



The Sun Runner

The Magazine of California Desert Life & Culture December 2007/January 2008

Following the
**GREEN
PATH**



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The Magazine of California Desert Life & Culture

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Following the Green Path

By Steve Brown

The Green Path North Project

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, along with its project partners, the Imperial Irrigation District, Citizens Energy, and the Southern California Public Power Authority, have proposed to construct a 500-kilovolt transmission system, to bring electricity from geothermal, solar, and wind operations in the Imperial County, to the LADWP power grid. The plan calls for 1,200 megawatts of capacity, with the potential to upgrade to 1,600 MW.

The project, Green Path North, is set to connect a new electrical substation near the existing Lugo substation in Hesperia, with a new substation to be built near the current Devers substation near North Palm Springs.

The Participants

Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

The country's largest municipal utility company, LADWP serves nearly 1.5 million customers in the City of Los Angeles, and owns and operates its own transmission network.

Imperial Irrigation District

An independent public power transmission provider, and a consumer-owned utility that provides electricity to 140,000 customers.

Citizens Energy

A non-profit corporation founded by Joseph P. Kennedy II, whose commercial subsidiaries support utility programs for low income families and the elderly.

Southern California Public Power Authority

A Joint Powers Authority that includes 12 public power agency members in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Imperial counties.

Stan Coutant's family has owned their Johnson Valley property since 1954. He says his wife Dixie and himself like it "just the way it is." That may change, however, since a survey marker for the Green Path North project was sited on BLM lands near their home.



26 *The Sun Runner* – December 2007/January 2008

“Why are you doing it? How much better can you eat?
What can you buy that you can't already afford?”

“The future, Mr. Gittes, the future.”

– *An exchange between detective Jake Gittes and millionaire Noah Cross in the film Chinatown*

“Forget it, Jake. It's Chinatown.”

– *Author Deanne Stillman*

The Path to Green

Earlier this year, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa put forth publicly a vision of a “green” L.A. for the future, stating he wanted the city to become the “greenest big city” in the country. Addressing the City Council, Villaraigosa noted predictions of global warming and climate change that could mean “longer and hotter summers, longer droughts, more devastating wildfires, and shortages of water that threaten public health and our economy.”

Setting a goal to reduce L.A.'s greenhouse gas emissions to 35 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, Villaraigosa called for an ambitious plan incorporating energy conservation, changes in commuting habits, water efficiency, new “green building” standards, reductions in garbage, and an increased use of green, renewable energy.

The plan Villaraigosa set forth noted that he called upon the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power in 2005 to move forward its plan to generate 20% of its energy from clean, renewable sources by the year 2017 to 2010, increasing the proportion to 35 percent by 2035. The plan stated that LADWP was well on its way, doubling its portfolio of renewable energy through wind, solar, and geothermal power, and new projects like the Pine Tree Wind Farm in the Mojave Desert near Tehachapi, the largest municipally owned wind farm in the country, is expected to provide 1.4 percent of LADWP's power needs by the time it comes online in July 2009.

A lawsuit filed by the Los Angeles and Kerncrest Audubon Societies claimed the Environmental Impact Report for the Pine Tree Wind Farm failed to fulfill the minimum disclosure obligations of the California Environmental Quality Act. The plaintiffs charged that LADWP did no avian studies looking for evidence of migratory songbirds in spring for their EIR, according to Garry George, executive director of the Los Angeles Audubon Society. The EIR, the Audubon announcement about the lawsuit said, noted one LADWP consultant visited the area once during that period of time—in the afternoon.

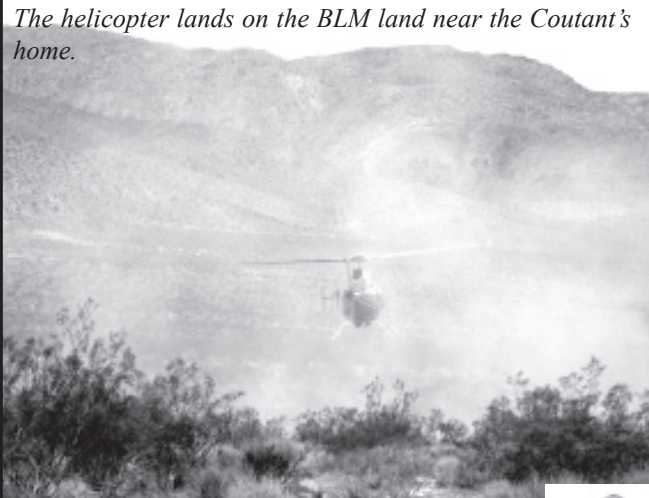
“In our opinion, this kind of study is not sufficient for the DWP's conclusion that the project ‘would have no substantial impact on avian wildlife.’ the Audubon announcement stated. LADWP won the Audubon case, and is now obtaining additional lands for wind projects in that area.

“The judge did not understand or agree with our attorney that migratory songbirds are nocturnal, and are most at risk between the hours of 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. in Spring and Fall, and that advanced technology such as radar would be required to assess the risk,” George noted. “Instead, he concluded that the DWP environmental consultant walked around the site on one afternoon during the Spring migration period and concluded that there were no migratory songbirds there, so there must not be any.”

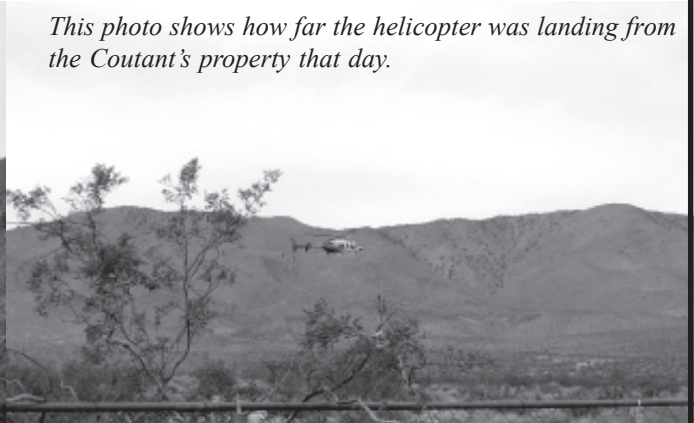
The Coutants of Johnson Valley receive a Visit from LADWP



A helicopter approaches the BLM land near the Coutant's home in Johnson Valley this past April.



The helicopter lands on the BLM land near the Coutant's home.



This photo shows how far the helicopter was landing from the Coutant's property that day.



Stan Coutant wonders about the impact of high voltage power lines on his amateur radio operations. Stan says the

The friendly survey crew hands Stan Coutant a flier identifying the crew as being with the LADWP's Green Path Project.



The helicopter is one of two registered to Los Angeles City Water & Power, according to the Federal Aviation Administration.



After their work is done, the survey crew flies away—for now.



Stan & Dixie Coutant



An LADWP survey marker, cemented into the ground (left). Similar survey markers, accompanied by marking stakes, have been found in half a dozen locations on BLM and private lands.

LADWP's Board of Commissioners has also just approved the purchase of additional wind power from a wind farm in Gilliam County, Oregon, with wind projects expected to provide more than 11 percent of the agency's needs by 2010.

No one can fault the mayor for wanting to green Los Angeles. But "green" practices can sometimes be complicated or misleading, and there are questions about just how green some energy sources and practices really are.

As George put it, "We find it highly ironic that protections for national wilderness and state parks might actually be thrown aside by our federal and state governments for an energy policy that includes a *green* rush to an imagined renewable future. Green destroying green is surely not a wise legacy for us to leave for future generations no matter how much we all need energy for our consumer electronics, computers and toys."

The Answer, My Friend...

But what does a wind farm under construction near Tehachapi have to do with a story on LADWP's planned Green Path North power transmission project that could stretch high voltage power lines north from Desert Hot Springs through Morongo Valley, Pioneertown, and Johnson Valley, up north to Hesperia?

There may be more to it than one may see at first glance. For instance, it may shed light on the utility's environmental position on renewable "green" energy, as well as its singlemindedness in reaching its ambitious renewable energy goals.

If one afternoon visit by a biologist is enough of a safeguard in the eyes of the utility to protect migratory songbirds that may be impacted by a huge wind energy project, what level of investigation and protection could the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve and the Pioneertown Mountains Preserve expect? If one visit to the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve, itself a designated Bureau of Land Management Area of Critical Environmental Concern, results in no bighorn sheep sightings, will that equate to a finding of no impact to bighorn sheep by the Green Path project?

Those are concerns LADWP is going to need to address during the process associated with the project, and though the utility is now becoming more forthright with the process, some of their previous actions appear to have created a significant amount of suspicion and distrust among local citizens and government officials up to this point.

For the Greater Good...

The Green Path project was first announced more than two years ago, in November 2005. It was described as a "major transmission line to deliver 'green' renewable energy to Los Angeles from the Salton Sea." The project was presented as a partnership between LADWP, the Imperial Irrigation District, and the non-profit organization, Citizens Energy (the Southern California Public Power Authority, a Joint Powers Authority that includes 12 public power agency members is now also listed as a partner). It was touted as benefiting residents in Los Angeles, Imperial, San Diego, and Riverside counties, a project "for the greater good."

"We're proud to work with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and the Imperial Irrigation District on the Green Path Project," stated Joseph P. Kennedy II, founder of Citizens Energy. "We will not only address the important issues of reliability, redundancy and transmission bottlenecks but also produce benefits to serve low-income households

throughout the areas served by the initiative."

Noticeably absent in the roll-out publicity was any mention of benefits of any sort for the citizens of San Bernardino County, where it appeared the approximately 85-mile long power transmission corridor was planned.

The IID, also a partner (until recently) with San Diego Gas & Electric, a Sempra Energy company in a similar project, Sunrise Powerlink, announced its formal support for Green Path North by a vote of its Board of Directors in November 2006. The IID noted that LADWP, as planned at that time, would own 76 percent of the project capacity, with IID Energy, SCPPA and Citizens Energy each owning 8 percent capacity and common facilities. Sunrise Powerlink has created its own controversy by seeking to bisect Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, as well as federally designated Wilderness areas, which are by law, roadless. Overturning Wilderness designation for the project could set an enormous precedent for other potential developmental uses to follow.

But it wasn't until March and April 2007 that Green Path North started to get noticed in the desert—and the national media.

"I was actually the one that blew the story up," said Dave Miller, president of the Friends of Big Morongo Canyon Preserve, and a member of the recently formed California Desert Coalition, a group opposing the project under the umbrella of the Mojave Desert Land Trust. "We were having our usual board meeting. We often have a BLM representative sit in. He told us about the gas pipeline (that crosses the Preserve underground) that has changed hands, then mentioned Green Path. He said, 'I can't tell you a lot about it because of the situation we were in,' but he said, 'It's going to be a huge project and you will want to know about this.'"

Miller said he and others began to collect and download information on the Green Path North project, from the LADWP website and elsewhere. Within two or three days, he noted, a lot of the original material was gone from the site, "replaced by PR BS and technical stuff."

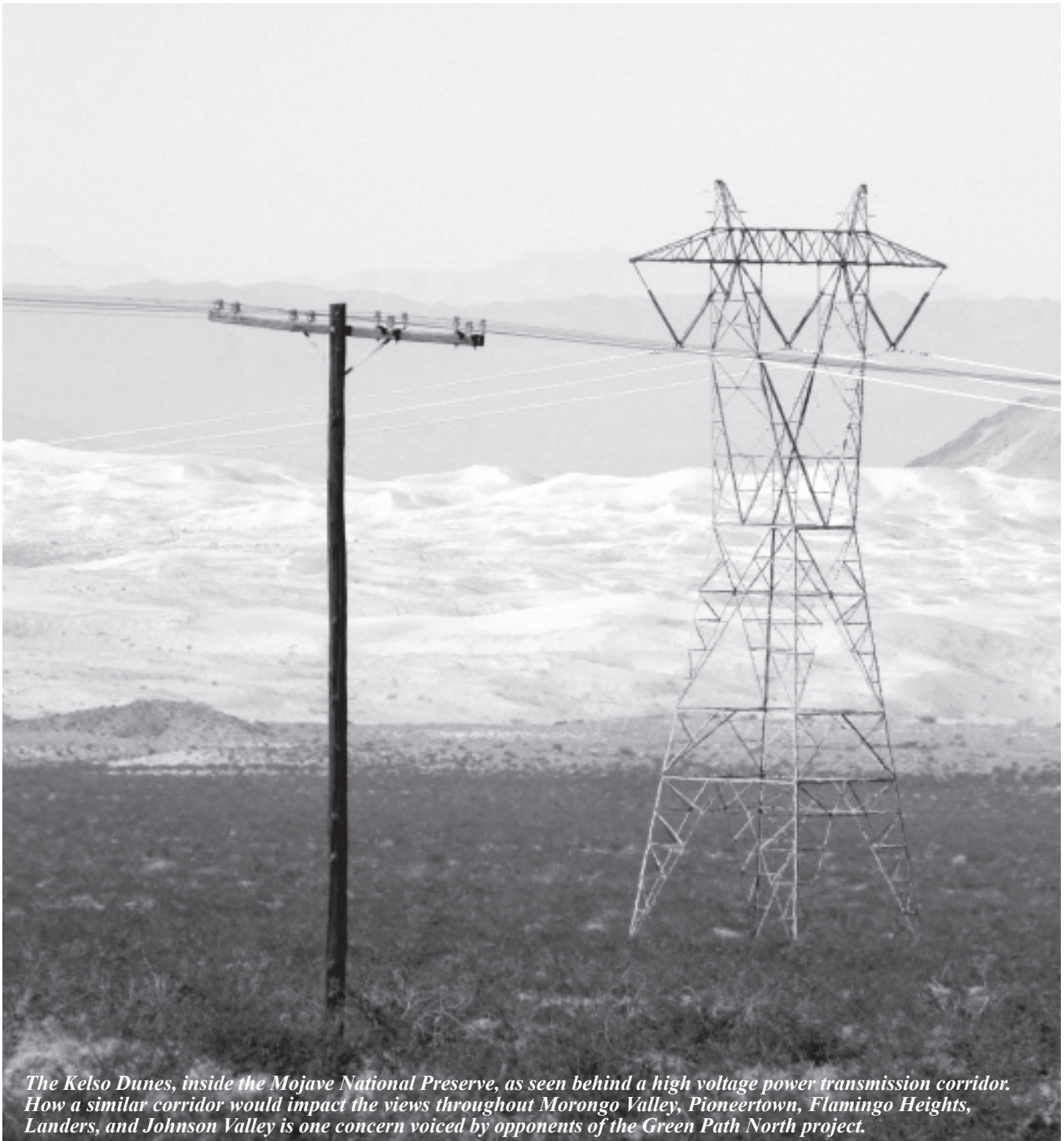
LADWP had applied to lease the rights-of-way for the large portion of a possible Green Path North power corridor route back in December 2006. According to Miller, LADWP officials had indicated to the BLM that they had held conversations about the project with San Bernardino County officials and the Wildlands Conservancy, owners of the Pioneertown Mountains Preserve that could be impacted by Green Path North.

"So I got on the phone with April Sall, manager of the Wildlands' holdings out here, and at that point asked her about Green Path, and she said, no, she was not aware of it," Miller explained. "She said to call David Myers, executive director of Wildlands Conservancy, and he went ballistic. No one had been contacted in their office."

Miller said after that, contact was made with Bruce Davis, chief of staff for Third District County Supervisor Dennis Hansberger, and he had not been aware of the project, and, after further inquiry, found that the supervisor was also in the dark.

"So they were livid," Miller noted about the reaction of county officials. "It was clear none of the county people knew about it, which seems rather strange since it's all in this county." Davis said he initially heard of the project when a staff member read an article in the *L.A. Times* and brought it to his attention.

"I had digested it for only about a day, when someone in the community started voicing concerns about it as well," Davis recalled. "Our office had not heard of the project from LADWP—we heard about it from the *L.A. Times*."



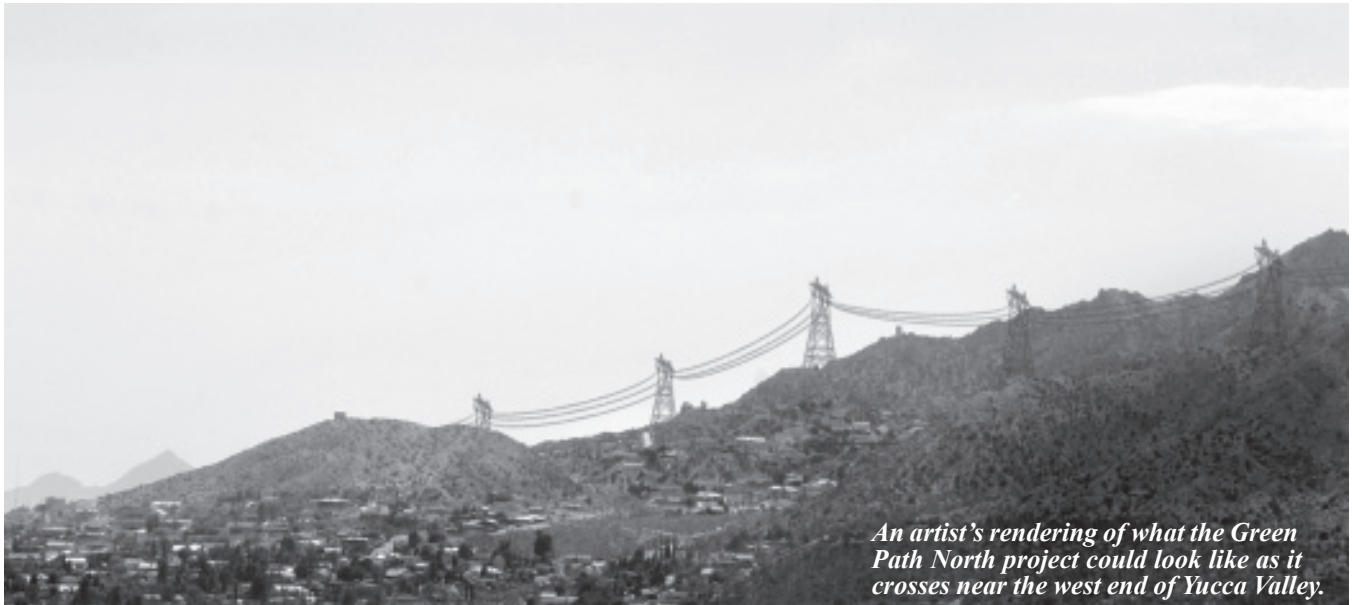
The Kelso Dunes, inside the Mojave National Preserve, as seen behind a high voltage power transmission corridor. How a similar corridor would impact the views throughout Morongo Valley, Pioneertown, Flamingo Heights, Landers, and Johnson Valley is one concern voiced by opponents of the Green Path North project.

Hansberger has since called for a vote on a resolution opposing the Green Path Project. Davis said LADWP representatives had been attempting to schedule a meeting with the supervisor prior to that vote, or to delay the vote until a meeting could be held.

“Supervisor Hansberger’s position is that while the Green Path North project may be tolerable using some alignments, any proposed alignment through the sensitive areas of the Morongo Basin, like Morongo Valley and Pioneertown, is just totally unacceptable, it’s just wrong,” Davis said. “We have wildlife corridors that might be impacted, the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve that could be harmed, we have the aesthetic values of the community that would be damaged, the environmen-

tal degradation due not just from the towers but the access roads and other useages that are not presently available, and those things are intolerable to the supervisor. I don’t believe the resolution he’s suggesting to the Board of Supervisors is going to argue against the Green Path North project, but it will argue against it coming through the Morongo Basin and through its sensitive areas.”

In April, the first survey markers for the project were found. A helicopter landed on BLM land close to Stan and Dixie Coutant’s home in Johnson Valley, dropping off a survey team who installed one of the markers, clearly marked as belonging to LADWP. The surveyors handed the Coutants a flier from the LADWP explaining Green Path North. But whether through



An artist's rendering of what the Green Path North project could look like as it crosses near the west end of Yucca Valley.

internal confusion, communications problems, or subterfuge, LADWP officials reportedly denied that the survey markers were theirs. This helped create the mistrust and suspicion that the utility is now attempting to overcome. But it seems they may yet have some distance to go.

"In a discussion I had earlier today with a representative of LADWP, they denied that any of these survey markers are theirs," Davis noted in the last week of November, adding that he thought it was an assistant director he had been speaking with. "This is exceedingly strange that they (the markers) could be falsified. Judging by the concern of these folks, it doesn't sound to be a fabrication."

Using Stan Coutant's photographs of the helicopter landing of the survey team, I ran the license number from the side of the helicopter through a Federal Aviation Administration database. The helicopter turned out to be one of two Bell 407s registered to L.A. City Water & Power. That a helicopter belonging to LADWP, that landed a survey team that installed both a survey marker and a stake labeled as being from LADWP and handed out fliers purported as being from LADWP, would not, in fact, be from LADWP, is difficult to believe.

"The photo's not blurry," Davis said, referring to a photograph he had received of one of the survey markers. "It's plugged into the ground, it says 'LADWP,' and it looks like a survey marker."

Carol Tucker, a spokesperson for LADWP, doesn't deny that the utility had been doing some surveying when contacted several days after Davis' meeting with the LADWP representative who denied it.

"It was some preliminary surveying, mostly to determine what real estate issues, if any, were issues with property (along the potential route)," Tucker explained. "I think the practice was to notify property owners. No property acquisition or rights-of-way have been established. My understanding is all efforts were made to contact property owners. I was told they did attempt to notify all the property owners."

Miller said he wasn't sure what method of trying to contact the property owners LADWP could have used, noting that the CDC had contacted all property owners who had survey markers found on their lands and none of them said LADWP had notified them, or asked for permission to install markers. Half a dozen or so survey markers had been found as of October, on both private and public lands. Miller said at least one

marker placed on private property has been removed by the owner, and added that even the BLM appeared to be "a little upset," that three markers were found in the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve.

"They've been just brazen," he noted. "While nothing (aircraft) is marked LADWP, we've seen consistent flyovers and have logged six over a three week period, flying two routes over Pioneertown. They're clearly all over this place trying to figure out how to make this happen."

Sall, the manager of the Pioneertown Mountains Preserve and co-chair of the CDC, reinforced Miller's story of discovering the Green Path project and noted that though she and David Nahai, president of the Commission for LADWP, spoke together on National Public Radio after the story broke, and had one meeting with LADWP, that has been all the contact the Wildlands Conservancy has had with the utility.

Tucker emphasized that the Green Path North project was in its very early stages and that more routes than those through the west end of the Morongo Basin were under consideration. "We don't have a timeframe now, it's all very preliminary," she said. "We'll potentially be beginning the environmental review process this spring, February, March. It's about a two year process before we would begin any construction, assuming it got approved."

Tucker said LADWP is planning to have workshops in the community to fully answer questions about the project. Informal workshops could begin in January, "at least to try to clear up misunderstandings and better communicate what the process is going to be. We're not trying to do anything in secret."

Tucker noted that the utility's project will be done in accordance with the appropriate laws and regulations, and that whatever transpires will be worked out with the community during the scoping process. When asked about the possibility of using or expanding the power transmission corridor that follows Interstate 10, she said, "It's something we will be looking at and have been looking at doing. There are issues with that route too, it has to do with development. It is my understanding that corridor is already highly developed and we have to be careful about impacts on developed lands as well as wilderness lands."

Meanwhile, political representatives for the hi-desert appear to be split over the project. Russell Lowery, chief of staff for State Senator Bob Dutton, said the senator has asked

An informational meeting about the Green Path North project hosted by the California Desert Coalition in October saw a large crowd of concerned hi-desert citizens fill the Yucca Room at the Yucca Valley Community Center.



LADWP questions about the choice of path and the environmental process involved, and is awaiting answers to his questions before formulating an official position on the project, but added he is concerned, while State Senator Roy Ashburn reportedly supports it. First District County Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt is tentatively against the project as proposed, according to David Zook, the supervisor's press secretary.

"Based on what he knows now, he is opposed to it," Zook said, adding that with regards to LADWP keeping county officials in the loop, "He's not been impressed by their efforts to include us because they haven't."

Impacts to Consider

Out in Johnson Valley, there is a rock corral, built in 1905 and replete with natural beauty and history. According to Jim Harvey, a Johnson Valley resident who has created the www.stopgreenpath.org website, Willie Boy even took a drink at the spring a quarter mile up from the corral.

"It's a very revered area, tucked back into the foothills, rich in Native American history," Harvey noted. "The old corral was built out of rocks over 100 years ago, and the spring has cottonwood trees around it and it fed a water tank in the corral area, and up until seven or eight years ago there was still the old original water tank. You have to pass a BLM sign warning you to tread lightly, not to disrupt the animals and ecology, and camp 600 feet away from the pond by the water tank. The ironic thing is just on the other side of the sign, less than 100 yards, is a survey marker that LADWP put in as part of the survey for

this line. Here we have the BLM telling me to tread lightly and not to disturb the ecology, but they'd allow LADWP to come in and blast, bore, crush rock, bulldoze, and so on? About a decade ago the BLM came up and put in a picnic area, encouraging families to come up and hang out by the pond. It's beautiful territory. Now they're going to allow power lines right across the top of it?"

Harvey said Johnson Valley residents are going to be seriously impacted by the project if it is built along that alignment. "No community is more effected than Johnson Valley," he noted. "We're going to see those things from the time they enter Johnson Valley until the time they leave."

He has also taken a look at data from the 1992 Landers Earthquake, and has been studying how powerlines hold up in natural disasters—or contribute to them. Possibly the most relevant correlation found has been that of the role of powerlines in recent wildfires in Southern California. The Rice Canyon and Witch Creek fires are reportedly believed by fire investigators to have been started by power lines downed in high winds. The Witch Creek Fire alone burned nearly 200,000 acres and destroyed more than 1,100 homes. Some homeowners have already filed suit against San Diego Gas & Electric for negligence, and the plaintiffs were reportedly seeking to have their suits classified as class action lawsuits, an invitation to the hundreds of other homeowners to join in the action.

Bill Powers, owner of Powers Engineering and author of *Smart Energy 2020*, said SDG&E called the downed power lines an act of God and said they couldn't predict extremely high

winds and their impact. Powers said he learned that the utility company never turned off their lines, even during high winds.

"They're telling the world it's an act of God and therefore they have no responsibility?" Powers asked, noting that the utility has approximately 360,000 trees it has to keep trimmed around its power lines. "Shutting down never even crossed their mind."

With high winds playing a direct role in the devastating Sawtooth Complex fire, among numerous others in the hi-desert, downed powerlines starting wildfires is a serious concern for the CDC and many residents. The Big Morongo Canyon Preserve has already suffered immensely from wildfire damage, as has the Pioneertown Mountains Preserve.

Fire is not the only danger that Steve Molton and Pamela Galvin are worried about, even though they lost their guest house in the Sawtooth Complex Fire. Both have gotten involved with the CDC, and have found that their home lies near one of the possible Green Path alignments.

"It's been like shock and awe," Galvin said. "After the fire I got the feeling that we're finally starting to recover emotionally. When we got the news (that a survey marker had been located near their home), we were pretty devastated, and we continue to be. We dealt with so much stuff in the last few years we thought this was a joke. It feels like we're being held hostage by a public utility."

Galvin noted that with the placement of a survey marker near their home, the couple can't sell the home without disclosing that there is a possibility of high voltage power lines being constructed nearby.

"The Realtors are on board with us," she added. "You have to disclose it otherwise you can be sued. Nobody's going to buy a property with a two-year construction project nearby, with dynamiting and helicopters. They lay the towers out in the area first, then use dynamite to put in foundations, then they thread the wires using helicopters, and I've heard that during the construction period there is a high fire danger because of crashes from helicopters."

"We're living at the whim of LADWP as to what our largest personal asset, our home, is worth, or if we can ever sell it," Molton noted. "And that's true of at least hundreds of people along the path."

At the Pioneertown Mountains Preserve, The Wildlands Conservancy has environmental concerns about the construction and operation of high voltage power lines across preserve lands, as well as the impact on cultural sites, but as a non-profit organization dedicated to land stewardship in perpetuity, it may create problems for future donors, as well as for wildlife.

"This has been an extreme disappointment to employees and donors," Sall said. She noted that the Conservancy had acquired lands that connected Joshua Tree National Park and the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve to the San Bernardino National Forest and Wilderness areas. And while she noted numerous environmental concerns, including that some animal species will not cross under powerlines, helping to further ecologically isolate the national park and other areas, she added the project's potential impact goes far beyond those worries.

"This is also a public trust issue," Sall explained. "Eminent domain is going to challenge that trust. Of huge concern is if a project like this goes through it sets a precedent. If passed, it will create a huge uproar here, but probably on the national level as well. Using eminent domain on a poorly planned project like this sets up a whole other set of issues. This project sets a precedent in so many ways. There are so many other impacts that are not being considered with the cost recovery, including all the new access roads and illegal off-road vehicle activity on

preserve grounds."

Sall said the Wildlands Conservancy was especially surprised by LADWP's possible routes that would cross Conservancy lands because the organization has been working with LADWP on a conservation easement program in Owens Valley, as well as educational projects with L.A. County and at parks throughout the county.

"Conversations (about the Owens Valley program) have not been as frequent since this issue came up," Sall said. "There has definitely been some disappointment and distrust in the way this project unfolded. I guess we're not the partners we thought we were."

Miller noted if the project cuts through the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve, it could seriously impact the bighorn sheep population, especially if construction extends through lambing season.

"It will cut a swath with 500 kilovolt lines through the deepest, wildest part of the Preserve," Miller said. "Very probably the larger animals will not cross under the power lines. If what we are finding (in studies) at the 250 kv level is scaled up to the 500 kv level, it will be devastating."

An unintended result of placing power lines through wild areas is that they give ravens and other predatory birds locations to scout for food in the cleared right of way below. This can endanger species like the desert tortoise who will suffer from increased, and more effective, predation.

Though health impacts from power transmission have been difficult to prove, there appears to be some evidence associating the electromagnetic fields they generate with childhood leukemia, cancer, and other health problems, while they attract radon which causes cancer. But so far, the health of cows may have played more of a role in current powerline projects than that of people. Dairy farmers in the Imperial Valley had been asking to change the route of the Sunrise Powerlink transmission lines, according to Powers, because high voltage lines result in a decrease in milk production. Powers said this has helped lead to the IID dropping out of that project.

With concerns ranging from environmental impacts on particular species and habitats, to economic damage to property values and tourism, the Green Path North project is uniting residents as disparate as real estate agents and conservationists in opposition to the plan.

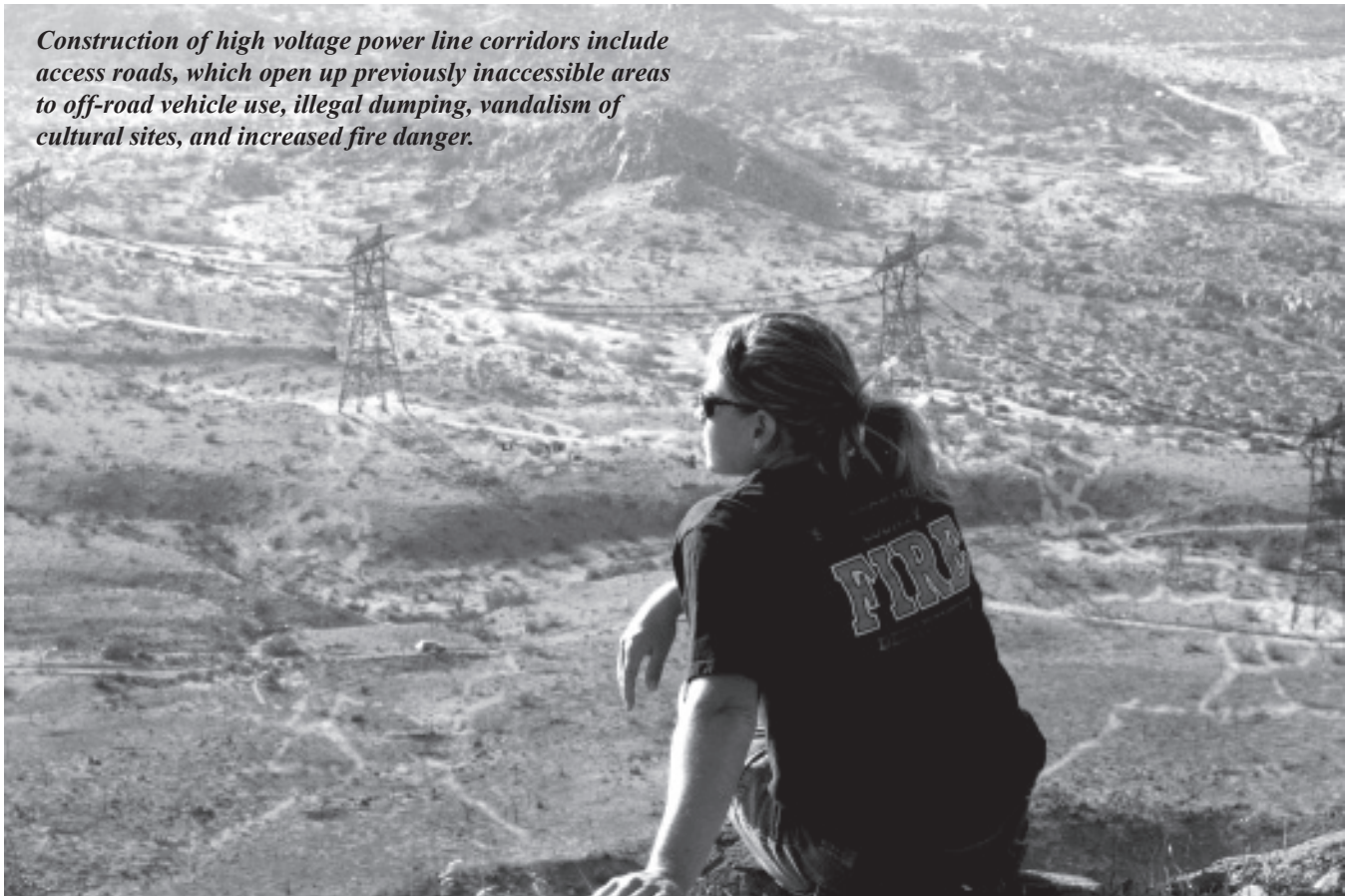
Smarter, Greener Alternatives

"This model had its place in the past," Powers said. An accomplished engineer in the field of power generation and transmission, Powers has authored San Diego Smart Energy 2020, a proposal that advocates the utilization of conservation, photovoltaic (solar) power, combined heat and power generation, green building principles, modernization of the existing distribution system to maximize the benefits of smart meters, and distributed generation—more smaller local sources of power generation instead relying upon large, distant sources of power that require long transmission lines, such as Sunrise Powerlink or Green Path North.

Powers referred to large high voltage transmission projects as "very mature technology," and noted that while the per unit price for power may be cheaper, it isn't less expensive when you take into consideration costs such as the \$7 billion estimated to construct and operate a project like Sunrise Powerlink over 40 years.

His plan is to steer metropolitan areas like San Diego away from reliance on power transmission corridors that may be vulnerable to interruption by fires and other natural disasters, and put existing technologies and practices to work to create a

Construction of high voltage power line corridors include access roads, which open up previously inaccessible areas to off-road vehicle use, illegal dumping, vandalism of cultural sites, and increased fire danger.



more efficient web of distributed generation that would increase energy independence and reliability, result in savings for consumers, and have a positive impact on global warming issues.

“It’s not an engineering challenge. The challenge to implementing a project like this isn’t technical or economic, it’s institutional,” Powers said. “The beast is the institutional interests. This model would work for L.A.”

Of Things Yet to Come

With dozens of solar and wind energy applications proposed for the BLM’s desert lands totalling over 600,000 acres—nearly 1,000 square miles—along with other proposed power corridors and other projects, it looks as if the California Desert Protection Act may be on the verge of disintegration.

“The BLM told me anything with a three percent grade or less that isn’t wilderness or preserve is going to be covered with wind and solar installations,” Miller said. “One, they said, was something like 30 square miles. You could take the whole Kelso Dry Lake out there and pave it. That’s sort of the effect.”

With the rush of metropolitan areas to go “green” with their energy supply, the desert may be forced to pay the price while cities pride themselves on their progressive practices and energy companies take another walk down the greed path instead of pursuing greener, better, options. But with the sheer volume of projects being considered for the desert, it is unlikely the individual impacts will be adequately considered, let alone the cumulative effects that may determine its survival.

While the lights burn bright in Chinatown, Noah Cross’ answer to Jake’s question about his ambition and greed echoes through the desert—“The future, Mr. Gittes, the future.”

Who will own the future of the desert is the question about to be asked.

Green Path facts from the December 26, 2006 LADWP application to the BLM:

- * Length of transmission line: 118 miles, right-of-way on BLM lands: 55 miles long, 330 feet wide, encompassing approximately 2,200 acres.
- * Structures to be used: 100-200 foot tall steel lattice towers
- * Approximately 70 temporary use areas needed, including about 50 stringing locations, 10 staging areas, one material yard, two roadless construction staging areas, two laydown areas (for substations), and four communications sites totaling approximately 255 acres.
- * Existing components would include roads and microwave communications sites. Possible future components would include transmission line towers, roads, and microwave communication sites. Six communication facilities are needed to operate the facility.
- * Construction of a tower site (estimate for one site) would involve: Rough terrain cranes, erection cranes, ready mix trucks, augers, backhoes, stakebed trucks, pull and tensioning equipment trucks, all-terrain forklifts, tractor-trailer big rigs, manlifts, motor graders, bulldozers, water trucks, mechanic trucks, crew trucks, a helicopter and fuel truck.
- * Construction would include: Roads to structure sites, a 330 foot right-of-way, 14 foot roadway with five foot wing ditches on sides, vegetation crushed but cleared only when necessary, blasting when necessary in rock areas, drilled concrete pier foundations with holes 20-30 feet deep and up to five feet in diameter.
- * Operation and maintenance would include: Regular air patrols, vegetation management for fire control purposes would not be conducted unless required.