

Response to Comment Letter I118

Mark Ostrander

- I118-1** This is an introductory statement by the commenter explaining that his comments on the Project are attached to the email. Please refer to Responses to Comments I118-2 through I118-10. County responses to these comments are provided below.
- I118-2** The commenter states opposition to the Project due to the community having endured other similar projects including the continuous construction of the border wall, fiber optic undergrounding, the Sunrise Power Link, ECO substation, Tule Wind, power pole fire hardening upgrade project, and the Jacumba solar project. In response, the Draft EIR considered cumulative projects in the area, and potential cumulative impacts are discussed throughout Chapter 2 of the Draft EIR. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the analysis contained within the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required.
- I118-3** The commenter states that other projects in the community vicinity use Jacumba Service District water and most of these projects underestimate the amount of water needed. The commenter states that that his well level has dropped as recorded by the County, and that this is their only source of water. In response, Section 2.7 Hydrology and Water Quality and Section 3.1.8 Utilities and Service Systems analyze the Proposed Project’s potential impacts to groundwater resources and water supply, including JCSD resources. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the analysis contained within the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required.
- I118-4** The commenter expresses concern regarding continuous truck traffic on Old Highway 80 causing damage to the road, and states that noise of the trucks is loud and sometimes run 6 to 7 days a week. In response, please refer to Sections 3.1.7 Transportation and Section 2.9 Noise of the EIR which analyze the Proposed Project’s potential impacts regarding transportation and construction traffic noise. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the analysis contained within the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required.
- I118-5** The commenter states that people of the community chose to reside there because of the aesthetics and views which similar projects to the proposed are ruining, and as a result property values continue to decline. In response, please refer to Global Response GR-1 Socioeconomic Impacts and Environmental Justice in the Final EIR. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the analysis contained within the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required.

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- I118-6** The commenter states that similar projects to that proposed are generally approved with disregard to how it impacts the community both socially and economically; and when they promise mitigation it benefits others outside the community while local groups trying to make their communities better receive no benefit and struggle to continue. In response, please refer to Global Response GR-1 Socioeconomic Impacts and Environmental Justice in the Final EIR. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the analysis contained within the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required.
- I118-7** The commenter states that due to similar projects such as that proposed, there has been a change in wildlife in the area, including hawks, deer, mountain sheep, and mountain lions. In response, please refer to Global Response GR-3 Biological Impacts, prepared as part of this Response to Comments Document. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the analysis contained within the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required.
- I118-8** The commenter states that another issue with utility type projects similar to that proposed is fire risk. The commenter expresses concern of McCain Valley camp closing as well as Rainbow camp resulting in a loss of ten crews over half of San Diego’s crew force. The commenter states concerns regarding increased fire as a result of more infrastructure, and the potential to decimate whole communities. The commenter also states that the battery storage also increases the fire risk as well as hazmat issues, potentially impacting groundwater resources. In response, please refer to Section 2.6, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Section 2.12, Wildfire and Section 3.1.6, Public Services of the EIR. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the analysis contained within the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required.
- I118-9** The commenter states that implementation of the Project would stop any future growth in Jacumba as the Project would take the largest piece of land in the community limiting the amount of new housing that could potentially be built. The commenter states the community has been impacted far more than other rural communities and most residents in the community are frustrated knowing that no matter what they do or say the County will approve it anyway. In response, please refer to Global Response GR-1 Socioeconomic Impacts and Environmental Justice in the Final EIR. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the analysis contained within the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required.
- I118-10** The commenter states that all the power projects in the area seem to be connected actions to the construction of the Sunrise Power Link. The commenter states that cumulative impacts were never adequately addressed as required by CEQA, and that

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the County must do due diligence when considering these projects and take into consideration the residents of the community. In response, cumulative projects in the Project area, including the Sunrise Power Link have been considered the cumulative analysis for all significant environmental effects analyzed in Chapter 2 of the Draft EIR. The cumulative analysis conducted for the EIR is based on both the list method and summary of projections method. The summary of projections method uses the County's General Plan and Mountain Empire Subregional Plan (both of which are available at the following website: <http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/generalplan.html>). Each environmental issue area within this EIR includes a discussion of potential cumulative impacts based on these methods. Table 1-4, Cumulative – Reasonably Foreseeable, Approved, and Pending Projects, lists projects that were included in the cumulative analysis.

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