

Power department spreads misinformation

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On Dec. 20, the Southern California Public Power Authority (SCPPA) published a full-page open letter in the Hi-Desert Star regarding the Green Path North transmission line project. In this advertisement, SCPPA asserted that numerous false claims have been made about the project.

Some of the claims SCPPA derides are claims made by the California Desert Coalition, and therefore, CDC would like to set the record straight about the false and misleading information in the SCPPA advertisement.

The proposed Green Path North transmission line route through the high desert cannot be approved by the Bureau of Land Management without designating the route an energy corridor. This is a requirement of the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan. A BLM spokesperson has confirmed that this requirement applies to the Green Path North route. The CDCA Plan currently identifies a 2- to 5-mile-wide "contingent corridor" along the Green Path North route. Contingent corridors become designated by amending the CDCA Plan. The California Desert Coalition is fighting ardently to ensure this is not the future for our desert lands and communities.

SCPPA, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, and the other advertisement signatories say they are committed to selecting and designing a path that will have the least impact on local residents and the environment. However, Southern California Edison recently announced that LADWP has flatly rejected Southern California Edison's offer of capacity on its power lines along the I-10 energy corridor. LADWP has clearly not listened to the voices of local residents or their county supervisors, who have implored the agency to use this already existing energy corridor for Green Path North transmission.

In rejecting Southern California Edison's offer, LADWP has exhibited the same arrogance, disregard for its ratepayers and failure to participate in California state transmission planning recognized by the California Independent System Operator (CAISO) in its report to the California Energy Commission. This report states, "The ISO's efforts with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power were also extensive and frustrating. The Department has a lot to gain from being part of the larger State grid as a way to minimize the need for new transmission, increase their access to renewable generation at lower cost to their ratepayers, and reduce their CO2 footprint."

In its statements about undergrounding sections of the Green Path North line, SCPAA ignores the evidence, confirmed by a Southern California Edison undergrounding specialist, that undergrounding power lines is even more environmentally destructive than overhead transmission. Thus SCPPA and its partners have not addressed a key objection to the power line route: the project's immediate and long-term detrimental impacts on environmentally sensitive lands. Both San Bernardino and Riverside County supervisors have stated in their resolutions opposing Green Path North that these adverse impacts can be avoided by LADWP using available existing energy corridors.

While property owners may individually assume LADWP's claim to consider undergrounding sections of the line means their section of the line, when you consider that Green Path North would cross 30 miles of private land, it becomes apparent that this is a false hope. Add to this miles of viewshed on public lands and the vistas along our highways that tourists so

admire, and it becomes clear that a limited amount of undergrounding could have little effect on the overall impact of Green Path North.

At LADWP's July meeting in Yucca Valley, David Nahai claimed that his agency is not "diabolically plotting" to destroy desert lands and communities. When the agency uses its deep pockets and advertising budget to spread fallacies and misinformation about the Green Path North Project, CDC asks, where is the dialogue and transparency that was promised to desert residents?