

Public Hearing on
Energy Policy Act—Section 368
Energy Corridors in the West:
Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

Speakers who asked that their name and address or just their address be withheld from the public record have that information replaced by xxxxx's.

Ontario, California, January 10, 2008, 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

LaVerne Kyriss: We're just about ready to start. We're working on our webcast, getting the connection set up. So, if you will give me a tiny bit of indulgence so we get the technical details so that those people who are dialing in can see the slides and listen to the same thing that you're hearing in person. And as soon as they're live we'll start.

Well, I just got the thumbs-up sign so that means we can start.

Good afternoon. Thank you for joining us for a public hearing on the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on Designating Energy Corridors on Federal Lands in the West. I'm LaVerne Kyriss from the Department of Energy and I'll serve as today's hearing officer.

Before we begin the formal hearing, Steve Borchard, who is the District Manager of the California Desert District and South Coast area, Bureau of Land Management, will make a brief opening statement.

But first, if you have not yet signed in or let us know that you want to speak at this meeting, you can do so right now at the registration table located right outside of the meeting room.

Handout materials. We have a fact sheet with an overall map on it and a handout that shows our siting process, how we got to the corridors are also available at the registration table.

Restrooms are located out through the lobby. They can direct you at the front desk.

In the event of a fire or other alarm, please take your personal belongings with you and evacuate the building as quickly, quietly and safely as possible. And I believe the nearest exit is right to our right.

With us, representing the federal interagency team managing this work are Kate Winthrop, right here, and Paul—from BLM—and Paul Johnson from Forest Service. After we're finished taking your comments we'll stay around to discuss the Draft PEIS with you.

Now, I'm going to turn the mic over to Steve.

Steve Borchard: Thanks, LaVerne.

Good afternoon and thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules and come here and provide the agencies with comments on this Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the designation of energy transport corridors on federal lands in the West. I'm Steve Borchard. I am the District Manager for BLM for the California Desert District and the South Coast area, about 11 million acres of public land here in Southern California.

In a few moments you'll hear a brief presentation about this document, the Programmatic EIS, which the Departments of Interior, Energy and Agriculture are preparing to meet requirements spelled out in the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

Currently, applications for right-of-ways to cross federal lands with pipelines or electric transmission infrastructure are considered singly on a case by case basis, without a whole lot of coordination among the various federal agencies whose lands are often involved in those projects that transport energy long distance.

In 2005 Congress directed those federal agencies to address this coordination situation by designating energy transport corridors, and also performing the necessary reviews of the environmental impacts of the designations. A Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, or EIS, developed under the National Environmental Policy Act, represents that required environmental review.

It is important to note that the corridor excuse me. It is important to note that another round of site-specific NEPA analysis would be completed for each project that is proposed for a location within a designated corridor. The Department of Energy, the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service developed the corridor locations that are proposed in this Draft Programmatic EIS using a three-step process which is detailed in the document and the handout available on the information table in the back or outside the room, and which this presentation will also describe to you.

In essence, today's hearing represents step four of that process. Public comments will help the agencies further refine the locations of the corridors so that important goals of the project are met, balancing the need to improve energy delivery in the West with our responsibility to protect the many resources found on these federal lands.

From the beginning, the agencies have committed to this strategy. And your comments will be valuable in helping to insure that it is carried through, that commitment is carried through, to the end of this planning effort.

Representatives from the Department of Energy, the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service are here in the room today to receive your comments. And on behalf of all three of these agencies, I want to thank you again for your time, your interest, and your participation.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Steve.

We're here today to receive your oral comments on the Draft PEIS. You can also submit written comments via the project website, by fax, or by mail.

This hearing is being webcast and transcribed so speakers are asked to speak clearly and distinctly into the microphone. If you're having trouble hearing a speaker, please signal me and I'll advise that speaker accordingly. After everyone who wishes to comment has spoken, I'll close the hearing.

So far, we have about a dozen people who request to speak on this issue today. Each of you will have an initial five minutes to make your presentation. When you have 30 seconds remaining, I'll notify you so you can wrap up. So, we'll go through everybody who has registered. We'll ask if there are any other people in the room who want to speak; we'll go through them. If the folks who already have spoken want to do another round to add to their comments, we'll do that and we'll do that in order until everybody

has said everything they want to or it's 5:00. And then we'll take a break at 5:00 and we'll reconvene at 6:00 for a second session. We'll do an evening session.

When you have 30 seconds remaining, I'll notify you so you can wrap up. I have a nice little slide that says "30 Seconds Remaining." And when your time is up I'll flash this. And I have a digital timer that beeps. So, you'll have a clue.

The hearing is to take comments on a Draft Programmatic EIS prepared in response to direction given by Congress to five federal agencies: Energy, Agriculture, Interior, Commerce and Defense. Section 368 directs the Secretaries to designate corridors for oil, gas, hydrogen pipe and electric transmission lines on federal lands in 11 western states; to perform necessary environmental reviews—partly because of this requirement we decided to prepare this EIS; to incorporate these designations into land use, land management or equivalent plans. A separate and distinct process is expected to begin later this year to identify corridors in the other 39 states.

The statute requires that when the Secretaries designate these corridors they must specify the corridor center line, the corridor width, and compatible uses. Congress also directed the Secretaries to take into account the need for electric transmission facilities to improve reliability, relieve congestion, and enhance the capacity of the national grid to deliver electricity.

The Draft PEIS proposes designating more than 6,000 miles of corridors. Sixty-two percent would incorporate existing locally-designated corridors and/or rights-of-way. Eighty-six percent would be on BLM land and 11 percent on Forest Service land. The Draft PEIS identifies 166 proposed corridor segments in all 11 western states. If all are included in the follow-on decisions, this would involve amending 165 land use or equivalent plans.

Previously designated corridors are outlined in yellow on the project map. Some of these are proposed for upgrade only. In the case of existing previously designated utility corridors, amendments to land use plans designating these as 368 corridors would subject these corridors to the interagency coordination processes described in the PEIS and they would be assigned Section 368 criteria; in effect, centerline, width, and compatible purposes.

Using existing corridors alone would not meet the requirements of Section 368. So, we've identified an additional 2,300 miles of proposed corridors. The proposed corridors also vary in width. We used a 3,500 foot starting point to provide flexibility for siting multiple rights-of-way.

An energy corridor is defined as a parcel of land identified through a land-use planning process as a preferred location for existing and future utility rights-of-way, and that is suitable to accommodate one or more rights-of-way which are similar, identical, or compatible.

Corridor designations assist in minimizing adverse impacts and the proliferation of separate rights-of-way. A right-of-way is a specific land use authorization— not a change in ownership—granted to allow construction and operations of a specific project that's often linear in character, such as a utility line or a roadway.

Rights-of-way permits include the requirements for compatible land uses and are not granted until a project applicant has complied with all the relevant requirements, including the appropriate environmental review.

In November 2007, we published the Draft PEIS. Comments are due February 14th. We will analyze and respond to the comments and complete the tasks necessary to prepare a Final EIS. We expect to have this ready sometime in mid-2008.

The land management agencies will be able to sign records of decision to designate corridors through amendments to land use plans no sooner than 30 days after the Final PEIS is issued.

The Draft PEIS analyzes two alternatives: taking no action and the proposed action. Choosing to adopt the no-action alternative would result in continuing ad hoc, uncoordinated development, as is done now. The proposed action is the result of a three-step corridor siting process described in chapter two of the Draft PEIS.

The first step was to incorporate comments provided by the public during scoping and after the draft map was released in 2006. Then the agencies worked closely with local federal land managers to accommodate local land use priorities, incorporate local knowledge of areas, and avoid areas known to be incompatible with potential future development. A handout summarizing this process for determining where the proposed corridors would be located is on the information tables. We also have examples of specific corridors on the project website.

We believe that the analysis of these alternatives meets NEPA's requirement for a hard look because the proposed action does not involve any site-specific, ground-disturbing activities. Site-specific NEPA review will be required to support all proposed projects within a 368-designated corridor.

And today, we don't know when and where any projects will be proposed by applicants seeking to site pipe and/or transmission lines. As a result of this uncertainty, the environmental effects described in chapter three of the Draft PEIS are necessarily more general than a site-specific analysis for a known project would be.

Comments will be most useful if they're specific, include suggested changes or methodologies, provide a rationale for your suggestions, and refer to the specific section or page number of the Draft PEIS.

Finally, we encourage you to submit your comments via the project website. It's easy for you, it speeds our ability to get comments into the database for analysis and up on the website for public review. And it doesn't require stamps or envelopes.

I'll call on speakers in the order in which you registered. Please step up to the microphone and clearly state your name and organization, if you're representing one, before you make your comments. Please limit your oral comments to five minutes so that everyone who wants to speak today may have a chance to be heard. I will advise you when you have 30 seconds left so you can wrap up.

We'll repeat this process until everyone who's registered to speak has had a chance to provide comment. I'll then ask if anyone else wants to speak. After those people have had a chance to speak and we've gone around the second time to make sure people don't want to add to their comments, we'll close the hearing and remind you of when comments are due and how to submit them.

If you're speaking from a prepared statement, please also leave us a copy at the registration desk. And if you're not prepared to leave us a copy, send it to us via the project website.

While agency representatives won't be answering questions during the hearing, we will stay afterwards to discuss the Draft PEIS with you. If needed, we'll take a 15-minute break midway through our scheduled time.

Are there any questions on the process? If there are no questions we'll now begin taking your comments.

Our first speaker will be Austin Puglisi. I'm probably massacring your name. And our second speaker will be James Haygood.

Austin Puglisi:

Okay. My name is Austin Puglisi and I'm a resident of Morongo Valley, which is a small community in-between Joshua Tree National Park and the San Bernardino Mountains. And I'm also a volunteer at the Big Morongo Canyon Nature Preserve, and I also served on the committee that helped draft the Morongo Valley Community Plan for Land Use and Development, approved by San Bernardino County.

And I want to address the portion of the report that says designation of a corridor will not have an affect on the communities, only constructions of actual product—I'm sorry, projects. Designation of a new corridor does have an effect on a community. And I'm gonna tell you my personal story to help explain this.

My wife and I have lived in the Southwest for almost 20 years. We settled in Morongo Valley about nine years ago. We saw it as a place where we could build our dream home. We wanted to have a house that was environmentally friendly, renewable energy that we generated on our land through solar power.

We researched. We found a nice parcel. We researched the zoning, we researched the rights-of-way. We researched the fact that it was in an area that was of environment concern and what that would let us do and not do. And based on the rules as they existed at the time we obtained our permits, we put in our solar-powered well, we got our building permit and we dug our foundation.

Then, we learned that the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power is planning to build high-voltage power lines across our property. This is not one of the designated power corridors in the WWEC map, but LA has petitioned and asked for it to be included.

And this uncertainty leaves us not knowing what to do. We could build and then we could have it taken by Los Angeles for imminent domain, or we could wait it out to see what happens. Last time it took our community 11 years to stop a proposed power line project. I'll be a little old to start building then. We could move and try to start over in a new town—not so easy in middle age—or just give up on our dream.

New corridors, when they are designated, affect the people living along them. Where federal land ends, private land begins. A lot of these corridors, they dead-end. Well, the power lines will keep going and they will affect the people who are living with that uncertainty.

So, I urge the agencies involved in this plan to stick more than 62 percent to established corridors where people are aware of the possibility, and try to encourage projects that generate the power closer to the cities that want to use the power so that hundreds of miles of new transmission lines aren't needed so much.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, sir.

Our next speaker is James Haygood. Is James in the room? He hasn't signed in yet.

After James, Max Thomas. Is Max in the room? He also hasn't signed in yet.

How about Richard Llewellyn? Okay. Following Richard, Barbara Renton. She hasn't signed in yet, either.

Richard Llewellyn: My name is Richard Llewellyn. And I'm also addressing the LADWP Green Path Corridor. Thank you for allowing me to express my comments.

My parents purchased property in the Morongo Basin in the mid-1960s and I moved to Yucca Valley in 1969. Attended high school and lived there for 39 years. I am a son whose 87-year-old mother lives in Yucca Valley, a husband whose wife was born in Twentynine Palms, a father whose children were raised in the Morongo Basin and continue to live in the Morongo Basin, and a grandfather whose grandchildren are being raised in the Morongo Basin. I can afford to live anywhere now in my life and I choose to live in the desert because of the quality of life it brings me.

Green Path North Project poses a serious increased risk of wildfires, a demand on our public services, effect on local economy, effect on property values, major health risks, the risk of damage to cultural and historical sites, effect on wildlife, impact on bird migration, impact on native plants and, most of all, the effect of the quality of life.

Also, access roads required will create added off-road use that is already taxed in the Mojave Desert and will lead to increased illegal dumping in the desert, placing added demand for local public services to clean up and added policing in the area. Increased risk of wildfires alone is enough to request that this project be halted.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Mr. Llewellyn.

Is Barbara Renton here? Okay, we'll go to our next speaker.

Joan Taylor. Is Joan here? And following Joan, Robert Jenkins.

Joan Taylor: Good afternoon, I'm—can you hear me okay? My name is Joan Taylor. There.

I'm here on behalf of the California/Nevada Regional Conservation Committee's Desert Subcommittee. And that's a big mouthful, but suffice it to say I'm here on behalf of the—those in the Sierra Club who care about the desert. I'm here primarily to learn. We do have a multi-region task force which will comment in writing on the PEIS. But, I can make a couple of general comments.

And as you all know, the Sierra Club is fiercely protective of wildlands. And also, we strongly endorse the development of renewable energy, particularly locally distributed and generated at urban centers where it is used.

We do feel that the PEIS is an improvement over the earlier draft. We feel that there—the needs analysis, at least my reaction on first read, is that it has insufficient specifics as to the congestion and that kind of thing, creating a need for new transmission.

We will be also taking a hard look at the PEIS's alternatives analysis, especially the alternative in increased locally-generated and distributed renewable power in urban centers as the optimum solution to security, congestion and reliability, and climate change issues as opposed to the continued dependence on remotely located fossil fuels.

Thank you very much.

LaVerne Kyriess:

Thank you, Ms. Taylor.

Robert Jenkins. And following Robert, April Sall.

Robert Jenkins:

Hello. I'm Robert Jenkins, Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

First, I'd like to start by commending the DOE and the agencies and their work in pulling this together. I was at the Western Electricity Coordinating Council that signed this—got it kicked off. And a lot of work was done with respect to identifying potential congestion corridors in the West. I think the DOE did a good job and able to bring that information over into their analyses. And I'd like to commend them for the work they did there.

What I would like to talk to about today, I represent PG&E's energy procurement arm. And there's an element in the executive summary that I think needs to be reinforced, and that is the agencies know that the designating of the energy corridors would not preclude an applicant from applying for a right-of-way outside these designated energy corridors.

The reason I'd like to have this reinforced is that the future development of upgrades of energy facilities, such as pipelines, transmission lines, distribution lines, will need to be fairly considered for federal permits environmental reviews, whether or not the locations for such facilities are situated within a designated corridor. As we stand today, it is impossible to determine the needs and most appropriate locations for all potential energy facilities.

Such siting is a fluid process depending upon external factors including location of generation, geography, climate, environmental and historical concerns. For example, California, like many other areas of the country, is seeking to enhance the use of renewable generation resources to meet environmental objectives and diversify its resources portfolio. The sites for such renewable resources are potentially remote from load centers and would require expansion of electric transmission system in order to develop.

However, since in many cases such sites are either in early development or yet to be development—developed—the transmission need does not appear in the congestion studies. For example, there are applications for many projects in the BLM lands south of the Mojave Desert Preserve. While there's an existing gas pipeline to the area, this corridor is not identified as a proposed Section 368 corridor. I do know there is a Section 368 corridor just at the very southern edge of the Mojave Preserve, but it's an underground-only corridor, which wouldn't be suitable for this need.

I'd like to point out there is a state-wide effort being led by the California Public Utilities Commission, the California Energy Commission, the California ISO, and public-owned utilities to have a state-wide collaborative planning effort, which is called the Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative, or RETI for short; R-E-T-I.

RETI was formed to identify electric transmission projects needed to accommodate the state's renewable energy goals, support future energy policy, and facilitate transmission corridor designation, and transmission and generation siting and permitting. Including—

included in RETI is a broad representative of interest groups including the Forest Service, BLM and the Sierra Club.

PG&E would like to ensure that the Section 368 energy corridor designation process is sufficiently flexible to accommodate state needs, as identified by RETI or other future planning efforts, and encourages that a process be identified to manage future amendments to the 368 designations.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Mr. Jenkins.

Is April Sall here? Great. And following April will be D'Anne Albers.

April Sall:

Thank you.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak here today about this issue. I first became aware of this legislation while researching the Green Path North project that's being proposed by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. While researching this legislation and researching the challenges our nation is faced with, I became aware of the Department of Energy's U.S. Climate Change Technology Program. This was a report put out by DOE. It was a three-part document that included a strategic plan that clearly illustrates a few important points. And it also strongly encourages the use of existing energy corridors.

I'm here today representing the Wildlands Conservancy, a non-profit 501(C)(3) conservation organization. The Wildlands Conservancy strongly encourages the panel to follow the strategy laid out by the DOE plan and minimize the amount of environmental damage by utilizing these existing corridors. This will minimize the damage on public conservation lands and conservation areas.

The Bureau of Land Management completed an analysis on energy corridors and designated several corridors in the 1980 California Desert Conservation Area Plan and its following amendments. Due to the nearly 120 applications being submitted for renewable energy in the California Desert District of the Bureau of Land Management, the Wildlands Conservancy is concerned that if these projects are fast-tracked through this legislation that our conservation lands will be significantly and irreversibly damaged.

The Wildlands Conservancy has facilitated in the purchase of nearly 600,000 acres of conservation lands in the Mojave Desert that was donated to the Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service for management. This has raised concern about the status of this conservation land and if it will be protected in perpetuity. Wildlands Conservancy raised over \$30 million in private donations for that purchase and they are now being threatened in this energy gold rush beginning in the Mojave Desert.

I encourage the panel to examine the problems with this vague legislation that designates broad corridors and dismisses the importance of our U.S. conservation lands and the environmental processes and laws that precede it, including the National Environmental Protection Act and the California Environmental Quality Act.

The Department of Energy Climate Change Technology Program also defines many recent technologies, including superconductor wires and the construction of high storage capacity units that would allow wind and solar energy sources to become base loads. Superconductor wires could nearly double the capacity of existing transmission lines. And the program also calls for conservation strategies and technologies to be utilized.

The program also charges our energy companies and our federal land managers to not only use existing corridors, but to also consider the overall effects of these impacts for the long-term. We have not yet seen what will come of our conservation lands if all of these projects were to go to completion.

Our nation is challenged with balancing our development, including that in the energy field, with the conservation and preservation of the environment we must live in. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power is proposing for their Green Path North project, they're applying for a 368 designation that will allow them to fast-track this project around existing environmental processes laid out by previous legislation.

The project is being green-washed and includes nuclear power, as well as possibly coal power across 500 kilovolt transmission lines that are—would be constructed through current pristine desert habitats. A lot of this area is of wilderness quality and the impacts of this project were not clearly evaluated in the California Desert Conservation Plan as this is a contingent corridor and not a designated corridor.

Wildlands Conservancy encourages the panel to utilize existing corridors and consider the impacts of this legislation and the precedence it could set.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Ms. Sall.

Our next speaker is D'Anne Albers, and she will be followed by Laraine Turk.

D'Anne Albers:

Good afternoon. My name is D'Anne Albers. I'm the California Desert Associate for Defenders of Wildlife and also a resident of Wonder Valley, which is just east of the Marine Base in Twentynine Palms.

Defenders of Wildlife is dedicated to the protection of all native wild animals and plants in a natural community. We have more than half a million members nationwide, with more than 125,000 members in California.

I am pleased to be here today to provide comments on the Draft Programmatic EIS for the Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal Lands in 11 Western States. Defenders is still reviewing this document and will submit more detailed written comments. However, I will take the opportunity to highlight a few of our basic concerns about this Draft EIS. My testimony today is not intended to be an exhaustive list. As I just mentioned, we will provide you with far more detailed comments of all our concerns and issues.

First, we do not believe that this Draft EIS is conducted at the appropriate level and scope of the NEPA analysis. Since this Programmatic EIS involves the placement of energy corridors in 11 western states, we believe that the document needed to evaluate impacts on a landscape basis.

However, while the document generally discusses the various types of lands and species impacted, there are no overall ecosystem-focused analysis on impacts to specific large geographic areas such as river corridors or major wildlife migration routes, as should be found in the programmatic document.

Second, we do not believe that the PEIS has evaluated the appropriate range of alternatives. The PEIS evaluates no action alternatives and no proposed action

alternatives. There was no environmentally protective alternative developed or analyzed, despite requests by conservation groups to do so. While the Draft EIS discusses an effort to incorporate some of the suggested improvements to sitings, such as limiting corridors to adjacent highways, we did not see any effort to include an alternative that avoids designated corridors in sensitive habitat areas.

Third, while the PEIS does appear to expand the areas of consideration for siting of the energy corridors for recommendations made during the scoping periods and on the preliminary map review, there does not appear to be an effort to avoid federally designated critical habitat areas and other sensitive wildlife areas. Indeed, those areas are not noted on the maps or identified as areas that were avoided in the corridor sitings.

Fourth, while we appreciated the long list of best management practices broken down by the various stages of site development, it appears that this list is more a laundry list of possible mitigation measures, but not mandatory. Thus, it is unclear what the level of required mitigation may be for these projects. As others pointed out during scoping comments, we urge you to follow the example of the Department of Interior's Wind Energy EIS and set forth a list of minimum mandatory best management projects—practices for all projects.

Finally, we are concerned about the decision by the federal agencies not to engage in consultation under the Federal Endangered Species Act. This Programmatic EIS will result in the amendment of many federal land management plans and, thus, may have an effect on listed species. Indeed, contrary to the conclusion drawn in this Programmatic EIS, the Wind Energy Programmatic EIS did undergo consultation to determine whether the proposed action jeopardized the continued existence of threatened and endangered species. Therefore, we urge the agencies to engage in consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fishery Service.

We thank you for the opportunity to state our comments here. We look forward to submitting comments that are more extensive, and working with you to produce a solid programmatic document that will lay a sustainable foundation for future energy development.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Ms. Albers.

Laraine Turk is our next speaker, and she'll be followed by Michael Thometz.

Laraine Turk:

Hello. My name is Laraine Turk. I'm a resident of Joshua Tree and I'm a member of the California Desert Coalition and the Morongo Basin Conservation Association.

I'm concerned about the West-Wide Energy Corridor in terms of the precious public land that is going to be so affected by new corridors. Decisions about public lands must be made ever so carefully; in the desert especially. It is resilient, but fragile. And this must be carefully considered on balance with our needs for energy.

It seems that the agencies are considering this Programmatic EIS in what almost amounts to shortcuts on the processing for the development of new corridors. I am concerned for these reasons:

One, we all know that old saying about when you're cutting wood you measure twice and cut once or you have a problem. I think this—it ends up being irreversible errors. In a way, that's what this is like. We will be losing safeguards to the environment by not

considering each proposed corridor carefully and fully and separately. The figurative short pieces of wood that aren't long enough to do the job can't be patched back together.

A second thing is the—also mentioned by another speaker—the National Strategic Plan for U.S. Climate Change Technology Program. And they emphasize the alternatives of existing corridors using the new—and emerging technologies to increase the capacity, and generating power locally. Again, using emerging technology as well as the existing technologies. There are both efficiency and national security reasons for these alternatives. So, why is there so much emphasis on new corridors in light of this national plan put together by our government giving these guidelines?

If these two alternatives were followed, increasing capacity of current lines and encouraging and enabling more local generation, the need for new corridors could be reduced greatly and thousands of acres of public land saved from what would amount to abuse.

And thirdly, I am concerned especially about the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's request to add the Green Path North corridor to the WWEC. Not only are there extensive environmental issues of wildlife corridors, desert plant damage, cultural artifacts being damaged, the corridor would add new risks of fire damage to the huge swathe of desert, both inhabited and uninhabited, that we lost in the 2005 Sawtooth Complex fire that affected and changed the lives of thousands of desert residents.

So please, to the agencies involved, take care of our lands by reducing the potential tidal wave of power lines—that might be a mixed metaphor—but the potential tidal wave of power lines in the desert. Remember that increasing capacity of existing lines and encouraging and enabling local generation and conservation are the best methods of meeting future energy needs.

Also, please say no to LADWP's Green Path North request. Green Path North should not be added to the WWEC.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Ms. Turk.

Our next speaker is Michael Thometz, and he will be followed by Paul Goff.

Michael Thometz:

My name is Mike Thometz. I live in San Diego County, east of San Diego. And I'm Habitat Coordinator for San Diego Quail Unlimited and I'm President of MERIT, which is a local land use advocacy group in San Diego County.

And I'm very, very late to this thing and I have enormous concerns. And I apologize in advance for not being very erudite about it. But let me just explain to you what a person living in San Diego County has to face currently.

First of all, we have the Sunrise Powerlink Environmental Impact Report out: 12,000 pages which we're supposed to review in less than 90 days.

Secondly, we just recently went through a Forest Service Management Plan for Cleveland National Forest. And they're telling us that we're not going to put any power lines through our facilities because we'd have to redo our management plan. So, if you want to put Sunrise through there, go away. Stick it on BLM.

We are currently involved in a South Coast resource management plan and update for the BLM section south of Interstate 8. We're filing a protest, last week, on the final Eastern San Diego County Resource Management Plan. We're doing an update of the county's general plan. And we're also trying to do an NCCP Multiple Species Conservation Plan for Eastern San Diego County. All these things are going on.

And I read—and I'm also involved very heavily in the Sunrise Powerlink thing. And I'm part of a group, the San Diego Foundation, which commissioned the report looking at alternative energy sources, which—and I don't know. I'm gonna somehow get that out, but it tells you that massive power lines running over everything aren't the way to solve most people's problems; that what you need is in-basin generation, much more modern technology. You could—solar. We have a solar initiative of a—whatever, I don't know, 300,000 roofs. There are a lot of other ways to solve the energy problem.

And so here—the concern that we all have is, when we're trying to work on local land use plans—and land use is local—I don't believe it is right, whether President Bush wants to do it or not, to tell me—the federal government says that you can—we're gonna put power lines anywhere we want in your area. And I understand that you have to have site-specific. But what we all fear is that site-specific is the stamp. And it doesn't make any difference what anybody wants. This big 11-state thing is going to trump everything locally. And that's not the way it should work.

The way that energy should be handled is to develop things locally, in-basin generation, solar, a lot of other things. And in San Diego County alone, just rationalization of their distribution grid would cut a substantial amount of their property needs. And they're fighting things like the—or San Diego Gas and Electric—like the LEAPS Project, which is Lake Elsinore Advance Power thing where they pump the water up at night when the rates are low and it comes down during the daytime. They don't want that. They're trying to fight in-basin power plants.

So, to us—you know, I haven't read this thing and I apologize for that, but I didn't even know that there was a—and you would think with all these groups that I was involved in that I would know that this thing was going on. The first thing I ever heard about it was in November. Got a map in the local paper that says there are now 11 states—energy corridors. First anybody heard about it. I never knew about this report. I've never seen it anywhere. It's never come forward in any of these groups I've ever talked—that I've been involved with. And we've had meetings on Sunrise *ad nauseam*. I get a lot of Sierra Club stuff, too.

So, I think you have—I'm frustrated and I think you have numerous members of the public who don't have the faintest idea of what's going on. Now, that's not unusual. I mean, that happens a lot. But—and this is something that's really important to a lot more people. And when I go to meetings that are—have environmentalists—I have recognized one person in this room. Now, normally when I go to a meeting I see, you know, 15 or 20 people that I know who are involved in environmental things and power corridors.

So, this fast track, which is what I consider, is going to blow away years of work for—on local planning issues. And I don't know how we would stop this thing. If it's a federal law, I guess you gotta do it.

But, I think that all corridors should be local. And to say that you have an existing corridor—right now we have a particular location in our area where there's a 69 kV line that goes to this little substation. Guess what's gonna come over it because they're gonna use an existing corridor? Five hundred kV right over the top of it. To me, 500 kV and 69

kV aren't the same thing. You can't—I mean, I've been in [unintelligible] State Park and you can't hear the 69. The 500 kV sounds like 50,000 hives of bees.

So, to me, these corridors are unfortunate. And I will respond to this thing when I get a chance to read it and I apologize that I haven't done it so far, but you need to get a lot more people involved in what's going on.

LaVerne Kyriess:

Mr. Thometz, we'll be happy to come back to you.

Paul Goff. And I may have mispronounced your name. Then we have a couple people who are going to let us have their time.

Paul Goff:

I would have liked to have held back to let you keep going.

But in the meantime, I live in xxxxx and I also live in xxxxx. And you know, in xxxxx, it's kind of like a town of tree-huggers. Everyone's, you know, green. And green's the spin word of the day. And everything's green and nobody wants to use white bags because there's litter all over the place and they want to save trees.

But, you start talking about the Green Path North and these power lines coming up from potentially the Mexican border, along the Salton Sea, you know, hitting somewhere around Desert Hot Springs and then going up across, right, bordering the national park and going over Morongo and Yucca Valley and Pioneertown and Pipe's Canyon out to Hesperia to provide power for Los Angeles and they're like, what? We've never heard of it. Most people, as this gentleman said, probably don't watch the news or read the paper.

And you know, my life, I'm fortunate to look at the ocean every day from my home. And I would think why aren't we harnessing water from the ocean for Los Angeles? And I see in the LA Times about PG&E is doing these power plants to harness ocean water. And they're two and a half miles offshore and the cables are underground and they're gonna potentially, you know, work. At least they think so. And it's a beautiful article. I have copies if anybody would like it.

And we live in Southern California and Arizona and all these places where there's sun, like, 360 days a year. And all these communities are built and none of them have solar power and you wonder why. And they say solar doesn't work. But yet, the very progressive Mayor of San Francisco, Gavin Newsom, you know, says that solar power works.

And there's all sorts of incentives for buildings to go solar and private people to go solar. And companies are giving money for people to go solar. And I think about it. I live in a high-rise, you know, in Santa Monica overlooking the ocean. We have 280 units. And I think, why aren't we our own power plant? We should be. It's ridiculous.

I also am fortunate to work in the same building I live in. So, when I go six floors up in my elevator, I look out the back and I look over the city of LA. And as the sun sets, I see millions and millions of lights burning and I don't get it. And I can't understand why if I go to my office at midnight there's millions of lights burning.

And a friend of mine called me from Europe the other day and she—I was telling her about something I was working on and she said, "Oh, oh. I've got to turn off a light." And I said, "Okay." And she said, "You know, in Europe we're always turning off lights. And we don't think the Americans can do it. You guys are such jokers." And I completely understand what she's talking about.

And I think that, first of all, that the federal government should put some of this money that they want to put out there to sort of maybe do some PSAs to let people know what's going on. You know, maybe put it on primetime so people know about, you know, this Green Path North project.

You know, I think that the English language is beautiful because it allows this political rhetoric. And if you don't know what that means, it means that you can take something really ugly and you can make it sound really good, like Mayor Villaraigosa did when I watched him, I think back in March, on the KCLA News. And he was talking about the Green Path and he was smiling.

And you know, LaVerne, when I was hearing you earlier I thought, God, what a lovely lady. All the wonderful things she's saying. She sounds great. And you really did. Very eloquent. And everything, though, when you think about it, I hear, like, my neighbors and maybe a couple people I've met and most people I don't know and, you know, they just sound so intelligent. But—not that you didn't, but it just—you can make it sound very good. And I think that we've gotta get the news out there of what this really sort of preposterous, you know, idea is.

I'm a land owner in the high desert and I think it's really beautiful. It's spectacular. We did suffer this wildfire. But still, the things that remain are the animals that lived and—you know, I found out recently through neighbors that—you know, bordering my property is where hundreds of years ago was like the New York City for the native Indian. And as you walk back, like, April manages the land conservancy. We have rocks with bulls carved into them, probably where Indians, you know, mashed lizards and nuts and things like that. And there's petroglyphs on the rocks.

And when you put in these high power lines, you know, people come through with quads. And I've gone through and photographed, like, under power lines down by Desert Hot Spring and Devers [ph], you know, people throw junk and there's garbage and it's awful. It's really, really terrible.

And I would let all people from federal agencies consider, if it were near your house or in your town, you know, would you really want it? None of us want it. We don't want Green Path North. We want LA to do stuff like harness the ocean, shut off lights, create their own energy plants on their roofs. You know, I think that's what's gotta be done.

And I appreciate you letting me speak.

LaVerne Kyriass:

I need to know if xxxxx is in the room and if you would like to speak?

xxxxx:

I didn't really come here to speak. I was gonna listen. My comments will get written. I think that's a better place to do it. But, now that you're here and I've heard a couple of things, when it comes to these energy corridors, trust no one. They tell ya they're gonna listen to ya, they understand your concerns. Don't trust it. Get smart, investigate. Don't trust it.

Don't trust the Forest Service. Don't trust PG&E. Don't just take their word for it. I can tell ya, Smokey Bear isn't the Smokey Bear I knew as a kid. Smokey Bear's blowing some smoke when it comes to federal use of national—or of our forests.

We're fighting a transmission line right now. The Forest Service has violated federal law when it comes to the Environmental Species Act. They don't care. They're ignoring it. We've asked for help from the Sierra Club. They're for renewable energy. They have

declined to help fight five federally endangered species because of the bigger picture of renewable energy, which is wind power.

I'm just telling you our area has been fast-tracked. We had corridors that were vetted. At the last minute they were switched. They're not vetted. It doesn't matter. It's on a fast track.

Somebody used the term "green wash." I'd never heard that before, but I'm gonna assume that means something like brainwashing in the name of so-called green power. Don't fall for it. There's a lot—billions of dollars going down here. There's a lot of stuff hidden under rocks. We don't know half of what's going on. Just investigate. Don't take somebody's word for it.

That's all. Thanks.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Mr. xxxxx

Ralph Hitchcock , are you here and did you want to speak? Okay. That is fine.

I want to ask if Mr. Haygood is here and if he wants to speak?

Mr. Thomas or Ms. Renton? All right.

Mr. Thometz, did you want to continue?

Michael Thometz: [Inaudible.]

LaVerne Kyriss: Okay.

Michael Thometz: [Inaudible.]

LaVerne Kyriss: Can I get you to speak into the mic so the folks on the webcast can hear you?

Michael Thometz: [Inaudible.]

I think it's particularly inappropriate when you get up in the morning and you walk out and you see some guy standing on your property, a couple of surveyors, and you say, "What are you here for? What are you doing on my property? You don't have my permission to be here." He says, "Oh, well, we're surveying for the transmission line that's going over your head." I don't think that's right. So this issue is, as I've tried to say, a local issue. That's what we've seen everywhere in our county.

And as soon as we had a route designated and some people with a little bit of money said, "Well, I don't like this," and raised \$300,000, guess what? The route moved over about four miles to the one direction and they co-opted the opposition. So, money shouldn't be a way to get around this but, in fact, that's what's working on a local level. In another area somebody said—raised a lot of stink so what did they—well, we'll bury it. And they buried it for three miles just to get around a particular local opposition to these routes.

But again, these are local issues. And we see—another example is that, right now, we have a bunch of power plants on the Mexican border and they want to get the power to Los Angeles. Green Path North is one of the ways they may do that. And Sempra wants to bring in liquefied natural gas from the Far East to substitute for the natural gas they're now burning in these plants in Mexicali. And the net use of energy, by the time you compress the gas, ship it over here, liquefy it again, is more than using natural gas.

So, one of the things you have to look at here is the big picture. And also there's more pollution. So, we see this kind of bait-and-switch thing that's going on. This problem is not with energy conservation and energy transmission, it's not gonna be solved by somebody in Washington and BLM saying, okay, these are the corridors we're gonna do this in. That's not—this all has to be done on a local level. And I don't know how we stop somebody saying this is where it's gonna be, but it has to be on a local level. And as the gentleman says, you can't trust anybody. It just doesn't work. And within two miles from my house the route has changed four times, all because of protests.

Now, there's a series of hearings in San Diego County over the next two months on Sunrise Powerlink. And I don't know how you incorporate all the information that comes out of that into your process. Because I mean, I think it is relevant to your process what people are saying about a fairly broad area about where power goes.

It's like these two processes are totally disconnected. Not unusual with the federal government. BLM doesn't talk to Fish and Wildlife Service and vice versa. But, I think you need to somehow get Lynda Kastoll, for example, from BLM in the central office who's the person that is doing the Sunrise Powerlink with the PUC, get her input into your process and let—find out what lessons she's learned to make whatever you're gonna do better. That would be another suggestion.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Mr. Thometz.

Is there anyone else who wanted to speak at today's hearing?

I'm sorry, I can't hear—?

Unidentified Man: [Inaudible.]

LaVerne Kyriss: Oh, well come back up. Please. And tell us your name again so we get it for the record.

Austin Puglisi: Austin Puglisi and I'm from Morongo Valley. What I wanted to say that I forgot to was, in the interest of the local power generation versus the remote power generation, there are dozens and dozens of solar plants proposed in the Mojave Desert. I believe it was mentioned by someone earlier. But, the sun shines in Los Angeles. The sun shines in San Diego. Why do they have to build these massive projects and destroy somebody else's land?

The agencies here can decide whether rural America has the right of self-determination, what to do with their own lands, or whether they are simply subservient to the desires of the cities and the municipal utilities and the power companies.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Mr. Puglisi.

Oh, thank you so much.

Unidentified Woman: [Inaudible.]

LaVerne Kyriss: If there are no other speakers at the moment, we will take a recess. We'll close this part of the hearing. If folks come later we'll reopen. So, on the webcast we'll take a break.

I want to thank you for joining us. Oh, I've lost my—thanks.

I want to thank you for joining us today to provide oral comments on the Draft PEIS proposing to designate energy corridors on federal lands in the West. Comments on the Draft PEIS are due February 14th and may be submitted online via the project website, by mail or by fax. All comments we receive by February 14th will be considered as we prepare the Draft—the Final PEIS. Comments submitted after February 14th will be considered to the degree possible.

Again, thank you for attending and we're gonna stay around to informally discuss the Draft PEIS with you.

Ontario, California, January 10, 2008, 6:00 p.m. -8:00 p.m.

LaVerne Kyriss: If I can get the attention of our technical folks, we'll un-mute the system.

Good evening. Thank you for joining us for a public hearing on the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on Designating Energy Corridors on Federal lands in the West. I'm LaVerne Kyriss from the Department of Energy and I'll serve as this evening's hearing officer.

Before we begin the formal hearing, Steve Borchard from the BLM—Steve's title is District Manager, California Desert District and South Coast Area, Bureau of Land Management—will make a brief opening statement.

But first, if you have not signed in yet, or if you have not let us know that you want to speak tonight, if you could do that at the registration desk. And I know a lot of you came in at the same time and I hope you all filled out a form telling us that you're here and, specifically, if you wanted to speak we need to know that so we can get you on the speakers list.

We also have hand-out materials. We have a fact sheet. And we have a siting process fact sheet that's a series of maps. We may have run short on those. If we did, those are available on our project website. And if you have trouble, if you—there's a comment form on that website and we can make sure we get those to you.

Restrooms are located past the registration desk in the lobby, the hotel registration desk in the lobby, down that hallway.

In the event of a fire or other alarm, we'd ask you to please take your personal belongings with you and evacuate the building as quickly, quietly and safely as possible. Our nearest exit is here to the right.

With me today, representing the federal interagency team managing this work, are Kate Winthrop from BLM. If you'd stand. Thanks, Kate. And Paul Johnson from Forest Service.

After we're finished taking your comments, we're gonna stay around to informally discuss the Draft PEIS with you.

And now, I'd like to turn the mic over to Steve.

Steve Borchard: Good evening and thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to come here tonight and participate in this process and provide comments on the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the designation of energy transport corridors on federal lands in the West. I am Steve Borchard. And as LaVerne said, I'm the District

Manager for Bureau of Land Management here in Southern California covering the California Desert District and the South Coast area

In a few moments you'll hear a brief presentation about the document, which the Departments of Interior, Energy and Agriculture are preparing to meet requirements contained in the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

Currently, applications for rights-of-way to cross federal lands with pipelines or electric transmission infrastructure are considered on a case-by-case basis, without much coordination among the various federal agencies whose lands are often involved in projects that these energy projects go across for long distances.

In 2005, Congress directed the federal agencies to address this situation by designating energy transport corridors, and also performing necessary reviews of the environmental impacts of the designation of the corridor. A Programmatic EIS, developed under the National Environmental Policy Act, represents that required environmental review.

It is important to note that another round of site-specific NEPA analysis would be completed for each individual project that would be proposed for a location within a designated corridor.

The Department of Energy, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Forest Service developed the corridor locations proposed in this Draft Programmatic EIS using a three-step process which is detailed in the document and a handout available on the information table and which this presentation will also describe.

In essence, today's hearing represents the fourth step of the process. Public comments will help the agencies further refine the locations of the corridors so that important goals of the project are met. Those important goals are balancing the need to improve energy delivery in the West with the federal responsibility to protect the many valuable resources found on the federal lands.

From the beginning, the agencies have committed to this strategy. And your comments will be valuable in helping to insure that it is carried through to the end of this planning effort.

Representatives from Energy, Bureau of Land Management, and the Forest Service are here tonight to receive your comments. And on behalf of all three of those agencies, I want to thank you again for you taking the time to participate and let us know what your thoughts are.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Steve.

We're here this evening to receive your oral comments on the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. You can also submit comments through the project website, by fax, or by mail.

This hearing is being webcast and transcribed. We'll also have the webcast archive on our project website. So, we'd ask you to speak clearly and distinctly into the microphone. If you're having trouble hearing a speaker in this room please signal me so I can let the speaker know that. After everyone who wishes to comment has spoken, I'll close the hearing.

So far, we have 35 people who want to speak tonight. So, when I did my little calculator, including the introduction that I need to tell you a little bit about the project, we'll have

about three minutes to start. So, we're gonna give everybody three minutes. I have a digital timer. And when we have 30 seconds remaining for each speaker, I have a nice little sign that says 30 seconds. And I'll be seated right here so you can see me waving that. And so, we want to hear from everybody who wants to speak.

This hearing is to take comments on a Draft Programmatic EIS prepared in response to direction given by Congress to five federal agencies: Energy, Agriculture, Interior, Commerce and Defense. Section 368 of the Energy Policy Act directs the Secretaries to designate corridors for oil, gas, hydrogen pipe and electric transmission lines on federal lands in the 11 western states; to perform necessary environmental reviews—partly because of this requirement, we decided to prepare the Draft PEIS that's the subject of this hearing—and to incorporate these designations into land use, land management or equivalent plans. A separate and distinct public process is expected to be later this year to identify corridors in the other 39 states.

The statute requires that when the Secretaries designate these corridors they must specify the corridor center line, the corridor width, and the corridor compatible uses. Congress also directed the Secretaries to take into account the need for electric transmission facilities to improve reliability, to relieve congestion, and enhance the capacity of the national grids to deliver electricity.

We do have seats in the front rows for those of you who are standing in the back of the room.

The Draft PEIS proposes designating more than 6,000 miles of corridors. Sixty-two percent would incorporate existing locally-designated corridors and/or rights-of-way. Eighty-six percent would be on BLM land and 11 percent on Forest Service land. The Draft PEIS identifies 166 proposed corridor segments in all 11 western states. If all are included in the follow-on decisions, this would involve amending 165 land use or equivalent plans.

Previously designated corridors are outlined in yellow on the project map. Some of these are proposed for upgrade only. In the case of existing previously designated utility corridors, amendments to land use plans designating them as 368 corridors would subject these corridors to the interagency coordination processes described in the PEIS, and they would be assigned Section 368 criteria; in effect, the centerline, width, and compatible purposes.

Using existing corridors alone would not meet the requirements of Section 368. So, we've identified an additional 2,300 miles of proposed corridors. The proposed corridors also vary in width. We used a 3,500 foot starting point to provide flexibility for siting multiple rights-of-way.

An energy corridor is defined as a parcel of land identified through a land-use planning process as a preferred location for existing and future utility rights-of-way, and that is suitable to accommodate one or more rights-of-way which are similar, identical, or compatible.

Corridor designations assist in minimizing adverse impacts and the proliferation of separate rights-of-way. A right-of-way is a specific land use authorization—not a change in ownership—granted to allow construction and operations of a specific project that's often linear in character, such as a utility line or a roadway.

Rights-of-way permits include the requirements for compatible land uses, and are not granted until a project applicant has complied with all the relevant requirements, including the appropriate environmental review.

In November 2007, we published the Draft PEIS. Comments on it are due February 14th. We will analyze and respond to the comments and complete the tasks necessary to prepare a Final EIS. We expect to have this ready sometime in mid-2008.

The land management agencies will be able to sign records of decision to designate corridors through amendments to land use plans no sooner than 30 days after the Final PEIS is issued.

The Draft PEIS analyzes two alternatives: taking no and the proposed alternative. Choosing to adopt the no-action alternative would result in continuing ad hoc, uncoordinated development, as is done now. The proposed action is the result of a three-step corridor siting process described in detail in chapter two of the Draft PEIS.

The first step was to incorporate comments provided by the public during scoping and after the draft map was released in 2006. Then, the agencies worked closely with local federal land managers to accommodate local land use priorities, incorporate local knowledge of areas, and avoid areas known to be incompatible with potential future development. A handout summarizing this process for determining where the proposed corridors would be located is on the information table. Examples of specific corridors are also available on our project website.

We believe that the analysis of these alternatives meets NEPA's requirement for a hard look because the proposed action does not involve any site-specific, ground-disturbing activities. Site-specific NEPA review will be required to support all proposed projects within a 368-designated corridor.

And today, we don't know when and where any projects will be proposed by applicants seeking to site pipelines and/or transmission lines. As a result of this uncertainty, the environmental effects described in chapter three of the Draft PEIS are necessarily more general than a site-specific analysis for a known project would be.

Comments will be most useful if they are specific, include suggested changes or methodologies, provide a rationale for your suggestions, and refer to the specific section or page number of the Draft PEIS.

Finally, we encourage you to submit comments via the project website. It's easy for you, it speeds our ability to get comments into the database for analysis and up on the website for public review, and doesn't require stamps or envelopes.

Finally, today's hearing process. I will call on speakers in the order in which you registered. Please step up to the microphone and clearly state your name and organization, if you're representing one, before making your comments. Please limit your oral comments to three minutes so that everyone who wants to speak today may have a chance to be heard. I'll advise you when you have 30 seconds left so you can wrap up.

We'll repeat this process until everyone who's registered to speak has had a chance to provide comment. I'll then ask if anyone else wants to speak. After those people have had a chance to speak, we'll go back and see if anybody wanted to add to their comments, if we have time remaining, and only after everyone has had a chance, then we'll close the hearing. We'll remind you of when comments are due and how to submit them.

If you're speaking from a prepared statement, we'd also ask you to please leave us a copy at the registration desk. If you're not prepared to do that tonight, if you could send it to us via the project website.

While agency representatives won't be answering questions during the hearing, we will stay afterwards to discuss the Draft PEIS with you.

Are there any questions on how the process is going to be conducted this evening? If not, we'll begin. We'll take your comments.

Our first speaker—and we've got seats right here, right here. There's some in the second row.

Our first speaker is Robin Maxwell and our second speaker is Max Thomas.

Robin Maxwell:

Hi. My name is Robin Maxwell. I am a historian and author and I live outside of Pioneertown. Off the grid. And at home this tower is generated 100 percent by photovoltaic solar panels and wind.

These energy corridors in question have spawned plans for any number of environmentally devastating projects on the East and West Coasts. But most disturbing to my neighbors and me is the LADWP's Green Path North transmission lines and the 100-plus so-called green generation plants proposed to blaze across our precious and pristine mountains, our wildlife sanctuaries and our spectacular flattop mesas, unique in California that would connect to the Green Path.

The ill-conceived plans for these energy corridors, their aftermath as well as the purpose of lining a few pockets are frighteningly similar to what America has just endured with five years in war in Iraq. This time, our government agencies and big energy corporations are planning to go to war on another desert: the Mojave Desert.

As a historian, I can tell you this is no different from an army of a large, powerful city-state marching down the road to a smaller, weaker, resource-rich neighbor and setting upon it to rape, pillage, plunder and, finally, possess it, for nothing more than its own financial gains.

My neighbors and I want to make sure that Angelinos are fully aware that the Green Path North and related projects will not only be denying their neighbors in the desert their property via the use of eminent domain, and their rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, but Green Path will cause the desecration of some of America's greatest national treasures.

How do you think Angelinos will feel when they learn that their tax dollars have paved over their desert playground with three million acres of wind farms and solar farms, and criss-crossed it with 200-foot tall steel towers and transmission lines? What do you think they're going to say when they find out that the Green Path North is going to straddle the San Andreas Fault in the exact location that seismologists are telling us is going to rupture next? Are you going to tell them, "Hey, it's okay. It's green energy." I'm here to tell you, you cannot ravage some of America's greatest natural wonders and call it green. It makes a mockery of the world—word.

We the people of the Mojave Desert are saying to you tonight, you cannot come out here and destroy our wildlands, our neighborhoods and our way of life. With all due respect, we will not allow you to do it. Every single town and city along the Green Path route, as well as the county of San Bernardino, has issued a very stern resolution against this

monstrosity. We will fight this from the Governor's mansion to the Supreme Court. We will take it upon ourselves to educate the public in every form of media.

Okay. Thank you very much.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Ms. Maxwell.

Our next speaker will be Max Thomas, followed by Judy Brannen.

Max Thomas: Hi. I'm Max Thomas—.

LaVerne Kyriss: —Max, Please come up to the microphone so those on the Webcast can hear you .

Max Thomas: I think they can hear me. I relinquish my three minutes so that others may speak. Thanks.

LaVerne Kyriss: It's just that the people on the webcast can't hear you. So, Max Thomas has relinquished his three minutes. And Judy Brannen is heading forward. Barbara Renton is our next speaker.

Judy Brannen: Good evening. My name is Judy Brannen and I'm a member of the California Desert Coalition and a partner of The Wilderness Society. I would like to state that I concur with everything that Robin Maxwell has said. And in addition, I would like to add a couple of comments.

Green Path North was on the books for a very long time before area residents and the County of San Bernardino and the town of Yucca Valley became aware of it. I live in the Pipe's Canyon area of Pioneertown. And the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Green Path North Project will forever [cut in audio] Mojave Desert.

The LADWP has been clandestine and secretive about their involvement. And it was not until August of 2007 that I became aware of the marker set into the mountain with LADWP and the name Katherine stamped on it. The marker's on private property within one mile of where I live, was set without owner's knowledge, and its existence was denied by the LADWP.

Subsequent markers indicate a route that bisects the Big Morongo Canyon and Pipe's Canyon Preserves, as well as historic Pioneertown, continues through Flamingo Heights, Johnson Valley, Lucerne Valley, and into Hesperia. These areas are home to wildlife and plants, Native American petroglyphs, flattop buttes, natural springs and the Joshua Tree National Park. People come from all over the world to view the majestic Joshua Trees and enjoy many species of birds coming to the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve.

As a licensed real estate broker, retired, with 30 years in the industry, I'd like to take a quick moment to address the effects GPM will have on property values. Private property that lies in the path will be subject to eminent domain and, regardless of any money the owners receive, there is never adequate compensation for the seizing of one's quality of life. The rural areas of the Morongo basin are inhabited by those of us who live differently than folks in the city. We respect all critters, including snakes, coyotes, bobcats and native vegetation.

If you own a home adjacent to the proposed power line, I promise you your home will be very difficult to sell. Instead of a lovely mountain view out the window, the sight of unsightly monstrous towers will have a very negative effect. Think like a buyer. Do you worry about the fire hazard and fire insurance cost? Seven of the October 2007

California fires were reported to have been caused by downed power lines. Are you concerned about health risks such as cancer affecting you and your children? The health risk attributed to living in proximity are still being debated. Would you take that risk?

I think all of us recognize the need for state-of-the-art renewable, truly green energy. Green Path North is anything but green. We are recovering from devastating wildfires, but we would never recover and survive the damages attributed to Green Path North. We ask you to please see that the corridor Green Path North is planning never gets on the map. And please, please encourage everyone to expand existing corridors and actively promote conservation.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Ms. Brannen.

Our next speaker is Barbara Renton.

Barbara Renton: Thank you. My name is Barbara Renton. I'm with the Wilderness Society, the California Desert Coalition, and I'm on the board of directors at Flamingo Heights. I'm against the West-Wide Energy Corridor based in California or anywhere else.

I survived cancer eight years ago, but I had to go to 12 doctors in 15 years before coming here to find a doctor to get rid of it. Now, LA wants to bring 500 cancer-causing electrical towers into my neighborhood. I say no.

I was suicidal before—since the age of 10. This finally stopped in 1996. Now, LA wants to bring 500 electrical towers to my area that has been linked to increased suicides from the constant noise of the hissing of electrical towers. I say no.

I moved to the rural desert after being diagnosed with MS in 1987 because I could no longer work with the State Police, and this area seemed compatible to my disease. To keep it in remission, the quiet, dry climate keeps my MS in remission. But now, LADWP wants to use my area for the benefit of an overpopulated LA. I say no.

Let the DWP use solar panels on each building in LA and force their people to recycle their waste, and not use our pristine desert as their own personal garbage dump and only source of energy. I left the great city of Chicago to reclaim my health in this desert and will not tolerate them to diminish or threaten my well-being just for their convenience and temporary profit.

If LA is not willing to use existing energy corridors along Route 10, they will find it a much more costly adventure to use my area since my 200 fellow NRA members will ensure they never get a second of energy from these illegal towers. And I encourage my neighbors to remove each marker they find on their property illegally. Many of my neighbors look forward to shooting out each megawatt tower with long-range rifles every day that LADWP would have the audacity to use our homes for their greedy energy sources.

LA Mayor Antonio wants to make LA—LA Mayor Antonio needs to make LA answer for their own garbage and their own energy and not use the Bureau of Land Management and destroy our quality of life. We will fight them every step of the way. That's not a threat—that's a promise. Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Ms. Renton.

Our next speaker is Karen Komorowski—I probably said that wrong—followed by Esther Shaw. Karen? I don't see Karen.

Esther Shaw? Esther Shaw has asked to relinquish her minutes. Thank you, Esther.

Eva Soltes? She'll be followed by Annie Thomas.

There you go. All right?

Eva Soltes: Yeah. I'm Eva Soltes and I'm here with the CDC, the Desert Coalition and also the Wilderness Society. And I agree with the things that have been said before me.

And one thing that is very striking to me is I'm distressed that all of the front row seats, where the elected officials should be here, are empty. And I think this is—are you elected?

Unidentified Woman: [Inaudible.]

Eva Soltes: No, elected. And there's a very specific distinction because I think it's to the heart of the problem that we're having. I think that Mayor Villaraigosa in Los Angeles has run into some problems with his term. And I think that he's trying to develop a plan that is gonna kind of pull him out politically that will make him look good, because he's had some other problems. And I think it's a very short-sighted approach that he's taking.

I think if there's anything that we learned from 9/11, it should be that we cannot protect every little part of our country, that we need to begin to have more civic planning that is going to look into the future. And to not stretch our institutions—the Defense Department, the Department of Security, the Energy Department—in a way that is not going to be possible.

And if there was ever a place in the world that could serve as an example as to how energy could be produced in a sustainable way it's Los Angeles. It's full of buildings that are single story. It's full of a kind of architecture where there's plenty of room, there's plenty of sun.

And I think if—he apparently does have a plan that, you know, within a certain number of years he wants to have a 30 percent increase in energy and so forth. That could be so simply done by dividing out, you know, that half a million people, you know, 30 percent of the people that need to, you know, develop a kind of consciousness.

And in the first two years if he, you know, gave a very large tax advantage or some kind of subsidy, you're looking at a project here that's billions of dollars to run an energy corridor. But, if half of that money could be devoted to alternative energy on an individual basis and make the people who are using it responsible for their own energy needs.

I mean, I frequent the cities. I, you know, am part of the cultural life there. I was born in Los Angeles. And I know how frightening it can be to be without electricity in this day and age. And I think that it's a very real threat when you're talking about transporting energy. I think that is a basic flaw, the idea of transporting large amounts of energy when, in fact, it could really be produced on an individual basis in home.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Our next speaker is Annie Thomas, and she will be followed by April Sall.

Annie Thomas: My name is Annie Thomas. I've lived in Joshua Tree for 20 years. By now you are fully aware of the CDC and the Wilderness Society organizations so I'll spare you that repetition.

CDC representing the residents of the Mojave Desert hopes to appeal to you as stewards of our public trust, civil liberties and public land. I've come here this evening to encourage you to, first, consider that the West-Wide Energy Corridor is fundamentally the wrong way to address our nation's need for energy, greenhouse gas reductions, national security, and reduce our dependence on foreign oil. And second, to deny the application for the right-of-way for the Green Path North Project as proposed by the applicant, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

I do not agree that blasting, bulldozing, scraping, crushing and grading are green. Nor are they activities that reduce greenhouse gases. Each plant that is removed no longer is there to absorb carbon dioxide. And each piece of heavy construction equipment contributed enormous amounts of carbon monoxide into the atmosphere.

In closing, I wish to implore you to please do what is right for the American people and what is right for the precious and fragile habitats of the Mojave Desert. We the people need your leadership to develop and maintain rational energy policy that is based on conservation and local generation of energy and stop Green Path North.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment, and for listening.

LaVerne Kyriess: Thank you, Ms. Thomas.

Our next speaker is April Sall, and she will be followed by Jane Mootz.

April Sall: Thank you. Good evening. My name is April Sall. I'm here representing the California Desert Coalitions. I am a resident of Pioneertown that lives in a house that is off the grid and powered entirely by solar panels, compete with a solar well.

I have many concerns about the fast-tracking process that the Energy Policy Act, Section 368, sets in place. It undermines the National Environmental Protection Act and the California Environmental Quality Act. A PEIS of this magnitude, that affects nearly three million acres of public land, is a new challenge to the Western states and their unique resources and environments. Therefore, by its very nature it is a concern to the scientific communities and the public citizens of this country because it is impossible to accurately mitigate the impacts of this magnitude of a project.

Ecological processes and corridors will be severely impacted by these corridors, as well as individual species. Cultural resources, both those documented and the possible hundreds of thousands that lie undocumented due to the limited staff and funding of our federal land managers are at risk.

Furthermore, since this legislation allows, and I quote, "Right-of-way proponents to benefit from using the corridors through streamlined permitting processes," there is a further concern that the impacts of the specific energy projects will not be analyzed to the level of detail necessary or appropriate.

Also, a 90-day comment period is insufficient to review, analyze and comment on a PEIS—again, of this magnitude—due to the significance of its irreversible negative effects on our public lands.

The risk of fire from downed power lines is a proven threat as seen in the recent Southern California wildfires. These towers can be brought down by high winds and earthquakes, both conditions common in many of the corridor-designated areas.

The Department of Energy's U.S. Climate Change Technology Program lays out several strategies superior to these archaic transmission projects. New technologies, local and regional power generation, and conservation strategies are clearly outlined in this strategic plan.

We come to you for leadership to bring the American public's energy generation and transmissions into the 21st century and to protect our national security interests by calling for local energy generation.

Please go back to the drawing table and do not allow projects like LADWP's Green Path North to fast-track dirty green power into our public lands and through our protected conservation areas for a WWEC right-of-way.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Ms. Sall.

Our next speaker is Jane Mootz, and she will be followed by xxxxx.

Jane Mootz: Good evening. My name is Jane Mootz and I'm a citizen of Yucca Valley. And I'm here on behalf of the California Desert Coalition and the Wilderness Society to provide public comment.

I do not agree that low or no interest government loans granted to developed corporations who develop projects within the West-Wide Energy Corridors, as that is an example of corporate welfare at our taxpayers' expense.

In addition, I strongly support an energy policy that promotes local generation of power through incentives, tax credits and low-interest loans before more remote generation and long distance transmission.

And in closing I'd just like to ask that you deny the Green Path North and provide the kind of leadership that we all are looking for.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Ms. Mootz.

Our next speaker is xxxxx. And xxxxx will be followed by Roland Wright.

xxxxx: Hi. I'm xxxxx. I live in xxxxx. I'm here representing the CDC and the Wilderness Society.

And what I'd like to speak about is—well, let me go back a step. I strongly support a national energy policy that promotes technology, assisted energy conservation through incentives, tax credits, and low-interest loans before more remote generation and long-distance transmissions. I strongly support a national energy policy that promotes local generation of power through incentives, tax credits, and low-interest loans before more remote generation and long-distance transmissions.

And the reason I feel that way is one of the subjects that goes along with national security is more localized power sources rather than the long-distance grids. One solution to that is individual solar-powered generation. This is a wonderful idea whose time is now.

I have taken this pledge. All of my appliances in my home are Energy Star efficient. All my light bulbs have been changed, the new energy saving type. And I have installed one of the largest solar systems in residential areas through the whole Morongo Valley. I have 72 panels, 11 kilowatt system. And I'm only gonna tell you what I paid for it for a reason. It was about an \$83,000 system. And after the discounts and rebates it wound up netting me about \$53,000.

And the reason I bring this up is there were rebates. But, each—every so often they keep lowering those rebates. They've gone down since I bought the system. Plus, California is one of the few states that will not pay back for the electricity given back to them. They will pay individual companies that will produce electricity. And because of what's going on, there are I believe 100 or 120 applications for additional power sources to be put into the desert that will then need more power—more towers to tie into the towers already proposed. And that's being overlooked.

I'll go back to where I had—. I recognize the new brand by the CPUC that it is in lieu of the new rebates. The new program in 2008, there is a program by the California Public Utility Commission for existing residences and commercial buildings that will allow \$0.39 per kilowatt. They will pay you, but only for five years. Why only for five years? If I'm giving them back electricity, why don't they pay for as long as I'm giving them electricity?

And that's how I feel about—and I think that you should stop the Green Path. And I'm not a public speaker.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Mr. xxxxx.

Our next speaker is Roland Wright, and he will be followed by Roger Taylor.

Roland Wright: Hi. I'm Roland Wright. And I've come to provide comment. I'm a resident of xxxxx and a member of the California Desert Coalition.

I'm here to speak in opposition to the Green Path North, and any other proposed corridor that would create long-distance transmission of energy. The added corridor is only going to increase the use of electricity in Los Angeles because they're not gonna give up any of their current electric transmission lines and so it's only going to increase it. It's not gonna conserve it at all.

To date, LA has talked a lot about being green. But, it hasn't done anything yet to conserve energy. It's got to start conserving energy. It needs to do that now. And so far, nothing.

LA should look at generating energy. They've got all these flat-top buildings in Los Angeles because by law they have to be flat. Why not solar panels on those? It would certainly create a lot of energy savings for them. If they would do these it would truly make Los Angeles green. And it would eliminate the need for long-distance transmission lines.

So, I do urge you to stop the Green Path North and stop all of the transmission lines.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Mr. Wright.

Our next speaker is Roger Taylor, and Mr. Taylor will be followed by Melissa Spurr.

Roger Taylor: My name is Roger Taylor. And as these other people are, with the CDC and Wilderness Society. I'm certainly not a public speaker. I certainly enjoyed hearing these other people because they've spoke my mind exactly. I agree with it all.

One little thing I might add to this that other people don't realize is, in Johnson Valley, right where they're putting this thing through, we have an airport. And it's downhill. And so, to land downhill, you have to really hedge-hop to get on the end of that runway when the wind's blowing from that direction. And those wires, they're going right on the end of the runway. So, someone is gonna be hung up there with their airplane on those wires sure as I'm standing here if you build it—do that.

And like I say, to keep it short, I agree with these other people and I thank you for listening.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Mr. Taylor.

Our next speaker is Melissa Spurr, and she will be followed by Peter Spurr.

Melissa Spurr: Good evening. My name is Melissa Spurr and I have come here today to provide comment. I'm a resident of xxxxx and I am a member of the California Desert Coalition, that I will refer to as the CDC as a partner with the Wilderness Society.

And I wish to say that I completely agree with all of the previous comments presented by the members of the CDC and Wilderness Society partners, especially Robin Maxwell. That was very powerful. And Ms. Renton, I'm not a gun person, but I can't think of a better use for a firearm than what you proposed.

And the CDC is a coalition that partners or coordinates with and/or represents environmental organizations, property owners, property owner associations, native tribes—Native American tribes, municipal advisory councils, city and town governments, resident associations, chambers of commerce, realtor associations, land trust organizations, wildland conservancies, land held in perpetuity, physicians, engineers, environmental scientists, attorneys, and hundreds of individuals who reside in the Mojave Desert.

The CDC fully supports the development of energy from renewable sources to reduce greenhouse gases and diminish our nation's dependence on foreign oil.

I am also here today sponsored by the Wilderness Society. The Wilderness Society has more than 300,000 spirited members who, since 1935, are dedicated to protecting America's wilderness through science, advocacy and education. The Wilderness Society's mission is to deliver an unspoiled legacy of wild places, with all the precious values they hold: biological diversity, clean air and water, towering forests, rushing rivers, sweet sage; silent deserts for our future generations.

The CDC, representing the residents of the Mojave Desert, hopes to appeal to you as stewards of our public trust, civil liberties and public lands.

I have come here this evening to encourage you to, first, consider that the West-Wide Energy Corridor is fundamentally the wrong way to address our nation's need for energy, greenhouse gas reduction, national security, and reduce our dependence on foreign oils.

Second, to deny the application for the right-of-way for the Green Path North Project as proposed by the applicant, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

I am opposed to the use of double-speak terms such as "green," "renewable," and "alternative," and I will not be fooled by the real corporate welfare agenda.

I am appalled by the behavior of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power who, for the past two years, have made false claims and lied when confronted with factual [cut in audio.] It is this type of deceitful and dishonest behavior that erodes trust among citizens and gives the government a bad name.

Okay, 30 seconds. I vehemently oppose the fact that, in order to connect the West-Wide Energy Corridors, many of whom are retired and elderly and on fixed incomes, will be driven defenselessly from their homes at rock-bottom prices due to the crash housing markets, West-Wide Energy Corridors and I'm out of time.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Ms. Spurr. We'll probably have a chance to come back and give you a second round.

Mr. Spurr. And you will be followed by David Garry.

Peter Spurr:

Good evening. My name is Peter Spurr and I've come here tonight to provide comment. I also am a resident of xxxxx and am a member of the California Desert Coalition, that I will refer to as the CDC, and partner with the Wilderness Society.

I wish to say that I also agree with all previous speakers tonight. And by now, you're fully aware of the CDC and the Wilderness Society organizations so I'll spare you the repetition.

The CDC, representing residents of the Mojave Desert hopes to appeal to you as stewards of our public trust, civil liberties and public lands. I've come here this evening to encourage you to, first, consider the West-Wide Energy Corridor is fundamentally the wrong way to address our nation's need for energy, greenhouse gas reduction, national security, and reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

Second, to deny the application for the right-of-way for the Green Path North Project as proposed by the applicant Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

And I think I speak for many when I say that I, too, am vehemently opposed to the use of double-speak for terms such as "green," "renewable," and "alternative." And I will not be fooled by the real corporate welfare agenda.

And I also strongly support a national energy policy that promotes local generation of power through incentives, tax credits, and low-interest loans before more remote generation and long-distance transmission. Remote generation of power and long-distance transmission lines is a concept that is so antiquated and it has to be—go back to the drawing board right away. It's like burning fossil fuels. It is certainly something that its time is over with.

In closing, I wish to implore you to please do what is right for the American people and what is right for the precious and fragile habitats of the Mojave Desert. We the people

need your leadership to develop and maintain rational energy policy that is based on conservation and local generation of energy and stop Green Path North.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment for you and thank you for listening.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Mr. Spurr.

Our next speaker is David Garry, and he will be followed by Ann Garry.

David Garry:

Good evening. My name is David Garry. I'm a resident of Pipe's Canyon, through which the transmission lines of the LADWP's Green Path North will transect if this is allowed. I am also a member of the CDC in conjunction with the Wilderness Society. And I'm also here to represent many of my neighbors.

I do have some suggestions for changes in methodology. It will require a little bit of thinking outside the box. I want to reduce the amount of corridors that we have. We have the technology to build huge power generating plants. We can also build small ones and make them more local. Get rid of these lines. They are a problem. We've seen that this last summer. They're gonna continue to be a problem. And they are antiquated. We can do better.

I also have concerns that alternatives that don't generate millions of dollars for large corporations are not addressed. You've heard many times about the photo-voltaic generation right here in this room tonight.

Energy consumption has to be addressed, especially in California. We are the worst. This has to be done before any permits are issued. It just must be done.

And in closing, I'm going to ask something of you that our government seems to have a real problem with. Please listen, please hear. Thank you very much.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Mr. Garry.

Our next speaker is Ann Garry. She will be followed by John Viola.

Ann Garry:

Good evening. My name is Ann Garry and I come here today to provide comment. I am a resident of Pipe's Canyon in San Bernardino County and I am a member of the CDC and a partner with the Wilderness Society.

I have come here this evening to encourage you to, first, consider that the West-Wide Corridor—the West-Wide Energy Corridor is fundamentally the wrong way to address our nation's need for energy, greenhouse gas reduction, national security, and reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

Second, to deny the application for the right-of-way for the Green Path North Project as proposed by the applicant, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

Our Mojave Desert is a different environment than that of Los Angeles. Our plants struggle to germinate and take many years to grow to maturity. There are many people that think of these plants as weeds, and sometimes there are 100-year-old ancients that have survived a brutal environment and yet bloom with a glorious carpet across lands that will be destroyed if Green Path North is allowed to happen. There is no value in this beauty to corporations and, therefore, they have no problem destroying what we find precious in our lives.

I do not agree that blasting, bulldozing, scraping, crushing and grading are green, nor are they activities that reduce greenhouse gases. Each plant that is removed no longer is there to absorb carbon dioxide. And each piece of heavy construction equipment contributes enormous amounts of carbon monoxide into the atmosphere.

In closing, I wish to implore you to please do what is right for the American people and what is right for the precious and fragile habitats of the Mojave Desert. We the people need your leadership to develop and maintain rational energy policy that is based on conservation and local generation of energy, and stop Green Path North.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment and for listening.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Ms. Garry.

Our next speaker is John Viola. He will be followed by xxxxx.

John Viola:

Thank you very much. My name is John Viola. I'm a member of the California Wilderness Society—I'm sorry, the California Desert Society. I've been awake a long time so I'm a little delirious. California Desert Coalition and the Wilderness Society. I'll spare you the details. You've heard enough about the California Desert Coalition and the Wilderness Society.

But, there are a few comments I want to make. And first, I want to reiterate that I agree with all the speakers that have spoken already. And I also agree that we want to ask you to do two things. First, to recognize that the West-Wide Energy Corridor is fundamentally wrong energy policy for the United States for the reasons that many people have already stated. And second, to deny the right-of-way proposed by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

I want to emphasize that I continue to support the statements that I presented to you on Sacramento on Tuesday. And I appreciate the opportunity to do that again this evening with a few other thoughts.

I also want to appreciate the very helpful conversations that us and our organization was able to share with Kate Winthrop and Tom Pogacnik at the BLM and with LaVerne Kyriss from the Department of Energy, and with Paul Johnson from the National Forest Service, and many others of the participating agencies that we were able to talk with.

A few additional comments that I'd like to make. Kate did an amazingly comprehensive job of explaining the BLM's rationale that underlies the agency's support of this Draft PEIS. Kate told us that the energy generation and transmission development is going to happen. Kate said that this proliferation of remote energy generation and long-distance transmission—spoke of it as if it was a done deal. Kate further explained that since it was going to happen, it would be better if it was contained within the boundaries of the West-Wide Energy Corridor rather than chaotically disbursed in corridors that could be more destructive to the environment.

This perspective makes sense—if you buy the premise that remote energy generation and long-distance transmission is a done deal. What I would like to ask Kate and Tom and LaVerne and Paul to consider is that the BLM and the DOE and the participating agencies, what they are doing with this Draft PEIS is that they are trying to make EPACT 2005—a bad bill—look good.

It is precisely the pathogenic premise that proliferation of remote energy generation and long-distance transmission is a done deal. And since it's "going to happen, it is better to

contain it within the West-Wide Energy Corridor" that has sedated some of the environmental organizations in our country to dangerously pass into a passive posture that, "It could have been worse."

Let's speak frankly. Oilmen have walked the halls of Washington for seven years, that Capitol Hill has been wined and dined by special interests. It's no wonder that EPACT 2005 and Section 368 and the resulting West-Wide Energy Corridors makes it easy for corporations to desecrate our wilderness and dilute NEPA and sweeten the pot with subsidies at taxpayers' expense. And it's no wonder that EPACT 2005, Section 1221 and the resulting NIETCs, defiles the state and county and local rights to regulate land.

I thank you. But before I leave, I just want to give you folks a present. Kate would you [inaudible].

[Applause.]

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Mr. Viola.

I'd like to call xxxxx forward. He will be followed by Catherine Svehla.

xxxxx: Hello. My name is xxxxx. I live in xxxxx, California. Grew up in Los Angeles. I am a retired general contractor, after 35 years. And one of my last projects was working on a 25,000 square foot home for a family of four. Need I say more? And it's this kind of unbridled consumption, unregulated, really untaxed, that's giving rise to the need for this sort of a corridor.

And I want to say that, yes, it's a bad idea from the beginning. And the idea that it's a done deal is a real damaging way to think about this. And I think that—what I want to say to the people of the Department of Energy, to Kate, to the rest of you from the BLM, is that if you find it in your hearts and you find the courage to stand up against this WWEC, to really stand up against it and say this is not the way for our nation to go, you will not be the first. You will not be the first to stand up against something that a government has asked you to do, that history condemned as morally reprehensible.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Mr. xxxxx.

Our next speaker will be Catherine Svehla—I may have said that wrong—followed by Cynthia Fink.

Sorry for—.

Catherine Svehla: That's okay. I'm used to getting "Catherine uh-uh-uh-uh..." So, the fact that you even tried it, I appreciate.

My name is Catherine and I'm a resident of xxxxx. And like many people in this room, I'm opposed to the Green Path North. I moved to the desert because I appreciate what's there, not because I had some fantasy about how I was going to enrich myself like a natural—it's a natural resource. And I have a problem with the specific project that's been proposed by Los Angeles for a lot of the reasons that have been mentioned here.

But, as part of the sort of larger context, I want to take my time to kind of speak to that because it has more to do with the Western Energy Corridor which, as people have said, is a bad—is just a bad idea. And it's a bad idea because it's not the best thinking and

because it reflects the old idea that we can just endlessly chew up whatever's out there. And that meeting the public needs for energy means trampling on and ultimately destroying the last remaining public resources that we have. It's just not the best way to do it. Anybody can get on the internet for five minutes and find ideas about local generation that make a lot more sense.

So, I hope that the result of this public hearing, these public comments, will translate into some sort of reformulation, not just of where these corridors would go, but the need to even have them to begin with.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you.

Cynthia Fink will be followed by Loucinda Ablin.

Cynthia Fink:

Good evening. My name is Cynthia Fink and I live in xxxxx, California, and I'm a member of the California Desert Coalition, along with the partnership for the Wilderness Society.

And I'm—the CDC which represents the residents of the Mojave Desert hopes to appeal to you as stewards of our public trust, civil liberties, and public lands. We've come here this evening to encourage you, number one, to consider that the West-Wide Energy Corridor is not a good idea and it's not a good way to address our nation's needs for energy, for greenhouse gas reduction, for national security, and to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

Second, I come here to ask you to deny the application for the right-of-way for the Green Path North Project as proposed by the applicant, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

I do not agree with the proposed designated corridors in the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement of the West-Wide Energy Corridors as they will average 3,500 feet wide, but ranging up to 5 miles in width and will scar 6,000 miles and almost 3 million acres of public lands.

I do not agree that the individuals and families should be defenselessly driven from their homes at rock-bottom prices due to the crashed housing market in order to connect West-Wide Energy Corridors across private lands.

In closing, I beg of you, please, do not—I ask that you please stop Green Path North, along with almost everyone else here and hundreds of others that couldn't be here this evening.

Thank you for listening.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Ms. Fink.

Loucinda Ablin will be followed by Karen Tracy.

Loucinda Ablin:

Good evening. My name is Loucinda Ablin and I am here from the town of Joshua Tree and Mojave. I'm here to be opposed to the Green Path North. I'm offended and insulted that the Mayor of Los Angeles and the LADWP's stated notion that the Mojave Desert is Los Angeles' backyard. And their resultant omnipotent attitude that allows them to think

they can destroy another geographic portion of California as they did in the Owens Valley.

I am also here today sponsored by the Wilderness Society. The Wilderness Society has more than 300,000 spirited members who, since 1935 are dedicated to protecting America's wilderness through science, advocacy and education. The Wilderness Society's mission is to deliver an unspoiled legacy of wild places, with all the precious values they hold: biological diversity, clean air and water, towering forests, rushing rivers, and sweet sage; silent deserts for our future generations.

In the Los Angeles Times, November 4th, 2007, it stated, "Power lines are the suspected culprits behind at least 7 of the 12 major fires that burned in Southern California this year, including the Witch Fire, which burned nearly 200,000 acres, destroyed 1,041 homes and killed 2 people."

There is no room for high-powered lines in the Mojave Desert, in California, or in the United States or the world. They are antiquated, they are outdated and we need to think of something better.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Ms. Ablin.

Karen Tracy will be followed by Daniel Sall.

Karen Tracy:

Good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Dr. Karen Tracy. I live in xxxxx. I have for 23 years. I, too, represent the CDC and the Wilderness Society.

Remote generation and long-distance transmission of electricity is—needs to be a thing of the past. The time has come for the difficult decision to make local generation the standard.

I'm personally appalled by the attitude of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power who, for the past two years, have made false claims and lied when confronted with the factual evidence of the survey markers planted in cement in our pristine areas. It's the type of deceitful and dishonest behavior that erodes trust and gives government a bad name.

All of the talking points that we've heard here this evening I agree with.

And in closing, I would implore you to do what is right for the American people and what is right for the precious and fragile inhabitants of the Mojave Desert. We the people need your leadership to make these difficult decisions. Develop and maintain a rational energy policy that is based upon conservation and local generation of energy. And stop Green Path North should LADWP apply.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Ms. Tracy.

Daniel Sall will be followed by xxxxx.

Daniel Sall:

I'm Danny Sall. I don't really know what I need to say now. Everybody's covered all the points, I think, over and over. But, I'll start off by saying I agree with most of the points that have been made here tonight.

But, I did want to tie together the 368 and the 1221. That—those sections of those energy acts, they basically—by fast tracking on the federal level these—the BLM, use of the land, it makes the green—it opens the door for Green Path North to come through our part of the country. And the—there's information on the LADWP's website that says that they can use 1221 for condemnation purposes and such. So, that's kind of how they're tying together.

And Mr. Rosenberg, the retired contractor—I'm still a contractor. And a 2,500 [sic] square foot house for 4 people. I've been working on ones in the low desert that are 2 people and 7,000 square feet. And they air-condition them all summer long so the furniture don't shrink. So, we have a lot of work to do with conservation.

And I'm a board member of the Mojave Desert Land Trust. And we've been working pretty diligently since our formation about three years ago with conserving—our mission statement is to protect and conserve most of—you know, what we can—left of the Mojave Desert. And as land trusts across the country are starting to discover with this West-Wide Energy act, that that creates quite a problem for conservation and protecting lands in perpetuity as 501(3)(c)'s are by law supposed to do. So, there's quite an uproar in the land conservation community about this particular act.

And the three million acres that are gonna be destroyed in the Mojave Desert with this corridor piece, the West-Wide Energy Corridor, doesn't address the millions that are already probably approaching a million with the solar and wind generation. And before it's over there'll be millions. And so how—I don't think anything of this magnitude has ever faced the BLM before. And scientifically I don't know how they're gonna be able to handle that. This—the studying of the ETAs and such just seems like such an overwhelming task because you can't pick out each project individually.

So anyway, I guess we'll hear what other points that everyone else has got.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Mr. Sall.

And I'll let you pronounce your last name. And she'll be followed by Richard Schwartz.

xxxxx:

Hi. My name is xxxx. And I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. I live xxxxx, California and I'm also here on behalf of the Wilderness Society and the California Desert Coalition, which was created in opposition to the Green Path of LADWP.

And when the community first found out about this, it was almost hard to believe that this was an actual plan. How could you actually put these gigantic power lines through preserves and historic areas, a preserve that—the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve, which is one of the only riparian areas rich with water in the entire Mojave Desert?

Well, the truth really is that there's few places for these corridors left. And there are so many few places because there's so many areas that haven't already been damaged by unrestricted consumption. There are so many—there's hardly any areas left that haven't been developed or used for their resources.

We have tapped all our resources. And we're at the end of this abundance of natural lands and space that we thought we could just continue using. It's now time to look at creative solutions to how we're gonna face the future because we cannot continue to use these resources at all.

And the great thing right now is that the money is out there, the solutions are out there and the technology is out there in abundance to really be figuring things out here. So many people have been talking tonight about generating local electricity because that's—and local power—because that is truly green.

Green means using the most efficient methods. It means conserving first and then, after that, generating power locally. Using things locally. This is at the core of green. So, you really can't call anything green if it doesn't follow those standards. And it's now time to hold large power companies to those standards. And there's no other excuse at this point. And the public eye is now on California, especially Southern California because there are so many people here that we are using a lot of the energy.

And if you do actually take the steps to reassess this entire assumption that we do need these power lines at all, and that's—and this West-Wide Energy Corridor—and you take those steps to bring in creative solutions and bring in local solutions and use the information that's out there, you will be rewarded. You will be looked at positively 5 years from now, 10 years from now. You will be heroes in the public eye. And I hope that you can take that step.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, xxxxx.

Richard Schwartz will be followed by Phyllis Schwartz.

Richard Schwartz: Good evening. My name is Richard Schwartz and I have come today to provide comment. I'm a resident of Yucca Valley and I'm a member of the CDC and a partner for the Wilderness Society. Before I begin, I wish to say that I completely agree with all of the previous comments presented by the members of the CDC and the Wilderness Society caucus.

Although my statements tonight may sound a little political, they cross all political lines. I think we've all noted our rising energy costs in conjunction with the obscene profits realized by our energy providers.

I want you to know that I do not agree with land use subsidies that the Bureau of Land Management will give corporation in the West-Wide Energy Corridors as it is another example of corporate welfare at our taxpayers' expense.

I do not agree with the investment tax credits that the Internal Revenue Service will provide to corporations to develop projects within the West-Wide Energy Corridor as it is another example of corporate welfare at our taxpayers' expense.

And I will repeat that I do not agree with lower or no-interest government loans granted to development corporations who develop projects within the West-Wide Energy Corridor as it is yet another example of corporate welfare at our taxpayers' expense.

In closing, I would also like to implore you to do the right thing for the American people. And also to stop the Green Path North.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Mr. Schwartz.

Phyllis Schwartz will be followed by Ruth Rieman.

Phyllis Schwartz: Good evening. Thank you for listening to all of us. And I relinquish my time to my fellow community.

Ruth Rieman: Good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to comment this evening. My name is Ruth Rieman. I am a resident of the County of San Bernardino, a member of the California Desert Coalition who is partnering with the Wilderness Society tonight.

I repeat for emphasis these two requests. First, understand that the West-Wide Energy Corridor is fundamentally the wrong way to address our nation's need for energy.

Second, deny the application for right-of-way for the Green Path North Project as proposed by the applicant, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

I think that the WWEC has the cart before the horse. It implies that remote energy production is the wave of the green future, before the nation has had a conversation of what the energy paradigm should be. I too, like many in the room tonight, strongly support a national energy policy that promotes local generation of power before remote generation and long-distance transmission are developed. It's time for the urban center citizens to find their own local green path that leaves the Mojave Desert unspoiled.

In closing, I ask that you do the right thing. For the greater good, save the Mojave Desert and begin by stopping Green Path North.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Ms. Rieman.

Our next speaker is xxxxx. xxxxxl will be followed by Jacqueline Ayer.

xxxxx: My name is xxxxx. I'm a resident of xxxxx. I've lived there for about 17 years. However, I do work in Los Angeles. So, I only get to see my home on the weekends and summers because I'm a teacher.

It's a pleasure to come out to xxxxx and come through the community as we have some really, really beautiful areas there. When I first started hearing about the Green Path and the corridors and everything and I started learning more about it, I'm very surprised that this could happen. It seems like that someone has taken a line and said, "What can we destroy the most." And they're going to come through some places that cannot be repaired.

When I travel in the summer, I go through in different states, small cities that are—you can see that they were once thriving but they are no longer thriving cities. Buildings become in disrepair. And I believe that will happen to not only our community, but the communities around us; Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree.

Another thing that concerns me is that there's a lot of issues with the BLM in terms of people that like to go off-roading, which is a good healthy activity. For a lot of people in Los Angeles, they have no place to play so they come out to the desert and they enjoy the desert. There is some problems with it. But basically, where are people going to go to enjoy the land, as long as they take care of it?

But now, I hear that BLM is going to allow DWP to come onto their land and build these towers. And everyone knows that they are—they're a health problem. It's going to ruin the land that they come through. They're going to be scraping it and cleaning it. There's going to be years of floods. There's going to be years of dry. There's going to be fires that come through. So, that is a really big concern to me.

The other concern that I have is that DWP is already putting markers in people's yards. And when I heard about that it came to my mind—I know the history of the Owens Valley when DWP started that route with the water from the mountains. So, I would suggest that maybe people learn the history of how DWP treats people, treats the land, and does not really have any regard for others.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, xxxxx.

Our next speaker is Jacqueline Ayer. Oh, there you are. She'll be followed by John McFarlane.

Jacqueline Ayer: Sorry about that. Yes, my name is Jackie Ayer and I live in the unincorporated area of xxxxx. So, I might be the only xxxxx person here. I'm on the town council in the community of xxxxx.

Vincent Station, which is the northern nexus for proposed corridor 107-268 is in the town of Acton. Right now, Acton is facing substantial impacts from new transmission capacity created by Southern California Edison development plans. The two SCE corridors that we are dealing with are only—well, a maximum of 300 feet wide. Now, with the energy corridors action we're looking at an additional 1,000 foot-wide corridor with corridor number 107-268, and that's three times bigger than the corridors which already cause us problems. There's no doubt that facilitating this corridor will cause a direct and substantial impact on the community of Acton.

NEPA demands that DOE identify and discuss impacts of the project, which includes impacts off federal lands as well as on federal lands. NEPA demands the DOE identify conflicts of the proposed corridors with local land use planning and policy. NEPA demands the DOE justify the location and width of corridor 107-268, at least on some reasonable level in the PEIS.

NEPA demands that DOE contemplate mitigation measures for impacts both on and off federal lands, at least on some reasonable level in the PEIS. I note that the Draft PEIS does none of these and does not satisfy any of these requirements.

I realize that the site-specific effects of this PEIS will be more general than the specific EIS. But, NEPA demands that effects be addressed and that relevant parties at least be contacted.

None of the public outreach efforts required to satisfy NEPA were utilized in developing the corridor 107-268. LA County Supervisor Antonovich's office was not contacted. The community of Acton, which will be significantly impacted by this corridor, was never contacted. It would have been a simple thing to do, but it was not done.

I note that DOE went to great lengths to, quote, "initiate consultation with Indian tribes who can be potentially impacted by the corridors." And I also note the DOE was very concerned about impact to non-federal lands, and even non-Indian lands that were controlled by Indian tribes. DOE made no such outreach efforts with local municipalities such as Acton that can be so significantly impacted.

And perhaps what I'm about to say you will find offensive, but I am offended that such preferential treatment was offered on purely racial lines.

NEPA—excuse me. What you've heard tonight is a demand that you consider real, no-project alternatives by exploring the viability of [unintelligible] generation, which obviate any requirement for transmission lines. You've heard a demand that the corridor identified be properly justified by an accurate needs analysis. You've heard a demand that DOE seek direction and suggestions from community organizations and municipalities in deciding where potential corridors should be and, indeed, if they should exist at all.

In short, you have heard a simple demand that the PEIS be brought into compliance with any—with the NEPA regulations. You have a statutory obligation to do so and you also have a moral obligation to do so.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Ms. Ayer.

John McFarlane will be followed by Evelyn Hatch.

John McFarlane:

Good evening. Thank you for this opportunity. I'm John McFarlane. I have come from Yucca Valley, California to make public comment. Yucca Valley, California is a small town on the Mojave Desert.

Before going there, I served 21 years in the United States Army serving my government and my fellow citizens, hopeful that I was helping to maintain a strong military force which would maintain our freedoms and our way of life. I think I did that. And I hope I can do some more of that tonight.

After serving 21 years in the Army I took my family to Yucca Valley for one year so we could rebuild, remodel, fix up the house that we owned there and then move to a better place. That was 30 years ago. There's no better place to move.

The house that we live in now has a large comfortable guest room. I implore you call, make an appointment. Come and make use of it. Stay. I'd like to show you the beauty, the serenity, and the fragility of the Mojave Desert. And in showing you that, I'd like you to make some value to the service that I had for our freedom by making decisions that these energy corridors through our desert are not good.

It would be much easier for DWP to destroy our desert than it was for them to almost completely destroy the Owens Valley. Our desert is more fragile than the Owens Valley was. But the agriculture of the Owens Valley has still not come back after 50 years. And I'm afraid the Mojave Desert would be even worsely impacted.

So, I implore you. Listen to the points that have been given here tonight. I agree with all of the points. There are many here tonight who have a lot of personal reasons that they don't want the corridor through their town. That's one side of the issue. But a lot of comments have been made that there's a better way to do it.

The politicians that you serve, that started this whole thing in process by enacting an act that requires to look at and maybe establish corridors will tell you that. If they receive a letter from a constituent they know there's at least 100 who feel that way. And that's correct. You've heard from a few people who represent CDC. For every one of us here tonight there are at least 100 out there who feel the same way as we do but couldn't make it.

There are a large group of people who are opposed to this. So, DWP needs to be told, if you build it, they will come. Some will come with rifles and shoot at your wires; some will land airplanes on it. But, we don't want you to destroy our desert.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Mr. McFarlane.

Evelyn Hatch will be followed by xxxxx.

Evelyn Hatch: I'm Evelyn Hatch. I live in Yucca Valley. And I agree with all of these lovely people. And I just wanted to emphasize a couple of points. As fliers, not only do our people run into wires, but how about the towers? They're gonna have a farmyard of towers to run into.

Also, we seem to be able to go to the moon, we're planning a trip to Mars. And do you mean to tell me that DWP can't find a way to use the existing lines and towers that are in existence?

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Ms. Hatch.

xxxxx will be followed by Sara Viola.

xxxxx: My name's xxxxx and I'm a resident of xxxxx, California. And I'm also a member of the CDC and a friend of the Wilderness Society. And if I turn four shades of red, it's the curse of being a redhead. So, bear with me.

I was raised in Los Angeles and found an opportunity to move to xxxxx for a job. And, you know, I'm a beach bum. Bottom line is, the first six months I was there I was like, what am I doing here? The desert, you know? I didn't like it. But in six months I learned things about the desert that turned me all the way around. I'm an artist. I'm an avid hiker. But, I've gotten to know areas up in the Pioneertown area like Roadrunner Rut and Gamut Gulch and Burns Canyon. I know the old road up to Big Bear, you know.

I'm also a real estate agent and I'm a member of the board of directors of the real estate board up there. I'm the liaison to the board. I know that California Association of Realtors is pretty [expletive].

Bottom line is, I'm against this thing. I know that after I leave here I'm gonna join the NRA. And you know, being raised in Los Angeles I've had a few bouts with bullies. I really think the DWP is a bunch of bullies. And I will be standing in front of a bulldozer. I don't care. I mean, this is wrong. You guys need to figure out a better way. It's not that difficult.

Anyways, thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you. Before I call our next speakers, if the person who took the comments out of our comment box at the registration desk would return those comments. We'd really like to have those back. So, thank you.

And Sara Viola will be followed by xxxx. And maybe those names are reversed, but xxx or xxxxx.

Sara Viola: Good evening. My name is Sara Viola. I'm a member with the California Desert Coalition and a member of the Wilderness Society. I wish to say that I agree with all the comments made previously tonight.

And I particularly want to say that I strongly support a national energy policy that promotes local generation of power, and power through incentives, tax credits, and low-interest loans instead of the development of multiple generation projects and long-distance transmission. With local generation it is not necessary to desecrate our wilderness areas. These are some of our nation's most precious resources which need to be preserved for future generations of plant, animal, and human life. We are spirits of this planet and we have an obligation to protect our planet and the plants and animals here as well. It's not just about human life.

But additionally, please consider future generations of people and what we're gonna do to—in the West corridors and the corridors in the East. And please be more forward-thinking than what the corporations who intend to make a lot of money plan to do. You people can—and others that you know—I'm sure can stop this project and we appreciate your help in that.

Thank you very much.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Ms. Viola.

And if xxxxx is here? Followed by Catherine Janowicz.

xxxxx: Hi. My name is xxxxx. I live in xxxxx and I am part of the Desert Coalition, friends of the Wilderness Society. And I opposed the Green Path North coming through the Morongo Basin.

I agree with everything that's been said here and I would just like to zero in on the place where the residents cannot speak for themselves, and that's the Big Morongo Canyon because they're—and I wish to speak for those residents, the plants and the animals.

I lived in Morongo Valley for 10 years and I spent literally thousands of hours over at the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve. Underground springs that burst forth just south of the highway come from snowpacks in the mountains. It takes three years to actually surface there. They run down through the canyon in streams. They support a large forest of cottonwood trees, mesquites and willows, big horn sheep, deer, bobcats, coyotes, and a multitude of small varmints. A beautiful, restful green spot.

One of the main bird migratory passes in the United States, from Canada to South America. The birds come through there. And people come from all over the world just to view the birds. It is a beautiful oasis, a Garden of Eden in the desert. And Green Path North just must not come through the Morongo Basin.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, xxxxx.

Catherine Janowicz will be followed by Robert Carroll.

Catherine Janowicz: Hello. My name is Catherine Janowicz. I live in Johnson Valley, California.

As our elected officials and people here who are representing—who were appointed to protect our public lands; our land, the people land, it's very disturbing to me that it is

being considered to support the West-Wide Energy Corridor as well as Act 368. These acts will risk that the current system put in place to protect our environment will be fast-tracked, and possibly even bypassed. These laws have been in place for—to protect our lands—for quite some time. And it had thorough study in order to ensure that you do not devastate any wildlands within this corridor.

Many of the areas of this corridor are so remote that it's impossible to even be fully aware of all of the species that currently inhabit it. If you fast-track our NEPA system and our environmental studies, how can you know that you're even going to scratch the surface of the full impact that this will have on our ecosystem?

It is your responsibility to stop any infringement upon our land. You don't need to compromise. These corridors are not necessary. There—what solid proof has been shown that the current corridors are insufficient to support our current needs, but not insufficient? It's quite possible that these corridors already exist, the consumption, that we reasonably should expect as citizens of this great county. But with additional conservation and reviewing the efficiency of the systems we have in place we can assure that we're looking out for our land. Would it seem better use of our existing corridors to look for local energy generation, use of new and better technology? It could possibly eliminate the needs for these corridors at all.

As you heard from many of the people here tonight, there are many impacts on our lives that probably haven't even been considered. Wildlife, small regional airports, and extremely unique plant life that will never be renewed once it is wiped out. It will—that wiped out plant life will impact entire ecosystems. From the spiders to the bobcats, it is all very important to us. Please consider the amount of damage that these corridors will do to our public lands.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Ms. Janowicz.

Unidentified Man: [Inaudible.]

LaVerne Kyriss: That must be Robert Carroll who's turning over his time. Thank you for relinquishing your time.

Our next speaker will be Laurel Williams, followed by Dave Voss.

Laurel Williams: My name is Laurel Williams. I'm a divert field organizer for the California Wilderness Coalition. The California Wilderness Coalition is a state-wide organization that's dedicated to protecting our wildlands and [unintelligible]. And we—.

Unidentified Speaker: [Inaudible.]

Laurel Williams: Yes. We reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the West-Wide Energy Corridors. And I'll start by saying that we were pleased to see that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is drastically improved over the corridors that were initially proposed during the scoping phase for the project.

The initially released corridor proposals would have devastated some of California's most treasured public lands. The original maps included corridors through Joshua Tree National Park, Lassa National Park and several wilderness study areas, as well as designated wilderness. So, while the proposed corridors released in the Draft

Environmental Impact Statement still need to be improved, they are a step in the right direction.

However, several of the currently proposed corridors skirt the edges of really important wild areas without clearly avoiding wilderness study areas, inventory wilderness areas and other important wildlands. So, the final project should clearly state that the new corridors will not intrude upon wilderness study areas, inventory wilderness areas, national parks, national monuments, designated wilderness, and potential wilderness. New corridors should be focused where existing infrastructure exists and should avoid intruding upon the places that really make California spectacular.

Lastly, we urge the various agencies to do more to demonstrate that new corridors and pipelines are actually needed.

Thanks.

LaVerne Kyriss:

Thank you, Ms. Williams.

Our next speaker will be Dave Voss, followed by Karen Komorowski.

Dave Voss:

Hi. I'm Dave Voss. I live in Oceanside, California. I'm with the San Diego chapter of the Sierra Club.

And I would like to request that all—following up on the previous speaker—all proposed wilderness areas and inventory wilderness areas be kept off limits for these corridors. And there's some good reasons for that.

But first, let's take a look at this. Why are we—why do we have this dichotomy? Why do we have the desert versus the cities? Why are we taking public lands versus private lands? And why has—why have utilities basically taken our maps, looked at all the public lands out there, and they do a dot-to-dot connecting the lands together?

Because the utilities make most of the land off these transmission lines. In San Diego, Sempra gets land off the generation—or gets money off the generation, transmission, the fuel that goes into the generation, and then the distribution. Local distributed generation; they only get money off the distributed side. So, there's no financial incentive for them to go for distributed generation. But, that's not what's right for us, the people; that's not what's right for the environment.

You're gonna say okay, great. You're environmentalists. You're against everything. Well, in San Diego we actually funded a study by a power engineer—Bill Powers was his name. He came up with a detailed plan how we could do all of our future energy needs for the next 20 years locally in San Diego. And if you want to take a look at that, that's at sdsmartenergy.org. Other—LA could do the same thing.

Now, again you're saying, well, you're environmentalists. You're the Sierra Club. Well, there's a power line in San Diego called—or proposed power line called Sunrise Powerlink. The California Public Utilities Commission, along with BLM, recently released the Draft EIS/EIR that took Sunrise Powerlink and compared it to six alternatives. Guess what? Sunrise Powerlink was number six out of seven. The top two alternatives: no wires, all local generation. One of them was all renewable. The other one half renewable.

What this shows is, if we don't look at all the alternatives, which this PEIS only looks at the no-action alternative. Our goal is to get power, but it's not to build to give profits to the utilities and ruin our public lands. So really, we need to look at all the alternatives.

Back to the issue of wilderness areas. Line 115-238 would go right through the Houser Mountain proposed wilderness addition.

And then we talked about connecting the dots. Well, what's in-between the dots? A lot of those areas have been purchased by private corporations that have put these into conservancies and land trusts because this land is so valuable. So, not only are we ruining source public land, we're also ruining private, nonprofit land that was put aside to preserve for habit.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Mr. Voss.

Is Karen Komorowski—is Karen here? Okay.

What about Max Thomas? Oh, you relinquished? I didn't have that—I didn't mark that off. Sorry.

Max Thomas: [Inaudible.]

LaVerne Kyriss: If you want to speak, you get a chance.

What about Esther Shaw? Okay. Well—please, Max.

Max Thomas: I agree with everything that's been said thus far by everyone. And thank you all for being here. It's wonderful to see you.

And I just wanted to say that this past Christmas I finally was in the same room with four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, two of which I'd never seen before. And it was quite powerful. And one thing that I think that we haven't heard or talked about this evening is that our Native American brothers and sisters remind us that, whatever we do, we need to be looking forward at least five generations.

I don't believe this project, the WWEC, is looking forward that far at all. And I would love to, in the future, walk hand-in-hand with my grandchildren and show them the beauty of the Mojave Desert and what I've come to appreciate, especially after the fires that we had in 2006. And the regrowth that is occurring is amazing. And if this Green Path North that LADWP is proposing goes through, it is going to be devastating to that which is re-growing.

And I ask you and implore you and I am hopeful that the future that we bring forth with generating new energy locally, decentralized, will be visionary and it will show our communities, our counties, our states, our nation and the world that there's a better way. There is available technology at this moment that we can utilize.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Mr. Thomas.

Is Esther Shaw here? Okay.

Anybody else who relinquished their minutes that they wanted to speak? Are there any other speakers who have not yet spoken who wanted to speak?

Melissa Spurr, would you like to finish your comments, because we didn't—we cut you off. Okay.

Melissa Spurr: [Inaudible.]

LaVerne Kyriss: Okay. Then you and then you. And tell us your name again because I have forgotten. I'm sorry.

Robin Maxwell: It's Robin Maxwell and I forgot my glasses. So, I hope I can see this.

I just wanted to say that we of the Mojave Desert are going to fight these transmission lines in public meetings like this one, in the offices of Mayor Villaraigosa, in Governor Schwarzeneger's office, in the state legislature, the halls of Congress, the White House and right up to the Supreme Court.

We will take it upon ourselves to educate the public in every form of media so they cannot be fooled [cut in audio] this is right action. We will make them understand that fellow citizens are being abused and that they are going to be paying for it. We know that you know that there are alternatives that can be employed, such as conservation and local energy generation that will allow cities like Los Angeles to become energy independent and free from aggression against their desert neighbors.

The citizens of the Mojave are not going to be silent and we are not going to back down, no matter how big this Goliath is. We don't want to have to lay down our bodies in front of your bulldozers, but if we have to we will. We will.

LaVerne Kyriss: And I don't remember your name, so I'm gonna let you introduce yourself. I apologize.

April Sall: Okay. No problem. My name is April Sall. And I would like to just address the federal land managers with one last point. As a fellow land manager myself for a nonprofit called the Wildlands Conservancy, I'd like to remind us all of a very simple, fundamental fact, that land is finite. And it's limited and the earth is not producing any more.

And we need to be careful and tread lightly on these decisions and consider our energy future with that in mind, that we have a limited amount of acreage that is open space and is foreseen less. And we need to be careful about the decisions we make. We have a challenge ahead of us, but we can do better.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Ms. Sall.

A hand for other folks who want to speak, please come forward. One and then two and then—.

Unidentified Man: [inaudible.]

LaVerne Kyriss: Please. Tell us your name, and if you represent an organization.

Steve Bardwell: Hello. My name is Steve Bardwell. I'm a member of the CDC in partner with the Wilderness Society. I am a resident of Los Angeles. And the Department of Water and Power provides my power. I hope soon to be a resident of the Pipe's Canyon area. And I am very disappointed in the—our Mayor, Antonio Villaraigosa, who I voted for on his

platform of being a green mayor. And as evidenced by this Green Path North, his concept of a green future and a green environment is totally incorrect.

The idea of creating independent distributed power generation systems, I think, is an alternative that needs to be considered. And it does not appear to have been considered within this PEIS.

One of the points that has been discussed and I have heard about is this idea of there being a security component to distributing—to these additional energy corridors. It seems to me that by having distributed and dispersed energy production on every roof that this is going to be a very big step in terms of creating some security for this country, from earthquakes that might sever all the lines, terrorists. But, if you have power distributed in lots of different places that's gonna be a much more secure solution to creating power. So, it's an alternative that I think really needs to be looked at and I don't believe that it has been. And I hope you all are able to do that.

Thank you.

John McFarlane:

John McFarlane from Yucca Valley here with CDC.

One more point. I started out telling you I served 21 years in the Armed Forces of the United States. In addition to that, I am a Professor of Business from National University. Putting those two together gives cause to—a fear to a rise in my heart. And I'm almost afraid to say this, but I think we have to consider it.

A large amount of the global economy is centered around the Pacific Rim. A lot of people in this country think about Wall Street and the stock market and never realize that half of the financial transactions that take place in the United States on a daily basis pass through downtown Los Angeles. If DWP wants to continue on this long-distance transmission of power to keep power in that whole system, they need to understand that they are continuing to perpetrate a situation that may arise.

Our government is coming close to spending a trillion dollars in a war against terrorism. From my military standpoint, I have to say—that I'm sorry to say—with very little effect. DWP is getting close to the point where a small cell of five terrorists could put—shut down half of the financial transactions of this country for a large number of days. There's no redundancy. There's no backup for all of those systems, all of those transactions that flow through Los Angeles. If that was—if the power to LA was shut down by blowing these long-distance transmission lines, we would be out of business for 5, 6, 10, maybe 20 days. Terrible situation.

LaVerne Kyriess:

Thank you, Mr. McFarlane.

We've got a speaker here. Okay. And we've got two more speakers after that.

Harvey Helfand:

Hi. Once again, Harvey Helfand, Johnson Valley, representing CDC in partnership with the Wilderness Society.

I want to be fair to the DWP and to the city of Los Angeles. And I think the DOE, the BLM, the Forest Service, and anybody else involved with the supposed Green Path, should give the city of Los Angeles and the DWP the same consideration they gave us, by being here tonight to listen to our concerns. And they're just not here to listen to us.

John Viola:

Thank you for the opportunity to finish my comments from before. And with all due respect, Steve, I need to say something to you. In your presentation you referred to

federal lands. There are no federal lands. They're public lands. We entrust the federal government to take care of them. And that's more than semantics. And I hope that that will be [inaudible due to applause].

I want to reiterate what I started to say before. Let's be frank. Oilmen have walked the halls of the White House for seven years. Capitol Hill has been wined and dined by special interests. It's no wonder that EPACT 2005 and Section 368 and the resulting West-Wide Energy Corridor makes it easy for corporations to desecrate our wilderness by diluting NEPA and sweetening the pot with subsidies at taxpayer expense. It's no wonder that EPACT 2005 Section 1221, and the resulting NAITCs defiles state, county, city, township rights to regulate land uses in their respective jurisdictions.

I reiterate the question that I raised to you in Sacramento. Is this good energy policy for America, or just old fashioned pork-barrel politics on a grander scale? You are the scientific and administrative stewards of our land, our energy resources, and our safety and our liberties. It is time for you to stand up to the bully politics in Washington and let them know that EPACT 2005, 368 and 1221, and WVEC, and NAITC are bad for America for all the reasons that you heard in Sacramento and the reasons that you heard here tonight in Ontario.

Please. We implore you. Go back to the beltway as the stewards who delivered the unspoiled legacy of wild places with all those precious values and biological diversities and clean air and water, and towering forests and rushing rivers and sage-sweet silent deserts for our future generations. Go back to the White House and go back to Capitol Hill and please tell our lawmakers that the people in the West do not want a continuation of the archaic energy policy that destroys lands and liberties to line the coffers of corporations. Tell them instead to develop energy policy that promotes technologically assisted conservation generation of energy.

But, let me remind you that we are a nation that has the resource capability to send a spacecraft sailing through the rings of Saturn and landing it perfectly on that planet. If we can do that, I know we have the resources and the ability to address our energy needs in a manner that is cost efficient, most effective, and preserves the legacy for future generations. Just check the internet and you'll find thousands of opportunities to show you that there are cities and towns all over this country that are doing what the federal government needs to do.

Thank you again for the opportunity.

LaVerne Kyriess:

Thank you, John.

Our time is getting short, but we had someone else here who wanted to speak again perhaps? If not, we've got somebody in the back who wants to speak again.

Okay. We'll let these last two speakers and then we're going to call a close to our formal hearing.

xxxxx:

Hi. My name is xxxx from xxxxx, California.

And I would just like to expand on the wonderful comments that Mr. McFarlane just made. And that is talking about profits and economic gains, whether immediate versus long-term. Because I know that companies like this LADWP like to throw their economic breadth around and say how much money that they are putting into things and into communities and talk about profits.

But, those are all short-term profits. Those are all short-term economic gains. But, the economic losses that we face to stand, not just from potential terrorist attacks that leave these lines wide open, but from natural disasters. So the power lines in LA and San Diego County were partially responsible for the fires that just devastated much of that area, and this is something that, in the desert, the desert is extremely vulnerable to. And who is going to be paying for the damages when more fires occur to places if these things would occur. I don't know if it's going to be LADWP and other large power companies. It's going to end up being on the weight of the people and the state of California and the federal government.

So, if you're thinking about money, which is a good thing to think about, [cut in audio] we like to think about all the other losses as well and the potential losses. But, if you're thinking about money, really look at the long-term benefits, the long-term losses, the tourism that will be decreased to areas. All of those things need to be seriously considered and not just the economic concerns of these power [cut in audio] at the present time.

Thank you.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, xxxxx.

And we have one last speaker. Yes. Please come forward and tell us your name.

Judy Brannen: My name is Judy Brannen and I live in the Pipe's Canyon area, Pioneertown. And I'm here with the California Desert Coalition and also partnering with the Wilderness Society.

I just wanted to say that this has been a long night for you and I'm sure it's been a long week for you. And it's been a long several months for all of us, too. As federal land managers, you are here to offer us a process and we thank you for that opportunity. But, I guess that kind of means you're supposed to listen to us and we appreciate that. But, we want you to know that we are here to defend the quality of life that is so near and so dear to us that we'll do anything we have to to try to impress upon you that, if a tower was going in your yard, I would surely hope that you would be doing the same thing. Please find a better way.

LaVerne Kyriss: Thank you, Ms. Brannen.

I'm gonna ask my assistant here to refresh our slides. Thank you.

And now, since our time is up, I'm going to close the hearing. I want to thank all of you for joining us this evening to provide oral comments on the Draft PEIS, proposing to designate energy corridors on federal lands in the West.

As I said earlier, comments on the Draft PEIS are due February 14th and may be submitted online via the project website, by mail, or by fax. All comments received by February 14th will be considered in preparing the Final EIS. Comments submitted after February 14th will be considered to the degree possible.

Again, I want to personally thank you for your attention and let you know that we will be staying around to discuss the Draft EIS with you.

THERE ARE OTHER ALTERNATIVES TO GREEN PATH NORTH
THAT MUST BE CONSIDERED AND I HOPE THAT YOU WILL DO
SO

THANK YOU FROM A CONCERNED MORONGO BASIN RESIDENT,
PROPERTY OWNER, TAX PAYER AND VOTER