

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

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June 29, 2012

In Reply Refer To: DOE120425A

Brian Mills
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability
U.S. Department of Energy (OE-20)
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-0001

Re: Energia Sierra Juarez U.S. Electric Transmission Line Project

Dear Mr. Mills:

Pursuant to 36 CFR 800 (as amended 8-05-04) regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Department of Energy (DOE), is seeking my comments on its determination on the Area of Potential Effect (APE), presence of historic properties, finding of eligibility for identified properties, and effects that the proposed undertaking will have on historic properties.

After consultation with DOE staff on June 5, 2012, previous issues with the definition of the APE, proof of Native American Tribal consultation and non-concurrence with findings of non-eligibility were resolved.

The proposed project will consist of constructing, operating, maintaining, and connecting an approximately .65-mile long electric transmission line that extends from the U.S. Mexico border to San Diego Gas and Electric's proposed East County Substation near the town of Jacumba in San Diego County, California. The construction of the electric transmission line includes the area of the proposed transmission line and associated access roads. The proposed transmission line would be supported on three to five 150-foot steel lattice towers or 170-foot steel monopoles that would be accessed by a new 28-foot wide road from Old Highway 80 to the selected corridor.

The APE for the construction of the ESJ transmission line is a 70-acre area that includes the rights-of-way of the alternative corridors from the U.S.-Mexico border to the proposed East County Substation, the main access road, and areas adjacent to those features. On May 31, 2012 DOE provided to SHPO staff a copy of the Section 106 Draft Memorandum of Agreement for the ECO Substation project demonstrating that this undertaking is separate from the Energia Sierra Juarez U.S. Electric Transmission Line Project.

In addition to your letter you have submitted the following document as evidence of your efforts to identify historic properties in the project Area of Potential Effects (APE):

- *Final Archaeological and Historical Investigations for the Energia Sierra Juarez U.S. Gen-Tie Line Project Jacumba, California* (EDAW, Inc. 2010)

Consultation with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) determined that there are known Native American cultural resources within or in the vicinity of the project. Consultation with local Native American tribal groups resulted in requests by the Campo Band of Kumeyaay Indians for a consultation meeting and monitoring of cultural resources.

Inventory efforts identified the following sites had the potential to be impacted by the proposed project and were therefore tested using subsurface excavations to assess their potential to provide information in regional or local prehistory and to determine their eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places: CA-SDI-6119, CA-SDI-19488, CA-SDI-19490, CA-SDI-19492, CA-SDI-19493, and CA-SDI-19494. The subsurface excavations indicated that the sites had limited or no subsurface components and have no potential to provide information important to regional or local prehistory; therefore the DOE has concluded these sites are ineligible for the National Register.

It was determined that construction of the proposed access road to the existing water well would not alter any of the elements of design or construction that make Old Highway 80 eligible for the National Register.

Subsurface excavations have not been conducted at sites CA-SDI-4455, CA-SDI-19486, and CA-SDI-19489 to determine their eligibility for inclusion in the National Register. If the Presidential Permit for this undertaking were to be granted, DOE would require that subsurface investigations be performed at these three sites prior to any ground disturbance and would consult with the Office of Historic Preservation regarding eligibility determinations prior to project construction. The DOE has determined this mitigation as having no adverse effect to historic properties.

Based on your identification efforts, I have the following comments:

1. I concur with the DOE on their finding of non-eligibility for listing on the National Register for the sites that have been tested using subsurface excavations: CA-SDI-6119, CA-SDI-19488, CA-SDI-14490, CA-SDI-19492, CA-SDI-19493, and CA-SDI-19494.
2. After aforementioned consultation, I now concur with the Area of Potential Effect (APE) as defined by the DOE.
3. Also after the aforementioned consultation it was agreed that CA-SDI-19486 and CA-SDI-19489 are not within the APE for the preferred alternative. Nonetheless, should this alternative be constructed, DOE will assume National Register eligibility and the sites will be avoided.
4. DOE also notes that the applicant has committed to several protective measures for all alternatives. These include monitoring of ground-disturbing activities during construction by a qualified archaeologist, a Native American monitor will also be invited to monitor as well. Avoidance of cultural resource

sites by redirecting pedestrian and vehicular traffic away from the site during construction and facility operation.

5. Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.4(a)(1), I concur with your determination of the APE. Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.4(d)(1), I concur with your finding of No historic properties affected.

Thank you for seeking my comments and for considering historic properties in planning your project. If you require further information, please contact Brendon Greenaway of my staff, at phone 916-445-7036 or email bgreenaway@parks.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer