

COVER SHEET

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR HYDROPOWER LICENSE

Lake Elsinore Advanced Pumped Storage Project

Docket No. P-11858-002

Appendix A

USFS Review of Special Use Permit Application

Pages A-1 to A-2

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APPENDIX A

**Review of Special Use Application for the Transmission Line
Proposal Relative to the Need for Federal Land
and Non-Federal Alternatives**

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REVIEW OF SPECIAL USE APPLICATION FOR THE TRANSMISSION LINE PROPOSAL RELATIVE TO THE NEED FOR FEDERAL LAND AND NON-FEDERAL ALTERNATIVES

Nevada Hydro Company and Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District have filed an application with the Cleveland National Forest for a “stand alone” transmission line authorization. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) has accepted this application and is evaluating this proposal in conjunction with the hydropower license application filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. When the USFS screens proposals, the need for federal land is evaluated to determine if the proposal is in the public interest. In the case of the “transmission line only” proposal, the applicants provided information used to evaluate other alternative alignments that were reasonably available to the applicant that did not require National Forest System lands. This appendix briefly summarizes the information considered by the USFS.

San Diego Gas & Electric Company proposed the Valley Rainbow transmission line interconnection project in 2001. Although the project was denied by the California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) in 2003, the CPUC staff released a preliminary report on the alternatives screening analysis in November 2002. The co-applicants have incorporated this information into the license application, Volume 3 of 6, Attachment 3. The analysis identified and screened 45 alternatives, including non-wires alternatives. The analysis identified 33 alternative routes that would provide the 500-kilovolt interconnection proposed by the LEAPS Project, 12 of those alternatives required use of National Forest System lands. The proposed routes on the National Forests were significantly constrained. Many crossed wilderness areas or tribal lands, which are essentially unavailable for development. Those routes that did not have wilderness or tribal lands are primarily those routes that have evolved into the alternatives considered in the LEAPS analysis.

Of the 21 alternative routes that did not need National Forest System lands, 15 crossed tribal lands that were not available for development. The remaining six routes were also constrained by land ownership, historic sites, habitat reserves, and displacement of homes and businesses along the right-of-way.

Given the numerous constraints on locating transmission line corridors in the Lake Elsinore area, the USFS concluded during the application screening that National Forest System lands are necessary for the proposed interconnect. It is also evident that alternative locations are not reasonably available to the co-applicants. For the purposes of this analysis, the range of alternatives includes several different routes that were designed to respond to specific issues while meeting the purpose and need of the project. Alternative routes that cross wilderness areas, tribal lands, or densely populated urban areas are not reasonably available to the proponent, and will not be considered in detail.

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