

COVER SHEET

Responsible Federal Agency: U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability

Cooperating Agency: County of San Diego

Title: Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Energia Sierra Juarez U.S. Transmission Line

Location: San Diego County, California

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Abstract: Energia Sierra Juarez U.S. Transmission, LLC (ESJ), a subsidiary of Sempra U.S. Gas and Power, has applied to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) for a Presidential permit to construct, operate, maintain, and connect a 1.7-mile transmission line (0.65 miles in the U.S.) across the international border between the U.S. and Mexico, near the town of Jacumba, California. A DOE Presidential permit is required before anyone can construct, operate, maintain, and connect an electric transmission line across the U.S. border. DOE must decide whether to issue a Presidential permit for the project.

DOE published a *Federal Register* "Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment and to Conduct Public Scoping Meetings; Baja Wind U.S. Transmission, LLC" on August 4, 2008 (73 FR 45218), held public scoping meetings in Jacumba, California, on August 28, 2008, and solicited written and electronic comments on the scope of the Environmental Assessment. Based on the comments received, DOE determined that an EIS would be the appropriate NEPA document for the proposed Presidential permit. Accordingly, on February 25, 2009, DOE issued in the *Federal Register* a "Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement; Energia Sierra Juarez U.S. Transmission, LLC" (74 FR 8517), but did not open an additional scoping period; however, it did indicate that any additional comments received would be considered to the extent practicable.

Public Comments: In preparing this final EIS, DOE considered comments received during the scoping period (August 2, 2008, through September 3, 2008) and public comment period on the draft EIS (September 17, 2010, through November 1, 2010). Comments on the draft EIS were accepted during the 45-day period following publication of (EPA's) Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* on September 17, 2010; DOE continued to accept late comments to the extent practicable, i.e., until September 2011. DOE held three public hearings on the Draft EIS in Jacumba, California, on October 5, 2010; Boulevard, California, on October 6, 2010; and San Diego, California, on October 7, 2010. All comments, including the late comments, were considered during preparation of this final EIS. Volume 3 contains the comments received during the public comment period on the draft EIS and DOE's responses to these comments. This final EIS contains revisions and new information based in part on comments received on the draft EIS. Vertical change bars in the margins indicate the locations of these revisions and new information. Editorial corrections and deletions are not indicated. Volume 3 is an entirely new part of this EIS; therefore it does not contain change bars.

The EIS addresses the environmental impacts of the proposed transmission line and the range of reasonable alternatives. Six alternatives were identified in this EIS, five of which were carried forward for detailed analysis (the No Action Alternative, a Double-Circuit 230-kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line, a Single-Circuit 500-kV Transmission Line, and a revised route for the Double-Circuit 230-kV or Single-Circuit 500-kV Transmission Line). DOE has identified the revised Double-Circuit 230-kV route (Alternative 4A) as its preferred alternative. DOE will use the EIS to ensure that it has the information it needs for informed decision-making. Copies of the final EIS are available for public review at the Jacumba and Campo-Moreno Village Branch libraries or may be obtained from Dr. Jerry Pell. The EIS also is available on the project EIS website (<http://www.esjprojecteis.org>). As required by CEQ NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1506.10), DOE will announce its decision on the proposed action in a Record of Decision in the *Federal Register* no sooner than 30 days after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency publishes the Notice of Availability of the final EIS.