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July 24, 2009

William Metz
Forest Supervisor
U.S. Department of Agriculture-Cleveland National Forest
10845 Rancho Bernardo Road, Suite 200
San Diego, CA 92127

Dear William:

I am writing to urge you to reject approval of the proposed Sunrise Powerlink transmission line across the Cleveland National Forest. The Powerlink appears to be in conflict with the Cleveland National Forest Land Management Plan and as a result, will cause enormous harm to forest resources and to communities around the forest.

The selected southern route for the Powerlink goes awkwardly through and adjacent to sensitive fire-prone and drought stricken public lands, the Forest, Resource Conservation Areas, Wilderness Areas, designated critical habitat for peninsular big horn sheep, nesting Golden Eagles and other endangered and sensitive species. It also significantly impacts numerous at-risk communities and many private properties. This unnecessary project introduces new and significant impacts from power-line ignited wildfires.

The record shows that the selected route, including the route through the Cleveland National Forest, never received the same level of environmental review as SDG&E's preferred route through the Anza Borrego Desert State Park. As a result, both the state and federal approvals are the subject of multiple legal appeals by various consumer, environmental, and community advocates.

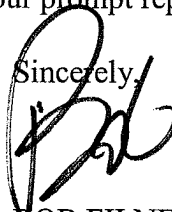
After reviewing constituent requests, available documents, proposed alternatives, and the July 9, 2009 letter submitted to you by Stephan C. Volker, Attorney for Backcountry Against Dumps, The Protect Our Communities Foundation, East County Action Coalition and Donna Tisdale, if the Forest Service intends to consider approval of the Powerlink, then it must conduct an expanded analysis that includes details on alternative projects, such as the *San Diego Smart Energy 2020: The 21st Century Alternative* plan by local expert engineer Bill Powers of Powers Engineering. As an update to the Smart Energy Plan, I have included a recent article by Mr. Power's documenting the recent denial of an application for a 100 MW natural gas turbine power plant by the California Energy Commission because rooftop solar PV could potentially achieve the same objectives at comparable costs. This landmark decision sets urban PV as the first-in-line generation resource, marking projects like the Sunrise Powerlink obsolete.

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SDG&E's advertising that the Sunrise Powerlink is necessary to supply San Diegans with renewable energy has no basis in fact. PV can be deployed just as readily in urban locations, and there are no environmental trade-offs associated with urban PV deployments—where the majority of power is consumed. For example, the California Public Utilities Commission approved Southern California Edison's (SCE) 500 MW urban rooftop PV project on June 18, 2009. This project is the direct opposite of SDG&E's obsolete paradigm to build a \$2 billion transmission line to access a more expensive form of remote solar energy.

I urge you to consider the legitimate and viable alternatives to construction of the Sunrise Powerlink across the Cleveland National Forest. I ask you to conduct an independent National Environmental Policy Act analysis of the Sunrise Powerlink and the related SDG&E Master Special Use Permit, compliant with all applicable laws and regulations. Furthermore, I also encourage you to provide an opportunity for public review and comment through local hearings of the harmful impacts the project would have on local communities.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me or Jessica Gomez of my staff at (619) 422-5963. I look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,


BOB FILNER
Member of Congress

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