

P-11858-002

**Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515**

April 25, 2005

ORIGINAL

**OFFICE OF
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
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FEDERAL ENERGY
REGULATORY COMMISSION**

The Honorable Joseph T. Kelliher, Chairman
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20426

**RE: Lake Elsinore Advanced Pumped Storage Project (FERC No. 11858-002) and
Talega-Escondido/Valley-Serrano Interconnect Project**

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We are writing to express our strong support for the proposed Lake Elsinore Advanced Pumped Storage Project (LEAPS) and the Talega-Escondido/Valley-Serrano Interconnect Project (TV/VSI) and ask that this letter be included for the record for the public comment period relating to this project.

As you know, California continues to lack the necessary transmission capacity and generation capacity to keep up with its population and economic growth. As the elected Members of Congress from Riverside and San Diego Counties, we understand the importance of having a reliable and clean source of electricity and the ability to transmit electricity where it is needed. For too long, two major grid systems have lacked a major interconnection to relieve the grid of increased congestion and add flexibility in the ability to transmit electricity north and south.

In addition, with the need to promote cleaner energy sources and protect our air and water systems, as well as add much needed generation capacity, it is rare to find a project that accomplishes all of these goals. Adding 500 megawatts of clean energy to the region is a readily available long-term solution to the peak load needs of Southern California. The Advanced Pumped Storage project has the added benefit of greatly improving the water quality and stability of Lake Elsinore, thereby adding to the environmental and economic value of the lake.

We all worked diligently on the passage of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPAct). Two major initiatives that Congress included with our strong support was the importance of supporting critical energy projects on new energy corridors on Federal lands, and the promotion of advanced transmission technologies such as pumped storage. Approval of

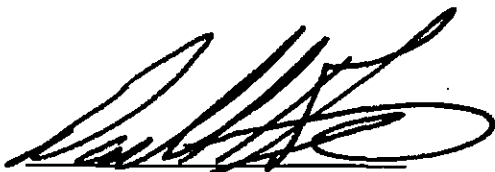
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the LEAPS project and the TV/VSI project represent the intent of these legislative initiatives.

As the environmental review process goes forward, we understand the need to balance the competing needs of forest users, assess the environmental impact to the forest, and determine appropriate mitigation for the use of the land. We believe minimizing the impact on private property owners is an important factor that should be included in this process. One of the benefits of the Projects' Sponsor's preferred alignment, instead of the U.S. Forestry Service's preferred line, is that it minimizes the visual impact to several existing and proposed housing developments. Keeping the proposed line farther in the Cleveland National Forest is a better option than siting the line close to those developments. In short, we oppose the preferred line offered by FERC and U.S. Forestry Service and support the alignment preferred by the proponents of the project.

Thank you for your consideration, and we urge you to continue to move forward on these two much needed projects. We look forward to working with you in meeting the electricity needs of Southern California.

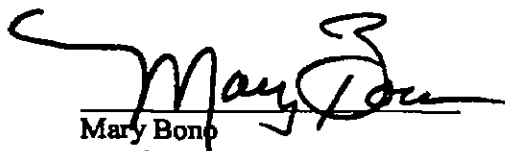
Sincerely,



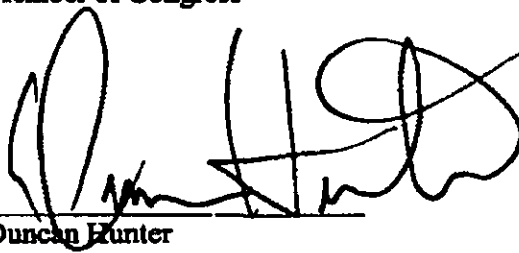
Darrell Issa
Member of Congress



Ken Calvert
Member of Congress



Mary Bono
Member of Congress



Duncan Hunter
Member of Congress