



January 23, 2009

President Obama  
Obama-Biden Transition Project  
451 6th St, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Obama for America  
P.O. Box 8102  
Chicago, IL 60680

Dear President Obama,

Recently, you received a letter from Governor Schwarzenegger asking you to direct the Forest Service to expedite the regulatory process for the highly controversial Sunrise Powerlink transmission project in Imperial and San Diego Counties. We oppose the governor's request and support the Forest Service fulfilling its obligations to properly review the project.

While San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) has claimed that its Sunrise Powerlink transmission line is a renewable energy project, there are substantive reasons to conclude that the line may well wind up increasing greenhouse gas emissions by importing fossil fuel-derived electricity from Baja California and on the spot market.

During the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) review process, Commissioner Dian Grueneich proposed approving the line only if SDG&E accepted a binding commitment to load the line with renewable energy. Ironically, after years of marketing Sunrise as a renewables project, SDG&E stated that if the company were required to guarantee that the line would be substantially loaded with renewable energy, they would abandon the project. In the end, the CPUC dropped Commissioner Grueneich's proposal and approved a line that will cross federal public lands with no guarantee that it will carry renewable energy.

Beyond the questionable status of Sunrise Powerlink as a renewable energy project, the line itself will cause significant environmental harm to federal public lands, including the Cleveland National Forest. The environmental review of the project acknowledges that this project is one of the most environmentally damaging transmission lines ever proposed in California. The Forest Service should give this much-debated project thorough consideration and not shortcut environmental legal requirements.

President Obama  
January 23, 2009  
Page 2 of 2

Sincerely,

/s/ Jim Metropulos

Jim Metropulos  
Senior Advocate  
Sierra Club California  
801 K Street, Suite 2700  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916)557-1100  
[www.sierraclubcalifornia.org](http://www.sierraclubcalifornia.org)

/s/ Taylor McKinnon

Taylor McKinnon  
Public Lands Program Director  
Center for Biological Diversity  
P.O.B. 1178  
Flagstaff, AZ 86002-1178  
(928) 310-6713  
[www.biologicaldiversity.org](http://www.biologicaldiversity.org)

/s/ Laura Hunter

Laura Hunter  
Campaign Director  
Environmental Health Coalition  
401 Mile of Cars Way Suite 310  
National City, CA 91950  
(619)-474-0220  
[www.environmentalhealth.org](http://www.environmentalhealth.org)

CC: Senator Barbara Boxer  
Senator Dianne Feinstein  
Congressman Bob Filner  
Congresswoman Susan Davis  
Forest Supervisor Will Metz, Cleveland National Forest