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Photo: [LADWP Map--Green Path North Route Alternatives C and A-3](#)

Green Path North Still Threatens the Desert

Three new alternatives for routing transmission lines through sensitive desert lands and communities were disclosed by the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power to stakeholders in a meeting held at LADWP offices in February.

California Desert Coalition (CDC) representatives attending the meeting to discuss the Green Path North transmission line project were turned down in their request for copies of maps displayed at the meeting. The new routing alternatives are iterations of the Los Angeles utility's proposed Route C, which runs through the high desert and which is the only route for which LADWP requested a right-of-way in its application to the Bureau of Land Management for the project.

"This refusal to release maps reflects LADWP's continuing lack of transparency in its planning process for a project that would destroy pristine desert lands and rural communities far from Los Angeles," said Ruth Rieman, CDC Vice Chair.

These latest iterations of Route C would make limited use of undergrounding in order to allow the utility to utilize existing roadway easements.

One new alternative runs underground along California Scenic Highway Route 62, which traverses the Morongo Pass from Desert Hot Springs to Morongo Valley. The route would then run above ground with high-transmission towers and lines as it crossed the rural bedroom community of Morongo Valley. A second alternative also runs west of Highway 62.

A third alternative runs underground along Highway 62 from the east end of Morongo Valley through the business district of Yucca Valley to Pioneertown Road and then along Pioneertown Road to where it would leave the highway, running transmission towers and lines above ground across the Pioneertown and Pipes Canyon areas.

Because this third alternative follows the original Route C where it runs through the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve, it would still devastate over 10 miles of important biological habitat in this area of critical environmental concern (ACEC), according to David Miller, President of the Friends of Big Morongo Canyon Preserve.

A map contained in LADWP's handout at the February stakeholders meeting reflects this third Route C alternative as well as a new Route A-3 alternative that would use the existing I-10 corridor for some of its path.

April Sall, CDC Chair, says "If they continue to work on the I-10, that's the appropriate place for it. But we're not there yet." She says the A-3 route LADWP announced does not appear to be the "smart path" along the I-10 Freeway that CDC has discussed with LADWP.

Sall is also concerned by the presentation of three new Route C alternatives, which she says indicate the LADWP is still pursuing a route through the Morongo Basin and other areas of the high desert even in the face of opposition from both San Bernardino and Riverside County Boards of Supervisors, cities and community organizations all along the route, including the Coachella Valley Association of Governments representing the broad Coachella Valley region, and U.S. Representative Jerry Lewis.

The California Desert Coalition continues to call for LADWP to eliminate all routes through the high desert from its planning for Green Path North and to work with Southern California Edison to utilize the existing I-10 energy corridor, thus making development of a new energy corridor through the high desert unnecessary.