

The San Diego Union-Tribune

U-T SUBSCRIBER TOOLS | SUBSCRIBE TO THE PAPER



# NEWS

NEWS SPORTS BUSINESS LIFESTYLE ENTERTAINMENT THINGS TO DO TRAVEL MYTOWN CLASSIFIEDS REAL ESTATE JOBS AUTOTRADER.COM

WEATHER 63° F

TRAFFIC

TOP STORY: HUNT FOR SCHEMME'S SUCCESSOR

SEARCH...

SUBSCRIBE

## Newsletter

LOCAL NEWS NEWS BY REGION NEWS BY TOPIC

EMAIL PRINT SAVE



### Last hurdle for the powerlink

BY JULIE MEIER WRIGHT AND TIM KELLEY  
SUNDAY, JUNE 14, 2009 AT 2 A.M.

Two of the more pressing questions facing our country today are: How do we create quality jobs, and how do we develop a sustainable future for our children? The answer to both can be found in the Sunrise Powerlink, the only electric transmission line approved in recent years that is designed specifically to deliver clean, renewable power.

The California Public Utilities Commission and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management have approved Sunrise. However, the project still must clear an additional administrative hurdle. The U.S. Forest Service must amend its land-use plan and issue a "record of decision" to allow for a portion of the line to be located in the Cleveland National Forest.

Forest Service officials are considering a number of factors before making this critical decision. We believe that they should consider numerous state and federal policies intended to accelerate clean energy development, how we can improve the state of our economy and how we can harness the virtually limitless potential of the region to generate multiple forms of clean, emissions-free energy.

Clearly, Sunrise represents the catalyst for the emerging renewable energy industry from San Diego's research institutes along the coast through East County to the Imperial Valley and the Salton Sea. In March 2008, San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation partnered with Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation to understand industry clusters that link us. A key emerging cluster is clean-tech and renewable energy. We plan to market the two regions, along with northern Baja California, as a "mega-region" for innovation, investment and growth.

As the San Diego region's demand for electricity rises, clean sources of energy will be needed more than ever to ensure a balanced energy supply and to maintain electric reliability for homes and businesses. Reliable power is essential to stay economically competitive and develop new jobs.

With respect to new jobs, Sunrise potentially is the equivalent of a master key to a complex lock. Everyone knows the world's fossil-fuel reserves won't last forever. Developing renewable energy projects will create well-paying green-collar jobs in Imperial County where unemployment exceeds 25 percent, the highest level of any county in the United States.

A recent study authored by the state's leading authorities on renewable energy identified significant amounts of wind, solar and geothermal energy opportunities in the region, overwhelmingly untapped today. Further, this mega-region is the only area in the nation that offers such a diverse renewable energy portfolio – sun, wind, geothermal, biomass and algae.

Experts nationwide agree a lack of electric transmission and other critical electric infrastructure is the biggest barrier to renewable energy development. That is where the Sunrise Powerlink will make a positive impact. The 120-mile line will deliver 1,000 megawatts of clean renewable energy to San Diego. Sunrise will help ensure our region has sufficient energy supplies to remain economically competitive and improve our environment to preserve our quality of life.

Sunrise is consistent with state and federal goals and directives. The new supplies of clean energy are needed to help achieve government policies intended to reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels. Here are just a few:

President Obama's New Energy for America Plan. This plan seeks to ensure that 25 percent of the country's electricity comes from renewable sources by 2025. Roughly \$6.5 billion included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is intended to provide tax relief and other incentives to develop the infrastructure necessary to move renewable energy from rural production areas to urban markets.

California Renewable Portfolio Standard. This aggressive mandate requires utilities to provide at least 20 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2010, a threshold widely expected to increase to 33 percent by 2020.

### THINGS TO DO

+ADD AN EVENT

EVENTS MOVIES RESTAURANTS

20 Fri	21 Sat	22 Sun	23 Mon	24 Tue	All events
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	---------------

7 pm tomorrow Sight & Sound

8 pm tomorrow Groovehaus - Where deep house lives...

8 pm tomorrow SUSHI Presents Zirk Ubu's "Adrift"

WHAT  WHEN

ALL EVENTS | HOT TICKETS | +ADD AN EVENT

MOST POPULAR MOST COMMENTS

[SDSU athletic director quits over scandal - Local Breaking News](#)

[Chargers see wildcat as more than gimmick - Sports](#)

[Rancho San Diego woman arrested in stabbing - Local Breaking News](#)

[Depth at linebacker paying off - Sports](#)

[Teens charged in three robberies - Local Breaking News](#)

### FOLLOW US



### SIGNON TOOLS

- Weather
- Traffic
- Surf
- Gas Prices
- Lottery
- Contests
- Forums
- Webcams
- SignOn Guides
- Coupons
- Sudoku
- Crossword
- Horoscope
- Email Alerts
- Text Alerts

### UNION-TRIBUNE TOOLS

- Your Subscription
- Subscribe
- Newspaper Ads
- Vacation Stop
- E-Edition
- Archives
- Buy U-T Photos
- Special Sections
- Newspaper in Education

California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32). This requires the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. A study by the University of San Diego identified increased use of renewable energy as the most effective means of reducing energy-related emissions in the region.

This is a rare opportunity for a single project to help provide solutions for two major problems. The Sunrise Powerlink and the renewable energy projects connected to the line, will create jobs that stimulate the economy, and will do so in a sustainable manner with immediate and long-term benefits. Therefore, we strongly encourage the U.S. Forest Service to complete its assessment, amend its land-use plan and issue a record of decision to allow the Sunrise Powerlink to be built without delay.

*Wright is president and CEO of the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation. Kelley is president and CEO of the Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation.*

EMAIL PRINT SAVE



DISQUS COMMENTS

Add New Comment

Profile Connect Twitter OpenID



Logged in as Logout from DISQUS

Logged in as using Facebook Connect (Logout)

Required: Please log into Disqus or connect with Facebook or sign in with Twitter or sign in using OpenID to comment on SignOnSanDiego.

Type your comment here.

Name

Community Page Subscribe by email

You must log into your Disqus Profile in order to post comments.

blog comments powered by Disqus

INSIDE SIGNONSANDIEGO.COM

NEWS

SPORTS

BUSINESS

LIFESTYLE

ENTERTAINMENT

THINGS TO DO



Scarcity of vaccine incites local anger



Hunt for Schemmel's successor



Batteries not included



More than Precious



Your local guide to San Diego restaurants serving up Thanksgiving dinner



More than 160 San Diego holiday events, and counting up Thanksgiving dinner



NEWS SPORTS BUSINESS LIFESTYLE ENTERTAINMENT THINGS TO DO TRAVEL CLASSIFIEDS REAL ESTATE JOBS AUTOTRADER.COM ABOUT US CONTACT US FAQ'S PRIVACY SUBSCRIBING RSS MOBILE

© Copyright 2009 The San Diego Union-Tribune, LLC