierra Juarez ridgeline from Jewel Valley Way in Boulevard

Panoramic photo/view of snow covered Sierra Juarez ridgeline from McCain Valley

SDG&E draft map of ECO Substation and 14 miles of new 69 kV line to Boulevard Substation

BOULEVARD PLANNING GROUP
PO BOX 1272
BOULEVARD, CA 91905

Iain Fisher
CEQA Project Manager
CPUC Energy Division
Transmission & Environmental Planning
505 Van Ness Avenue, Room 4a
San Francisco, CA 94102-3298

September 4, 2009

**RE: SDG&E's ECO (Jacumba & Boulevard) Substation CPUC Application No. 09-08-003:
Request for full CEQA/NEPA EIR/EIS review and local hearings.**

Dear Mr. Fisher,

At our regular public meeting held on September 3rd, our community planning group (advisory to San Diego County) voted unanimously to formally request a full EIR/EIS for SDG&E's ECO Substation project, which includes a major expansion of our Boulevard Substation and much more. SDG&E's proposed "expedited ex-parte" approval for this controversial project is unjustified. With multiple related and interconnected wind energy and transmission projects—in two countries—the staggering significant and cumulative impacts to several rural low-income communities (including Mexican ejidos) demand a full CEQA/NEPA EIR/EIS review process with public hearings held in the impacted communities. Boulevard and Jacumba are the most impacted US communities.

Two SDG&E representatives, Don Parent and Alan Dusi (current ECO project manager), were present at last night's meeting. Campo tribal Chair, Monique La Chappa was also there to answer questions on their proposed 160 MW wind energy project, in partnership with SDG&E and Invenergy Wind, which will also connect to the ECO Substation. New and upgraded lines and another substation will be needed for the new Campo project. In response to questions, Chairwoman La Chappa was adamant that the ECO Substation is not connected to Sunrise Powerlink. Don Parent and Alan Dusi also took that position.

However, the Planning Group pointed out that the EIR/EIS for Sunrise Powerlink stated that the two were connected actions as is Sempra's Energia Sierra Juarez binational wind energy /transmission project. When asked if SDG&E had disclosed the ECO / Sunrise connection to Chairwoman La Chappa, prior to her signing the requested support letter, Mr. Parent said it was not his place to so, further stating that she should have known. The Campo Band opposed the Sunrise Powerlink. When later asked if SDG&E had offered the alternative to connect the new tribal wind project directly to the existing Southwest Powerlink that crosses tribal lands on their southern boundary, rather than at the ECO Substation, she stated that the issue had not really been discussed.

When asked why the ECO PEA does not show or refer to the Sunrise Powerlink or Sierra Juarez infrastructure and turbines, the SDG&E response was that those projects were not approved when the ECO project was started. We pointed out that Sunrise was approved over 8 months ago and the

Sierra Juarez scoping documents show visual simulations of turbine locations on the Sierra Juarez ridgeline adjacent to the ECO Substation location. There was more than enough time to update the PEA prior to release.

For now, all we know about the new Campo wind project is that 5-6 MET towers were recently installed, without apparent notice, and that approximately 80 industrial turbines are planned. The regional office of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is conducting an EA. One non-profit group has already sent a written request to the Area BIA office requesting a full EIS/EIR and our planning group voted to do the same. The existing 50 MW Kumeyaay Wind project, on Campo tribal land, has resulted in noise and other complaints from off-reservation neighbors and has suffered the shattering and shedding of a good portion of one giant blade adjacent to I-8. Our community was also taken off-grid during the almost 2-month reconductoring process to accommodate the transmission of Kumeyaay Wind. We suffered brown-outs, surges, and numerous outages during that time. Several locals complained of damages to sensitive equipment and appliances to no avail. We expect to suffer the same fate with the new projects.

Our group received one hard copy of the PEA on August 27th which did not allow much time for review and drafting comments prior to our regular monthly meeting on September 3rd. Concerns were expressed by members of the public and impacted property owners with the apparent lack of documents made available for review at the local Jacumba Library or elsewhere. Many of our rural residents still have dial up internet service, or none at all, so the online PEA was not readily available.

The following are the initial comments that were approved at our 9/3 meeting:

1.1 Project Components:

1. The connection of this project to the Sunrise Powerlink via the Southwest Powerlink (SWPL) is a glaring omission.
2. The 600% expansion of the Boulevard Substation from 1/4 acre to 2 acres on residential zoned property is downplayed
3. A list and map of the proposed wind energy projects and analyses of their impacts is absent.

1.2 Project Location:

4. The names of the most impacted rural low-income communities, Boulevard and Jacumba is left out of this section. Why?

1.3 Project Need and Alternatives:

5. The ECO Substation application is premature. Full disclosure information on the location and significant and cumulative impacts of the proposed wind generation projects.

including binational impacts, that the need for this project is reportedly based on are not made available.

6. The planned project expansion with five 500kV bays, nine 230 kV bays (pages 3-22 to 3-13) represents the foreseeable need for additional transmission lines that must be addressed.

7. Alternative renewable energy projects at or near the point of use, such as SCE's 500 MW commercial PV project, would eliminated the professed need for this project, are absent.

8. The limited alternatives reportedly considered and rejected are not made clear or supported.

1.4 Agency Coordination:

9. The status of the BLM Right of Way process is not made clear in this document. What about the joint CEQA/ NEPA review process

10. Page 1-2 notes that Section 7 consultations with USFW under the Endangered Species Act have not been conducted. Peninsular Big Horn Sheep have been recently documented west of Jacumba where the project also crosses Quino Checkerspot Butterfly Critical Habitat

11. It is our understanding that members of local Native American tribes have been belatedly hired by SDG&E for the Sunrise Powerlink project. Word is filtering back that they are finding major problems with SDG&E's work. What is the status of review from impacted tribes for the proposed project? Pre-approval consultation and review for this project is also necessary.

12. Was the tribal Campo Executive Committee fully informed of the proposed projects connection to the controversial Sunrise Powerlink project that they refused to allow to cross their lands, prior to their submitting a letter of support? Or was this inconvenient detail omitted.

13. The Boulevard Planning Group has received notification for the MOU scoping for Sempra's Energia Sierra Juarez, but nothing for the ECO Substation project which impacts property under County authority in both the Boulevard. Planning Area. and the Jacumba Planning Area

14. The residential property purchased from Mary Schoepfer for the new 2 acre Boulevard Substation is zoned S92-General Rural which requires a Major Use Impact Permit (MUP) from the County of San Diego. SDG&E's proposed changes at the White Star Communications facility rebuild, which appears to include a back up generator, will require also require a MUP.

15. The almost 500 acres that SDG&E proposes to purchase in Jacumba is also zoned for low-density residential land use and will need a MUP as noted above. This is a lot of land that could be turned into one giant substation facility as stated in expansion plans. We believe this land was targeted by the County for conservation in their Multiple Species Conservation Plan.

1.5 Proponents Environmental Assessment (PEA) Contents:

16. Where are the exact wind generation locations that allegedly require gen-ties and this proposed "hub"?
17. Figure 3-9 states that "Map of Existing and Proposed system has been omitted from this document due to its confidential nature". What??
18. Where are the environmental reviews for the related wind energy projects, including the length and routes of the various alleged gen-tie lines?
19. What are the cumulative and significant impacts from those multiple projects?
20. What are the alternatives such as the SDG&E/ Invenenergy/Campo tribal wind proposal to connect to the SWPL where it crosses the southern boundary of Campo tribal lands?
21. (Footnote 2 page 1-3) There is no enforceable mechanism to ensure SDG&E's voluntary public commitment to serve 33 % of their load from renewable energy by 2020.

Connected Actions:

22. CEQA mandates that an EIR identify and analyze all significant adverse effects of a project. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21100; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15126.)
23. SDG&E's application fails to fully and adequately describe the whole of the project and the combined impacts from the connected actions.
24. The Application does acknowledge that Sempra's Energia Sierra Juarez (ESJ) cross-border 500 kV transmission line and 1,250 MW wind energy proposal *is a connected action*.
25. The Sunrise Powerlink FEIR/EIS found that Sempra's Presidential Permit Application for their "La Rumorosa Wind" (now known as ESJ) project and the proposed "Jacumba" and "Boulevard" Substations (now the ECO Substation) are "but for" *connected actions*. Sempra's Baja wind project is considered an Indirect Effect because it is out of the country. See Sunrise FEIR/EIS Figure ES-1.
26. The Presidential Permit Application for Sempra's ESJ project states unequivocally

that *Sunrise Powerlink*, or other new transmission (none is proposed), is needed to move any new energy out of the ESJ / ECO Substation area. See www.ESJprojectEIS.org

27. For the reasons noted above, and more, the ECO/Boulevard Substation project is therefore a connected action to the Sunrise Powerlink along with *all* the wind energy projects that are proposed to connect to through the two substations along with the multiple new 138 kV lines—not just the ESJ project.

28. All of these interrelated and interconnected wind and transmission infrastructure projects need to be analyzed as a whole to address the significant and cumulative impacts they represent to the impacted communities and nature.

29. The majority of these projects are concentrated between Boulevard and Jacumba / Jacume. Leaving these low-income rural communities with an undue share of the burden and impacts, raising environmental justice issues.

30. Sempra's existing Bajanorte Gasducto LNG line and a new water line run through their ESJ lease area. With a new cross-border 500 kV line as proposed for their ESJ project, they will have all the necessary ingredients for a new gas-fired power plant at the border on the Baja side: gas, water, transmission.

31. The reasonably foreseeable potential for gas fired power plant on Sempra's ESJ lease area, with increased GHG emissions is completely ignored.

32. Sempra has stated that when the wind doesn't blow and the sun doesn't shine, backup generation is needed. They see natural gas (LNG) as the go to option in the decades to come. They have invested billions in their LNG infrastructure in Baja including their Energia Costa Azul LNG receipt terminal near Ensenada.

33. The approval of the Sunrise Powerlink is the subject of multiple appeals / suits at the state and federal level and none of the proposed wind energy projects have completed the required dual NEPA/ CEQA review process. There is no assurance that any of them will pass that much scrutinized review and /or the legal challenges to follow.

Water:

34. Groundwater is proposed to be used at this site or water imported from IID in Imperial Valley. Which is it? IID water is generally very high in salts which could be problematic if a spill occurred. A 15 x 30 120,000 gallon water tank is also proposed.

35. 30 million gallons of water is projected for construction of the project (page3-53) which represents a lot of water for a desert environment if groundwater is uses. How much will be needed to operate the facility at the proposed and expanded stages?

36. A maximum amount of almost 570,000 gallons of oil for transformers is proposed to be used on-site (page 3-21). Leaks and spills can cause significant contamination of priceless groundwater resources. Especially for surrounding private property owners. Fractured rock aquifers are notoriously difficult if not impossible to remediate. Contamination can be carried off-site via a high-flow fracture at unknown rates and in unknown directions

37. In the event groundwater is used, what about draw down impacts to neighboring private property and public lands. How will the use and impacts be monitored and remediated? What enforcement measures are available?

38. Rural residential land has already been subdivided in the immediate area. What is vacant now may become a residence with the necessary water well.

39. Will any springs or seeps in the area, that endangered species, such as peninsular big horn sheep and others rely on for survival, be impacted by project related drawn down of groundwater levels in this area of highly fractured bedrock?

Soil:

40. Undisturbed desert soil and native cover reportedly act to sequester carbon on a par with forested lands. What are the impacts to the carbon sink attributes of the project site as represented by the proposed project and connected actions?

41. An estimated 140,000 cubic yards of soil may be imported to fill the project site. Will the imported soil contain invasive plants and seeds? How will that be monitored and mitigated?

Noise:

42. The introduction of industrial noise levels for construction, operation, and maintenance for this and all connected projects will be significant and cumulative. This will generate negative impacts to adjacent property owners and endangered and sensitive species who occupy and pass through the area, including big horn sheep, golden eagles, and reintroduced condors, and more.

43. Rural noise levels are generally lower than those in urban and suburban areas especially at night and sound carries further in our high desert air.

44. Construction at the Boulevard Substation could reportedly be ongoing for up to 12 hours per day for one year.

45. Impacts to recreation will also occur in adjacent areas.

46. Legitimate third party ambient noise levels should be taken prior to approval / construction to ensure the enforce ability of noise level mitigation requirements

Fire threat:

47. The increase fire threat and impacts, from the proposed and related projects, to our fire department and our human and natural communities needs to be addressed. Those projects include but are not limited to: The Sunrise Powerlink; hundreds of 40-60 story tall wind turbines at multiple locations, multiple transmission lines and substations for each wind project including the Energia Sierra Juarez 500 kV line, the newly proposed Boulevard Border Patrol station for 250 agents with detention facility, and SDG&E's existing Southwest Powerlink and poorly maintained 69 kV lines, and the existing Kumeyaay Wind facility—which has already thrown at least one turbine blade.
48. All new transmission lines and other infrastructure should be placed underground to avoid increased fire risk in fireprone backcountry areas with inadequate fire protection

Visual & Dark Sky resources:

49. Lack of full disclosure: The maps and photo simulations in this project document purposefully, irresponsibly, and inexplicably left out all of the proposed Sunrise Powerlink infrastructure and the 400-600 foot tall industrial turbines that will be skylined behind the ECO Substation, and more. When added to the existing Southwest Powerlink (SWPL), the proposed project substations and new transmission lines, all in the same corridor, and multiple turbine projects, the impacts are staggering for our rural communities, public lands, and private properties.
50. The scattering of the landscape by massive brush removal and grading is vastly understated. The newly graded areas show up starkly light against the darker brush cover and undisturbed soil and rock outcroppings. The visual impact is significant and highly visible from both close and afar.
51. Introduction and/or massive expansion of major impact industrial projects, with industrial scale lighting, new 2,900 foot by 30 foot roads, pads, 120,000 gallon water tanks and high barbed wire topped security fencing in a scenic rural area, along scenic and historic roadways, is a devastating travesty to local communities and the small businesses that rely on a tourist/recreation based economy—including the nearby Desert View Tower and the Jacumba Hot Springs Spa.
52. Excessive lighting will have a significant impact on our prized dark skies. Fifty 300-watt tungsten-quartz lamps used for 'security and safety' will significantly degrade our dark sky resources in one of the last dark sky areas left in Southern California
53. When added to the blinking red night lights and flashing strobe lights on the connected action turbine projects, proposed for virtually every highly visible ridge/line in our open landscape area, the impacts are significant and cumulative.

Security & reliability:

54. The brightly lit facility will also serve as a beacon for illegal trafficking of drugs and immigrant through the area.
55. How reliable is it to import power from Mexico? What happens in the event of an overthrow of the government or terror attack on the generation and grid infrastructure by domestic and /or foreign operatives. Drug cartel kidnappings and ransom demands are a also a regular occurrence on the Baja side in our border region. They are reportedly moving into oil theft from Pemex and threats to infrastructure and could present a threat to our energy infrastructure in remote areas.

Property & Conservation Values:

56. There will be negative impacts not only to the remaining 94 acre portion of the properties purchased for the ECO Substation (pag 3-38) but to those immediately surrounding the proposed project locations and transmission routes, any the many properties that will view the significantly increased industrial infrastructure in our rural open space areas.
57. There will be negative impacts to the conserved and protected properties in the area, and those properties that may have been targeted for conservation and protection that will be impacted. One such property is the Jacumba-Eade property purchased in January 08 by The Nature Conservancy for inclusion into the Anza Borrego State
58. The County of San Diego has also targeted some of the impacted and surrounding lands for conservation in their East County Multiple Species Conservation Plan
59. The BLM and other federal and state agencies have also participated in the Las Californias Binational Conservation Initiative which has scientifically ID'd the impacted areas as part of one of only five globally significant biological hot spots with critical habitat and cross-border wildlife corridors that need protection. Conservationists refer to our richly diverse ~~transitional~~ (desert-mountains-coast) area as Mediterranean Mosaic.
60. The ECO Substation along with the Sunrise Powerlink, proposed wind projects and all the new and expanded infrastructure that go with those projects represent significant and cumulative impacts to the proposed Sierra Juarez and La Posta linkages, including the Parque to Park proposal to connect Anza Borrego Park (and Jacumba property purchased for the Park) with Baja's Parque Nacional Constitucion de 1857 and the Parque Nacional San Pedro Martir.

Economic:

61. Local tourism and recreation are a major source of income for our local businesses.

The transformation of the area from open and accessible lands and landscapes will be significantly degraded resulting in cumulative negative impacts to low-income rural communities. Many of our businesses, which provide services to local residents and visitors, are hanging by a thread and will not withstand further loss of business resulting from a reduction to their customer base.

62. Negative impacts to surrounding property values.

63. Most jobs created will go to folks from out of the area. Any benefits will be fleeting in comparison to the permanent negative impacts.

Mitigation:

64. CEQA requires that mitigation measures must be "fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other measures" so "that feasible mitigation measures will actually be implemented as a condition of development."

65. SDG&E's proposed *Community Enhancement Program* to mitigate project impacts should be done prior to the approval of any project. The same should have been done for Sunrise Powerlink. The PUC collected over a million dollars in fines for SDG&E misrepresenting the southern route but none of that money was designated as mitigation for the impacted human and natural communities.

66. We have enough unanalyzed and unmitigated significant and cumulative impacts from the Sunrise Powerlink and proposed wind farms—without adding this project. Any mitigation measures for environmental and community impacts should be fully enforceable as noted above.

Project Support Letters:

67. SDG&E, and their parent company Sempra, both have teams of PR reps and cheerleaders that get paid to run all over the county and state to drum up support for their projects. They also have an apparently endless budget and funding for supporters' pet projects and campaign funds, through the Sempra Foundation and other contributions, to rally supporters to their side. Our rural low-income communities cannot compete on that level which puts us at a major disadvantage and trying to play catch-up.

68. The support letters display a cast of the usual suspects that appear to blindly sign on to whatever SDG&E / Sempra ask them to. They are not part the impacted community or involved in local planning issues. They have no idea of the significant and cumulative impacts these multiple projects represent. Nor do they appear to care how their actions impact our rural and natural communities.

69. Please note that some support letters do not actually declare support—they simply

thank SDG&E for the information and ask to be kept in the loop.

70. Other than the Campo Executive Committee (Campo Band) support letter, none of the signers actually live in the impacted area.

71. We believe that SDG&E did not properly disclose to the Campo Ex Com that the Substation is a connected action to the Sunrise Powerlink which they prevented from crossing their lands—or that an alternative existed for the gen-tie for their wind energy proposal in partnership with SDG& E and Invenergy where the existing SWPL crosses the southern section of Campo tribal land.

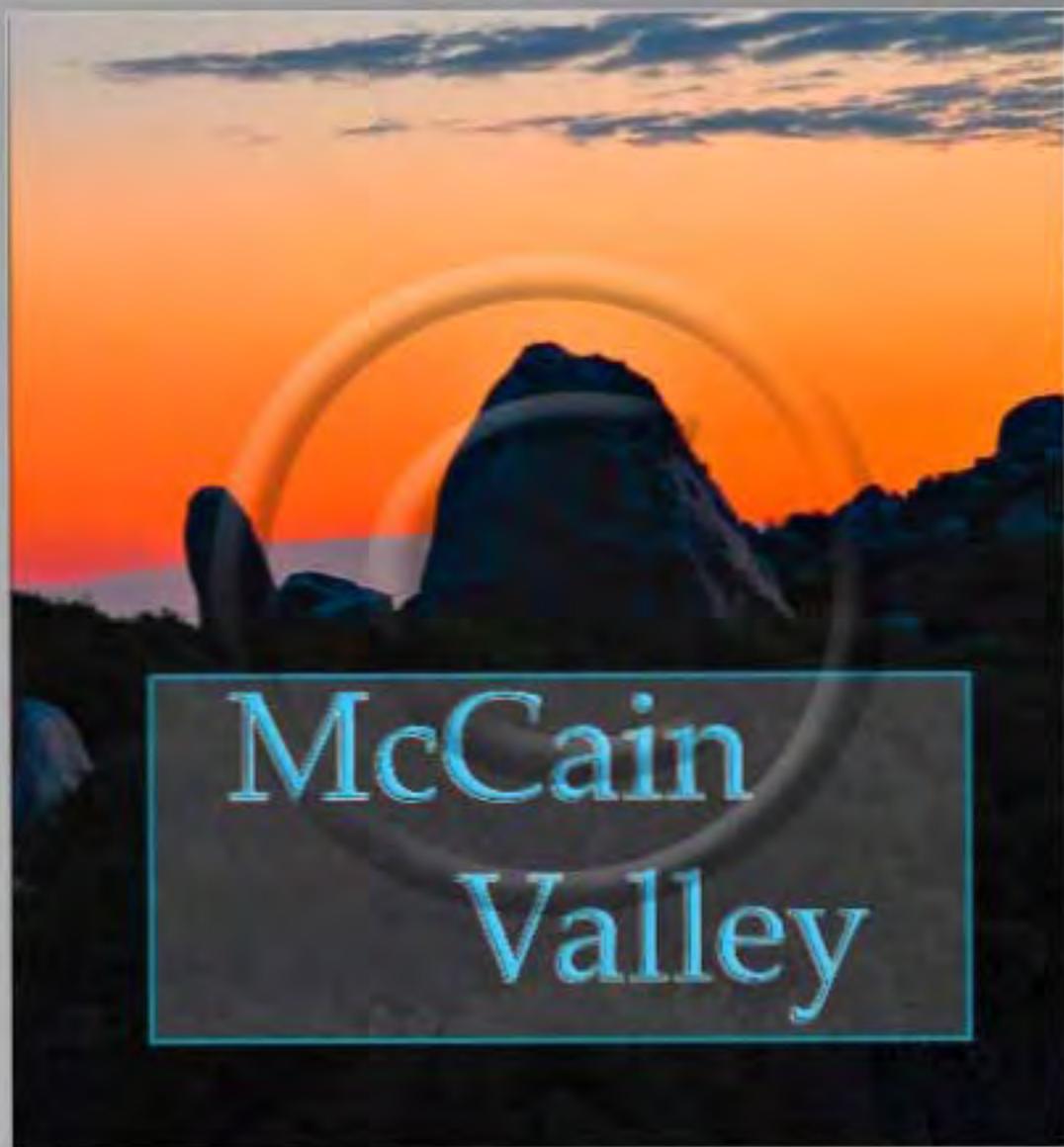
72. Hamann Companies is an absentee Boulevard land owner, that purchased an old cattle ranch several years ago with development goals for planned communities in our drought stricken groundwater dependent area which has no major water or sewer district.

73. Michael Stevens of the Stevens Planning Group has, and probably still does, work as a consultant to several absentee developers who have purchased historic ranch properties in the Boulevard area for speculative master planned and other project. His support is biased.

Please add us to the serve list for any and all communications and documents regarding this and related projects. Contact me at 619-766-4170 or donnatisdale@hughes.net if you have any questions. We look forward to your positive response to our requests for a joint CEQA/NEPA review for this project and the related / connected projects.

Sincerely,

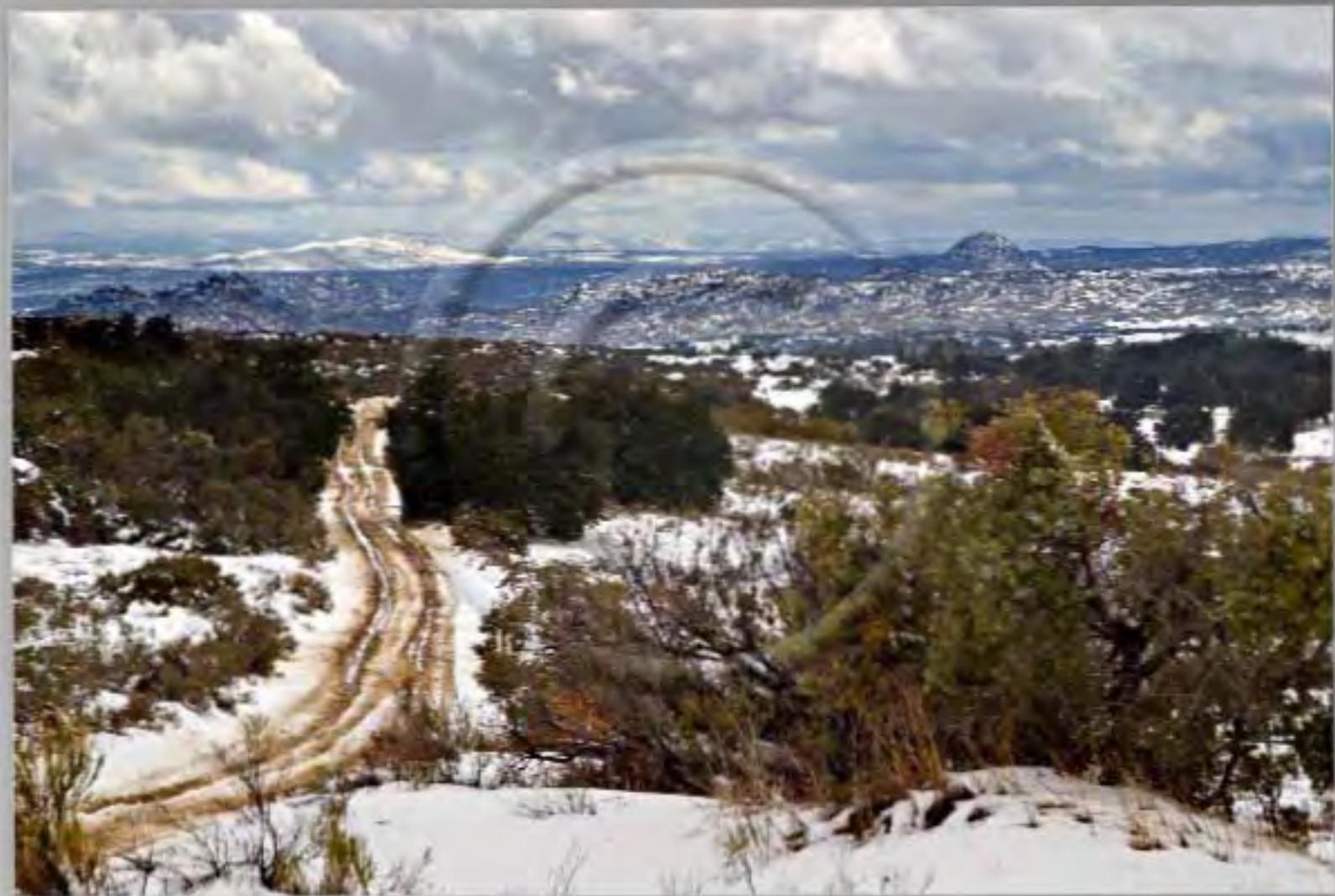
Donna Tisdale, Chair



McCain
Valley









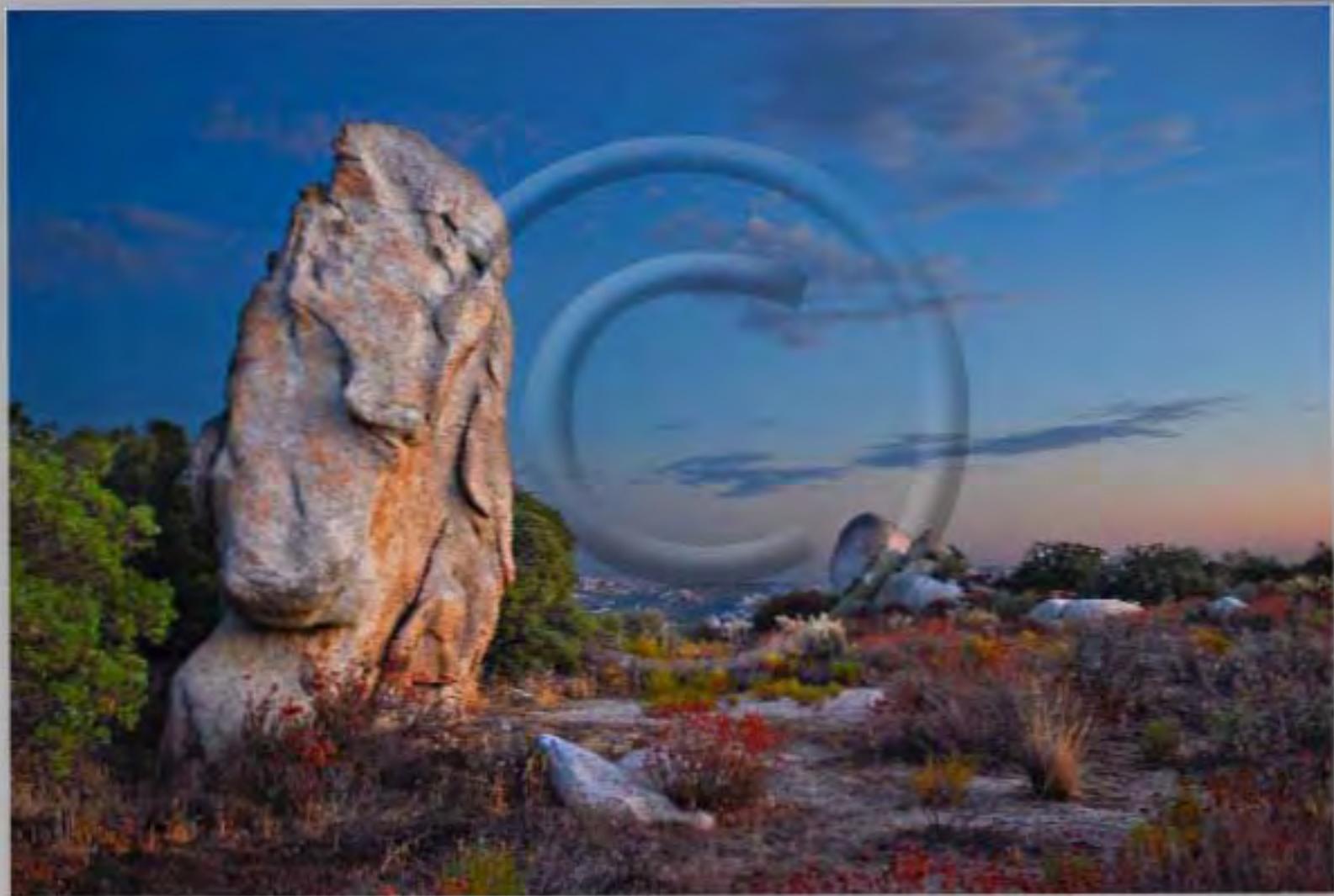


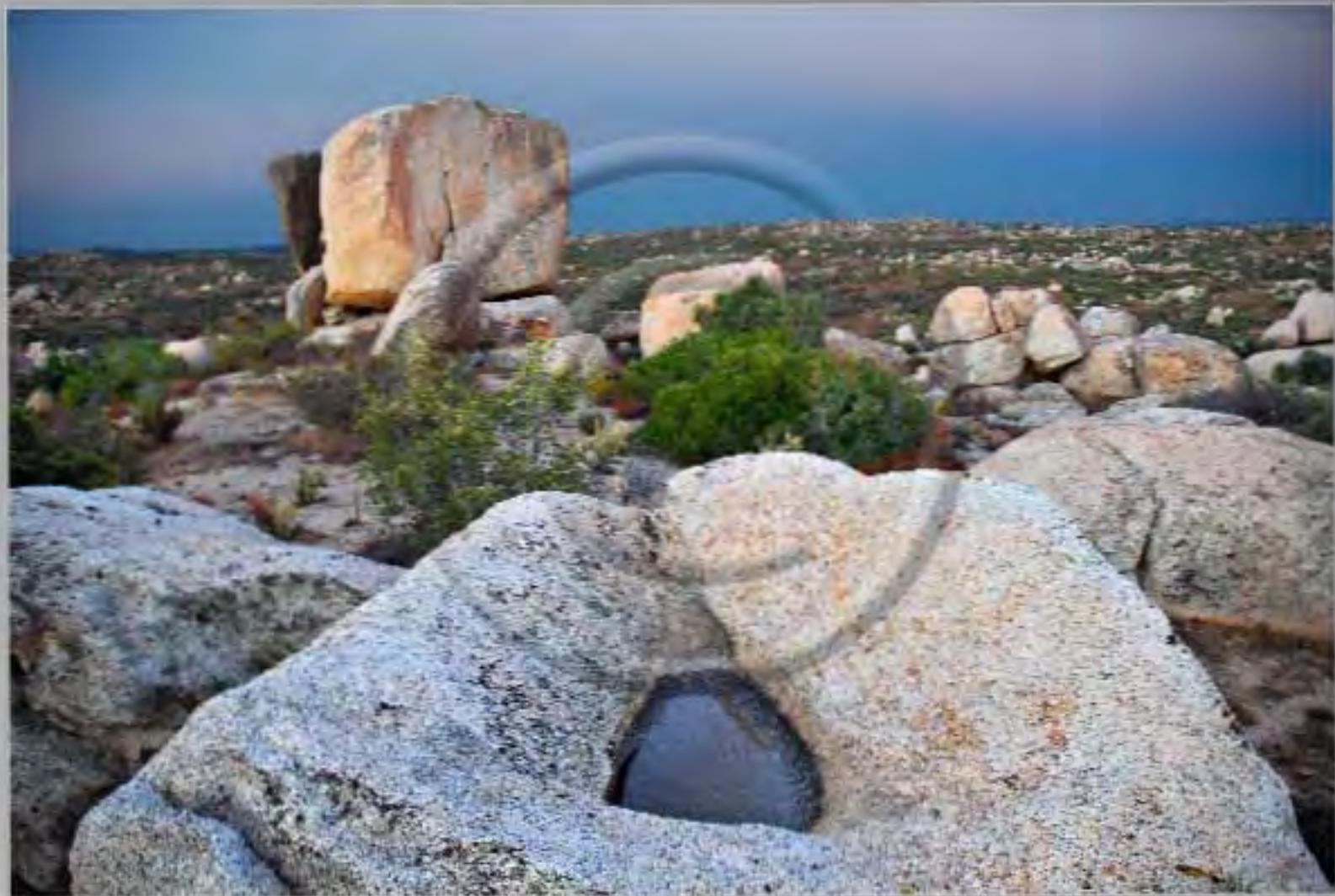












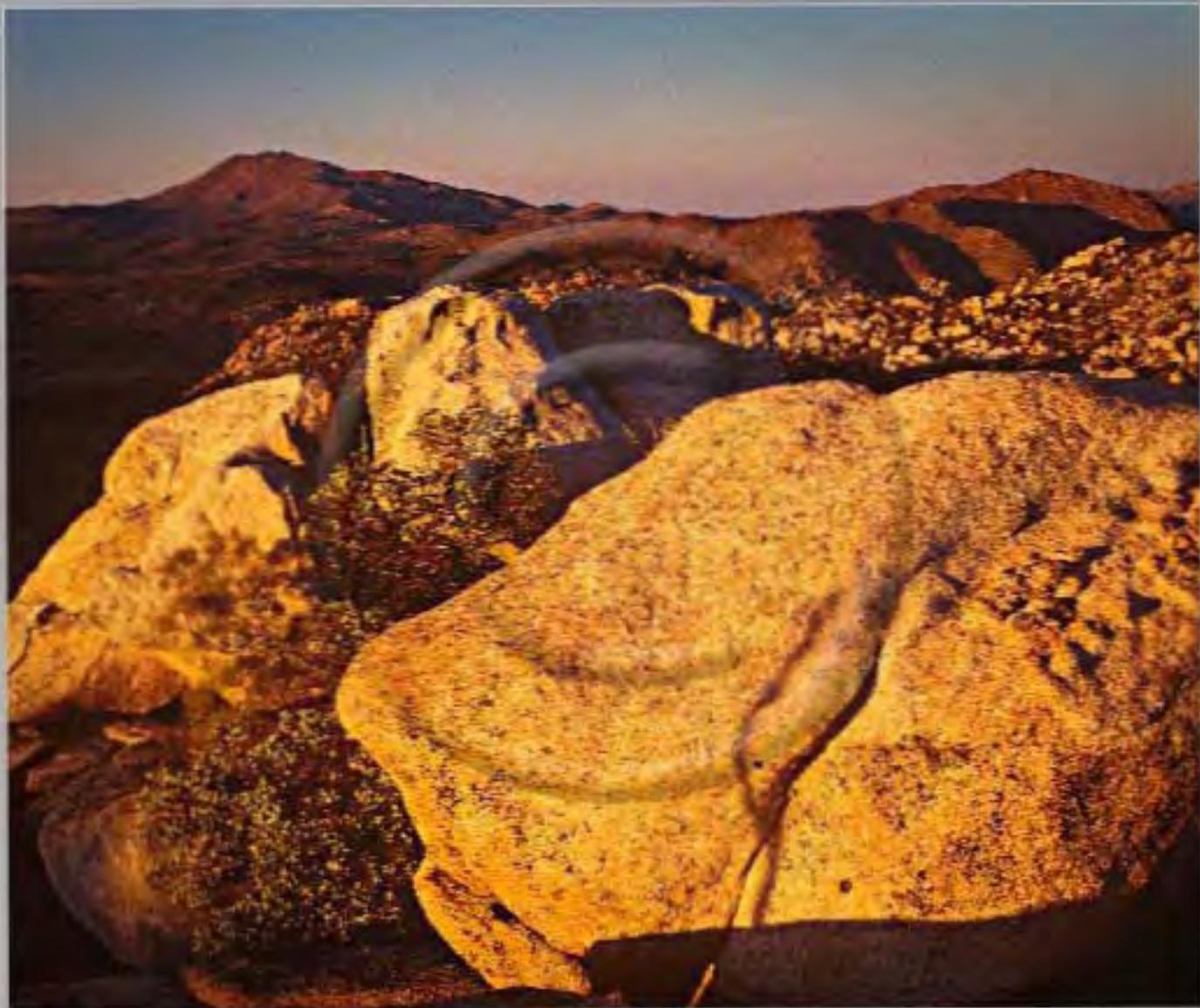




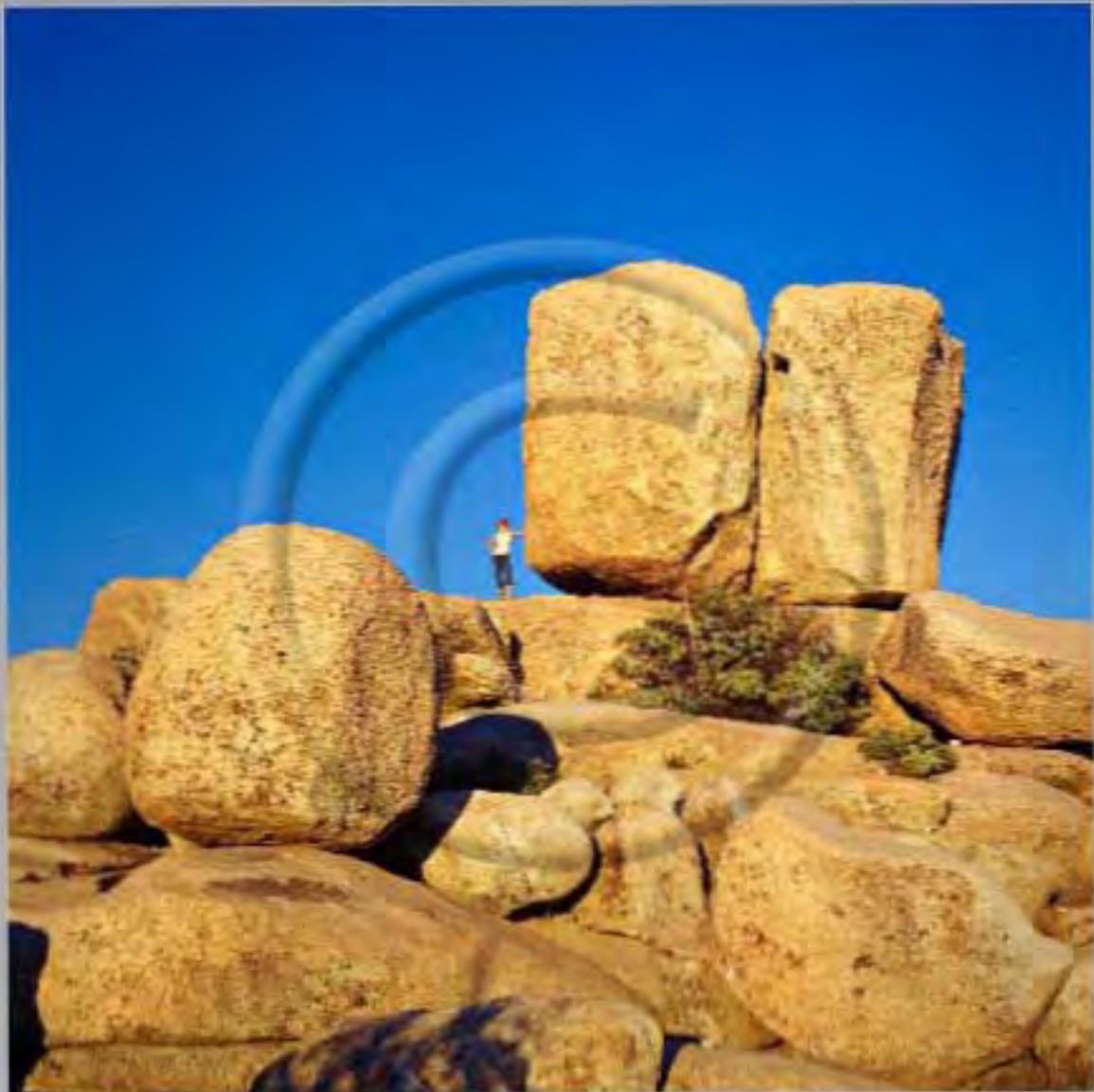




















Managing the conservation of the California condor and its ecosystem in a changing climate



Once extinct in the wild, California condors are now recovering due to the efforts of the Zoological Society of San Diego (ZSSD) and partner organizations.

After contributing to the reintroduction of condors in the USA, in 2002 the ZSSD established a bi-national, large-scale, long-term program to release captive bred condors to the wild in the Sierra San Pedro Martir region of northern Baja California, Mexico. This keystone species of high ecological and cultural importance had survived in Baja until as recently as 1945.

The ZSSD has been intensively monitoring and managing the reintroduced birds to ensure the successful establishment of a wild population that will eventually merge with other reintroduced populations in the USA.

The ZSSD condor project has not only aided in the recovery of the species, it has also linked the conservation efforts of the Mexican and United States governments and serves as a focus for ecosystem conservation throughout the region.





Managing the conservation of the California condor and its ecosystem in a changing climate



Condors range widely in their foraging flights and require large areas of undisturbed habitat to maintain viable populations.

Condors are also integral to the health of North American mountainous ecosystems because of their role at the apex of scavenging guilds.

Condors are considered an umbrella species in that efforts to conserve and manage condor populations also help conserve other species and habitats within condor ranges.

For example, condors in Baja scavenge on the carcasses of threatened bighorn sheep and compete for food resources with endangered pumas. These animals benefit from conservation management initiatives designed to reintroduce condor populations and maintain the health of their ecosystems, e.g. through protective legislation and habitat restoration programs.





Managing the conservation of the California condor and its ecosystem in a changing climate



The Sierra San Pedro Martir region where the condors are released is an area of high ecological significance and economic value, providing increasing local revenue through ecotourism.

Although the region is remote and federally protected, it remains extremely vulnerable to anthropogenic disturbances such as illegal logging and cattle grazing. Climate change is predicted to have extensive degradative impacts on the region and may diminish the quality of habitats for threatened wildlife by reducing water availability and increasing the frequency and intensity of wildfire events.

This project will use innovative technologies such as satellite telemetry, GIS and remote sensing to characterize, model and monitor the behavior, habitat use and population dynamics of condors reintroduced to Baja.

This will be done with a view to conducting long-term, multi-scale ecological research that has direct conservation management and socioeconomic benefits for the Sierra San Pedro Martir bioregion.

The research findings will also inform and enhance the management strategies of condor reintroduction programs throughout North America.



Managing the conservation of the California condor and its ecosystem in a changing climate



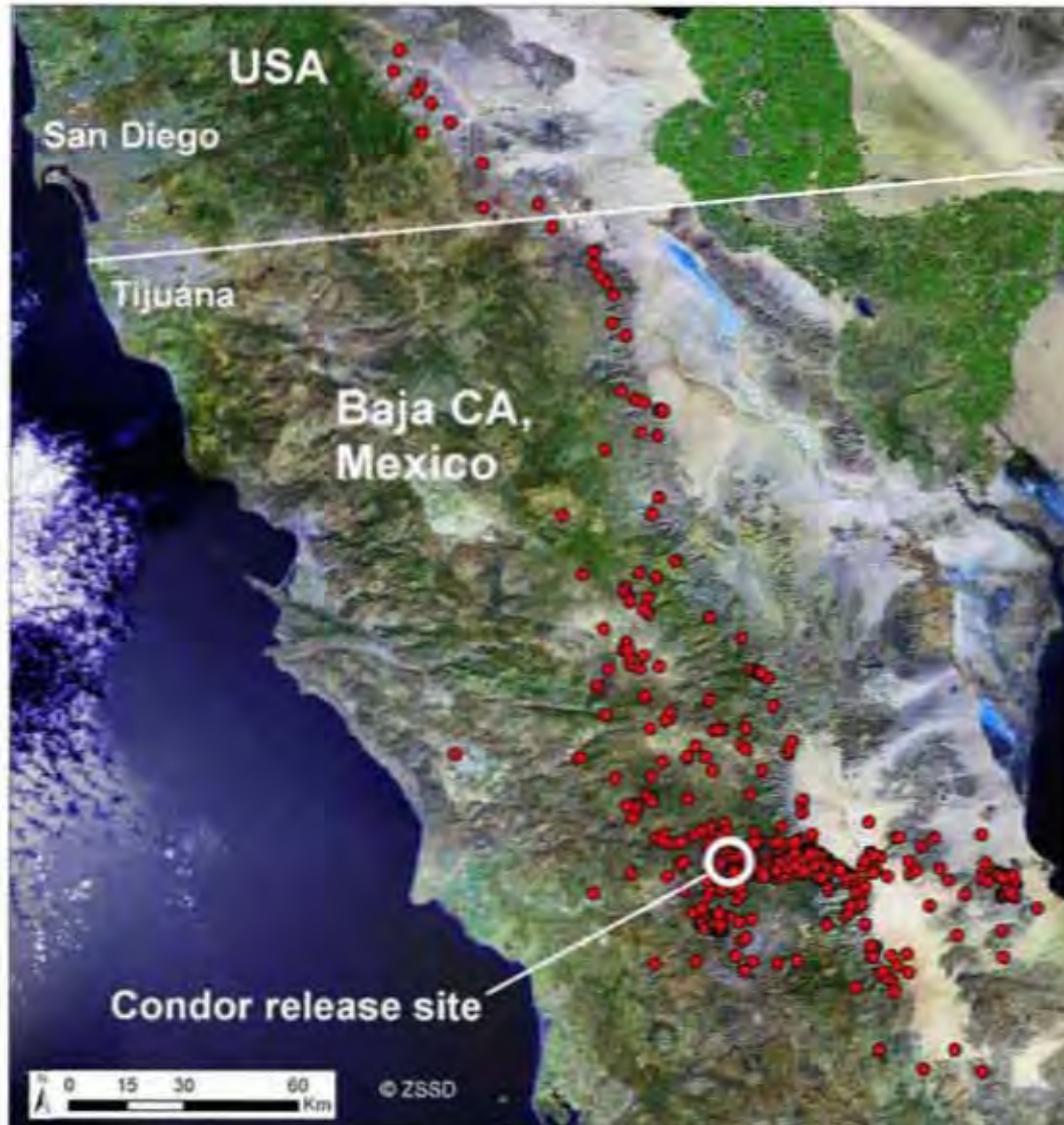
TOP and RIGHT: Captive-reared condors are reintroduced into the wild at the field site in Baja California, Mexico with GPS transmitters attached to their wings. The small, light-weight GPS-tags (**LEFT**) provide accurate locations of the birds so that their movements may be tracked and monitored by the management team. The movement data also provide valuable information on the spatial ecology and habitat use of the condors.



Managing the conservation of the California condor and its ecosystem in a changing climate



Managing the conservation of the California condor and its ecosystem in a changing climate



Satellite map indicating the location of the condor reintroduction site in the Sierra San Pedro Martir region of Baja California, Mexico. The red dots indicate the GPS location fixes of a three-year-old female condor that was tracked making a large-scale exploratory return flight of 200 km, north from the Baja release site across the USA/Mexico border in April 2007 (each dot represents a separate location fix acquired from the bird). The GPS fixes indicate that the condor made intensive use of core areas within close proximity to the release site. High-resolution satellite imagery provided by Planet Action enables researchers to build an accurate picture of condor habitat use and preference. This valuable ecological information will allow managers to tailor the reintroduction programs to the specific habitat requirements of the birds and to predict and mitigate the effects of climate change on this important ecosystem.