

1.1 BACKGROUND

On March 3, 2005, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), prepared and distributed for public review the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the San Diego Gas & Electric Company's (SDG&E) proposed Otay Mesa Power Purchase Agreement (OMPPA) Transmission Project (the "Proposed Project"). If approved, the Proposed Project would install a new 230 kilovolt (kV) electric transmission circuit that would connect Calpine's Otay Mesa Generation Project (OMGP), currently under construction near SDG&E's existing Miguel Substation, with SDG&E's existing Sycamore Canyon Substation, and a second 230 kV electric transmission circuit that would connect the OMGP to SDG&E's existing Old Town Substation. Additional Project components would include a new transition station, two new overhead to underground transition cable poles, and modifications to the existing Sycamore Canyon, Miguel and Old Town Substations. The new 230 kV transmission circuit evaluated in the EIR includes approximately 18 miles of overhead 230 kV transmission circuit to be located within existing SDG&E right-of-way and ten miles of 230 kV transmission circuit to be located underground primarily within existing SDG&E right-of-way and public roadways. According to SDG&E, the Project is proposed as the primary infrastructure needed to connect the OMGP to SDG&E's transmission system.

1.2 PURPOSE OF RESPONSE TO COMMENTS DOCUMENT

This document, in conjunction with the SDG&E Otay Mesa Power Purchase Agreement Transmission Project Draft EIR (March 2005), constitutes the Final EIR on the Proposed Project. The Final EIR has been prepared pursuant to CEQA Section 21000 et. seq., California Public Resources Code, and in accordance with the Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA Section 15000 et. seq., California Code of Regulations, Tit. 14. The Final EIR will be used by the CPUC as part of its CPCN approval process, which includes selecting project alternatives, adopting mitigation measures, and reviewing project costs.

This volume of the Final EIR contains all comments on the Draft EIR and responses thereto. The focus of the responses to comments is on the disposition of significant environmental issues as raised in the comments, as specified by Section 15088(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines. Detailed responses are not provided to comments on the merits of the proposed project. However, when a comment is not directed to significant environmental issues, the responses indicate that the comment has been noted and that no further response is necessary.

1.3 ORGANIZATION OF FINAL EIR

As required by Section 15132 of the CEQA Guidelines, the Final EIR consists of the following elements:

- The Draft EIR.
- A summary of the public review process (see Final EIR Section 2).
- A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIR (see Final EIR Section 3).
- Comments and recommendations received on the Draft EIR (see Final EIR Section 3).
- Responses to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process (see Final EIR Section 3).
- Revisions to the Draft EIR (see Final EIR Section 4).

1.4 DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Pursuant to Article XII of the Constitution of the State of California, the CPUC oversees the regulation of investor-owned public utilities, including SDG&E. The CPUC is also the lead State agency ensuring compliance of the SDG&E's proposed OMPPA Transmission Project with CEQA. This Final EIR will ultimately be used by the CPUC, in conjunction with other information developed in the CPUC's formal record, to act on SDG&E's application for a CPCN. Under CEQA requirements, the CPUC will determine the adequacy of this Final EIR and, if adequate, will certify the document as complying with CEQA.