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The San Diego Union-Tribune.

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Letters to the editor

January 26, 2007

The environment and the Powerlink debate

Responding as vice president of public policy and communications for the Downtown San Diego Partnership, I enjoyed reading "Alter climate? Change ways" (Local, Jan. 23) and wanted to highlight some significant plans already under way in San Diego to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Although recently maligned by some quoted in your pages, SDG&E's Sunrise Powerlink would eventually bring 1,000 megawatts of electricity to San Diego from clean, zero-emission sources such as solar, wind and geothermal.

Providing 1,000 megawatts of green energy would power about 650,000 homes, but even more impressive is that by providing consumers with 1,000 megawatts of zero-emission energy, the resulting positive effect to the environment is equivalent to the elimination of 800,000 cars from our freeways. That is a goal that we should all support.

KEVIN J. CASEY
San Diego

"Alter climate? Change ways" (Local, Jan. 23) left the impression that it is hard to make a dent in the amount of emissions we produce locally.

Writing on behalf of the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council (secretary-treasurer), I am hoping that you haven't discouraged people from trying. If every citizen that can afford it would change their light bulbs, install a blanket on their water heater, utilize public transportation and reduce their electricity use, it would have a collective impact.

By accessing clean energy sources such as wind, solar and geothermal, the Sunrise Powerlink electric transmission line could reduce greenhouse gases equal to taking hundreds of thousands of cars off the freeways. This is a huge step in the right direction.

In addition to delivering 1,000 megawatts of electricity from zero emission sources, the Powerlink would connect to what could be the largest solar energy facility in the world, in Imperial Valley. I think it is important for politicians to inspire people and companies to be more environmentally friendly, even if they have limited power to effect change. I encourage your paper to run a list once a week of all the things we can do as citizens to help stop global warming.

Reducing greenhouse gases and securing reliable electricity while advancing solar and renewable technology is a win-win for everyone.

JERRY BUTKIEWICZ
San Diego

How in the world can SDG&E continue promoting its Sunrise Powerlink, a huge transmission line project that would bring supposedly "clean" power from the Imperial Valley. This power line would bisect our beautiful Anza Borrego State

Write us

The San Diego Union-Tribune welcomes letters to the editor. Because of the number of letters received, and to allow as many readers as possible to be published, it is the policy of the newspaper to publish no more than one letter from the same author within 120 days. Letters may be edited. It is also our policy to publish letters supporting or opposing a particular issue in a ratio reflecting the number received on each side.

To be considered for publication, a letter must include an address, daytime phone number and, if faxed or mailed, be signed. It may be sent to Letters Editor, The San Diego Union-Tribune, Post Office Box 120191, San Diego, CA 92112-0191, faxed to (619) 260-5081 or e-mailed to letters@uniontrib.com. Letters submitted may be used in print or in digital form in any publication or service authorized by the Union-Tribune Publishing Co.



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Park and a hundred miles of backcountry, permanently ruining vistas. While at the same time SDG&E has just stated that it won't buy power from a newly proposed replacement baseline generator power plant in Chula Vista, saying it doesn't need the power ("Mayor wants power plant removed from bayfront site," Local, Jan. 23). How can it need this horrible power line but not need the power from a clean, new power plant that would replace an existing old power plant? Why search outside our region for power when there are options inside? The environment is not just clean air and clean water – but also open space and protecting our parks.

CHARLES C. SEEGER
Oceanside

It is unheard of for wilderness areas to be de-designated by either state or federal government. This, if allowed, would open any and all wilderness areas to exploitation. There will be two meetings at Borrego Springs Resort on Feb. 8. The one in the afternoon, from 2 to 4:30 p.m., is with the Public Utilities Commission to discuss routes and alternates. The one in the evening at 7:30 is with the California State Parks and Recreation Commission on the DE-designation of Wilderness areas in Anza Borrego State Park.

We can't let this happen. Just last week it was reported that SDG&E will not buy power from South Bay because it said it could handle its own needs. So why is it necessary to destroy our wilderness and recreational area? Besides, there are alternatives.

JEANINE BUSSEY
San Diego

Sunroad official defends project

A great deal of irresponsible, inaccurate and unfounded allegations have been made and reported in the media regarding Sunroad's Centrum I office building currently under construction in Kearny Mesa. As vice president of development for Sunroad Enterprises, we would like to take this opportunity to outline the facts and refute the false claims asserted by the San Diego city attorney and others.

First, public safety is of utmost concern to Sunroad Enterprises.

Second, the office building poses no threat to public safety. Steps taken by the Federal Aviation Administration to adjust air traffic patterns have resolved all safety issues, leaving no danger to pilots using Montgomery Field. In fact, the buffer zone for pilots landing at Montgomery Field under infrequent weather conditions creates a margin of safety equivalent to a 42-story building.

Third, Sunroad is working with city staff to develop a comprehensive, long-term solution that will not only preserve but also enhance safety at Montgomery Field as well as improving its viability.

Fourth, this project went through an exhaustive review by the governmental agencies having land-use oversight and regulatory authority. The project received all necessary approvals and was issued all required permits for the building at the height it stands today; furthermore, the building is located outside the area affecting flight operations at Montgomery Field as determined under a city overlay zone, county land-use and community plan for the airport area. All work being performed on the building has the full and explicit approval of the city department having jurisdiction over the project.

The Jan. 19 letter from Caltrans to the city betrays a serious misunderstanding of the facts concerning the project and the law Caltrans purports to enforce. The truth is, Sunroad fully complied with federal law by sending a Notice of Proposed Construction at the building's true height of 180 feet to the FAA not once, but twice, and fully complied with state law by seeking an application for a permit from Caltrans not once, but twice. To date, no application has been provided by Caltrans.

Sunroad enterprises is being harmed by the continued distortions and misrepresentations regarding the building. A lengthy and expensive legal battle that has not been authorized by the City Council is an inappropriate use of scarce resources and taxpayer dollars. Sunroad will not be distracted from its focus of improving public safety by the efforts of the city attorney and others to invent a crisis that does not exist. Sunroad Enterprises will continue to work cooperatively with the city and the FAA to ensure that Montgomery Field remains a safe and viable airport.

TOM STORY
San Diego

Questioning makeup of city's audit panel

Regarding "Atkins appointed to audit committee" (Local, Jan. 24):

Appointing San Diego City Council members Toni Atkins and Tony Young to the city audit committee is insane. What do they bring to the table other than two warm bodies? I would bet that neither of them know the difference between a debit and a credit much less being able to pass judgment on the city's accounting policies.

The entire concept of an audit committee is faulty unless you can bring some expertise in accounting matters and even then it is suspect. Enron, Broadcom and MCI had audit committees. If the auditors are incompetent or choose to acquiesce to corrupt management, audit committees won't help the situation other than to cover the mayor's rear end. All we are doing is adding another needless and expensive level of bureaucracy under the pretense this will ensure better accounting. There is no substitute for honest and able management, and all the Toni Atkins and Tony Youngs of the world won't change that fact.

JAMES HOPKINS
San Diego

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