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To: The Protect Our Community Foundation  
San Diego Foundation  
Attn: Emily Young  
2508 Historic Decatur Road, Ste. 200  
San Diego, CA 92106

May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Dear Board of Directors,

Enclosed is our contribution of \$1000.00 to support your grassroots campaign in its fight against the proposed Sunrise Powerlink project. We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to your organization for fighting against a project that would endanger the forest ecosystem and undermine the mission of the Cleveland National Forest Foundation.

Established in 1908 by President Theodore Roosevelt, the Cleveland National Forest contained 2 million acres from the Mexican border into Riverside County. Today, the forest exists at a fraction of its original capacity, and now encompasses four non-contiguous parcels of land that total only 450,000 acres. Furthermore, that land is checkered with privately owned land. Threatened from within and without, it is absolutely essential to protect the vital remnants of this unique Southern California wildland. The mission of the Cleveland National Forest Foundation is to restore our fragmented forest to its former glory. The chaparral, meadows, and pine-oak woodlands that grace the mountains and foothills are especially rich in unique species. The Cleveland National Forest is located in one of the areas of the world with the greatest biodiversity and yet is also one of the areas most threatened by urban sprawl.

The Cleveland National Forest Foundation holds a progressive vision of this region's future, therefore the organization aims to promote the wise planning of the urban and rural lands as one ecosystem. This entails understanding that the improvement of urban communities is a key to reducing urban sprawl and a crucial element of proper planning. The Sunrise Powerlink inadvertently undermines this effort by promoting development on rural lands instead of focusing on more local power generation and an urban infill design model. It is ironic that in a time of catastrophic water shortage, the forest that still fulfills its original function of watershed protection is threatened by the urban

areas that desperately need this vital resource. It is interesting to note that most of the city's reservoirs, which either hold imported water or collect local supplies, have drainage in the Cleveland National Forest (see watershed map attachment). Ultimately, John Muir was right when he said "we all live in a house of one room": destroy one part of the house and you destroy it all. A healthy regional economy can only survive in a healthy environment.

In accordance with CNFF's interests in preventing urban encroachment into the forest, the organization has been monitoring the progression of the San Diego Association of Government's 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (SANDAG's 2030 RTP), which drives land use in San Diego County. For more detailed information on the 2030 RTP, please refer to <http://www.sofar.org/>. The following factual findings from the 2030 RTP and its environmental impact report confirm that SANDAG's planning efforts in San Diego County are the antithesis of sustainability:

- Instead of encouraging city-centered growth, the SANDAG plan, by its own accounting, promotes excessive growth in rural areas.
- The population in incorporated San Diego County is projected to grow by 55%, and by an average of 42% in three rural communities, over the next 20 years.
- Population percentage increase in groundwater dependent areas, which includes forest lands (East of the County Water Authority), will be 168%
- Freeway lane miles will increase by over 800 miles, leading to a 38.8 million mile increase in vehicle-miles traveled, or VMT
- Gasoline consumption will increase by 31.26%, diesel consumption by 25%.
- Greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) under the RTP will exceed existing levels by about 31%, or 5.3 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.
- The increase in GHG emissions will contribute to an exacerbation of climate change (an impact the RTP EIR finds to be significant). (EIR at 4.7-34 and 4.7-38.)

Incredibly, according to the statement of overriding considerations for the 2030 RTP, SANDAG believes that the socioeconomic benefits of their plan outweigh the regionally "significant unavoidable and unmitigable impacts... to land use, visual resources, energy, and biological resources". This flawed reasoning has heretofore encouraged the growth of unsustainable development, massive highways, and

resource depletion. We should not let this archaic thought pattern justify the construction of the powerlink at the expense of our environment. In addition to the potential damage to the forest ecosystem that would be caused by the powerlink, we must not forget the broader threat in the form of continued growth and urban sprawl. Even if the powerlink could be constructed without harming a single leaf in the forest, it would still be fueling unsustainable growth. We might find that if we committed to real change and built our urban areas sustainably, we wouldn't need this additional power at all. Ultimately, this project is just a symptom of a wider failure of vision by all its proponents.

Thank you again for your efforts to stop this project from going forward. Please be in touch with any new developments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Duncan McFetridge". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Duncan McFetridge, CNFF Director

CC: William Metz, Cleveland National Forest Supervisor

