

COVER SHEET

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

Cooperating Agency: County of San Diego

Title: Draft 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-U.S.), a subsidiary of Sempra Generation, 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.

The EIS addresses the environmental impacts of the proposed transmission line and the range of reasonable alternatives. Five alternatives were identified in this EIS, three of which were carried forward for detailed analysis (the No Action Alternative, a Double-Circuit 230-kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line and a Single-Circuit 500-kV Transmission Line). DOE will use the EIS to ensure that it has the information it needs for informed decision-making. DOE invites comments on this draft EIS during the 45-day comment period that will begin when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency publishes the Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register*. Copies of the draft EIS will be available for public review at the Jacumba and Campo-Moreno Village Branch libraries or may be obtained from Dr. Jerry Pell. The EIS also will be available via the project website (<http://www.esjprojecteis.org/>). During the 45-day comment period, public hearings will be held in San Diego, Boulevard, and Jacumba, California. Written and oral comments will be given equal weight, and any comments received after the comment period ends will be considered to the extent practicable. DOE's responses to comments received on the draft EIS will be included in the final EIS. DOE will announce its decision in a Record of Decision no sooner than 30 days after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency publishes the Notice of Availability of the final EIS.