

ORIGINAL



**Rancho Capistrano Property Owners Association**

C/o CID Property Management  
41811 Ivy Street, Suite C., Murrieta CA 92562  
Office (951)698-9099 / Fax (951)639-4600

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SECRETARY OF THE  
COMMISSION  
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FEDERAL ENERGY  
REGULATORY COMMISSION

December 6, 2012

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission,  
Project No. 14227-000  
Washington D.C. 20426

Attention:

Timothy J. Welch, Chief  
West Branch, Division of Hydro Power Licensing

**Subject:** Motion to Intervene by Board of Directors and members, Rancho Capistrano POA in the matter of the Lake Elsinore Advanced Pump Storage ( LEAPS) Project No. 14227-000

Dear Mr. Welch,

Pursuant to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Rules of Practice and Procedure, we (members and Board of Directors RCPOA) submit this notice to intervene on the basis of the draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) concerning the license application by Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District and The Nevada Hydro Company, Inc. We seek to intervene in order to comment on the LEAPS project DEIS.

Rancho Capistrano POA is a gated community of approximately 134 homes and lots located 5 miles south of the Ortega Highway on The South Main Divide. Many homes within our community are valued at \$500,000 to one million dollars, and vacant lots have sold for around \$250,000 and up. All of our residents live here full time. The proposed LEAPS Project is located on the only access road to our community approx 1.5 miles to the north. The proposed 500 KV Transmission lines will follow and cross this access road. As such the potential impact of these proposed projects will have more effect on our community than any other.

Our concerns that we are requesting be included within the scope of the project are as follows:

1. PG&E own safety recommendations for power lines up to and including 500KV are that during a fire situation when smoke is present no persons approach within 100ft of the high tension lines. Fire department SOP increase this distance from 300ft - 500ft. This is because there is a danger that the power lines can actually arc to ground utilizing the suspended particles in the smoke as a conductor. Our community has only one escape route for use during evacuations. This proposal will not only put much of this transmission line

- within 100ft -500ft of our route, it will also cross over it at least one point. In other words during brush fires with smoke around the power lines our only escape route can no longer be used. Our entire community could become trapped.
2. In this area most fires start in the urban interface area at the bottom of the hill, topography, fuel and wind then cause them to make a rapid run up the slope. Because of the difficult access for fire crews most of the fires that start are actually controlled by utilizing retardant drops from aircraft. The proposed Transmission lines on the hill will prevent the use of these aircraft in almost all situations, these small fires will then become big fires advancing up the hill and then crossing over the South Main Divide and threatening our community. The South Main Divide is the only other control line that can be utilized to control these fires, but again because of the location of the transmission lines fire Captains will be very unwilling to put their personnel in an area in which their own escape routes could be cut off if the smoke approaches the power lines.
  3. Faulty insulators on 500 KV lines themselves have actually been the cause of numerous fires throughout the state. Grounding of power lines during fires can actually start off secondary fires and finally all of the access roads required to service the proposed towers will open up huge areas of the national forest to potential arsonists and accidental fire starts.
  4. The South Main Divide paving was actually funded by our community. We paid 100% of the construction costs ( USFS provided engineering and planning) This road was specifically designed as a low use 35mph road, corners, road widths and camber are not suitable for higher speeds or increased traffic. A conventional 55 mph road would have been considerably more expensive to construct. These proposed projects could potentially add as many as 400,000 cars per year to the South Main Divide. The entire roadway will need to be redesigned and upgraded to handle this traffic or the residents will be placed at much greater risk due to potential accidents.
  5. We are very concerned about the impact on property values. During the day the LEAPS project will be empty, a giant mud-hole will remain, combined with the visual effect of giant towers which are visible to every potential buyer and resident approaching our community, local realtors are estimating that these projects combined will reduce property values by up to a \$100,000 per home, multiplied by the number of homes and vacant lots this loss of property values will be considerable. Who will reimburse the property owners for this and make up for the loss of revenues from property taxes ( potentially a reduction in tax base of up to \$15,000,000 )
  6. The LEAPS project will flood over 10,000 oak trees, many of them hundreds of years old. The trails through these groves are some of the most beautiful in the Forest and are enjoyed by hundreds of visitors and residents each year. These trails are irreplaceable and their loss will have a major impact again on our property values and our quality of life. The Morgan trail is a premier hiking and horse riding trail, it runs right through this area and will be completely destroyed.
  7. Part of the uniqueness of our community is the utilization of two areas on the South Main Divide for hang-gliding. This is one of the best locations in the world; the transmission lines will have a major effect on this activity no matter where they are located.
  8. We urge you to look at other potential routes from the transmission lines either along the freeway corridor or out in the wilderness area away from all homes and roads. We are 100% against the LEAPS project it will have an unbelievable negative impact on the ecosystem and create what is little more than a dry lake bed during the day that will function much like a giant heat sync, it will create no new energy.

As the elected representatives of the owners of 134 privately owned parcels within our community the RCPOA Board of Directors trust that FERC will make the right decision and ensure the passing of the No Action Alternative denying approval for this project. Our Life Safety concerns far outweigh any potential advantages of this project.

The Rancho Capistrano Board of Directors is the primary contact for the Association would like all communications and copies of filings copied and sent to the Board through its managing agent at the following address.

Rancho Capistrano POA  
C/o CID Property Management  
41811 Ivy Street, Suite C.  
Murrieta, CA 92562

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Timothy Maw', with a large circular flourish at the end.

Timothy Maw, CMCA®,  
Community Manager,  
For the Board of Directors,  
Rancho Capistrano Property Owners Association.