Aspen Environmental Group

Recent Accomplishments and Ongoing Projects

Fall 2006 | Energy Update Issue | Issue No. 16

1991 15 2006
Years of Service

Awards:

Los Angeles Unified School District New School Construction Program EIR Aspen. won the APA Los Angeles Section 2006 Planning Awards Environmental Award

Otay River Watershed Management Plan Aspen was selected as a finalist in the Outstanding Environmental Resource Document category of the 2006 AEP Awards

Aspen Welcomes:

In addition to Dr. Carl Linvill (see article to the right), Aspen welcomes several other new members to our staff:

John Keene - Senior Associate, CEQA/NEPA Project Manager, Sacramento

Stan Yeh, MPA - Associate, CEQA/NEPA Project Manager, Sacramento

Somer Goulet - Staff Environmental Planner, Sacramento

Examples of New Aspen Projects:

California Public Utilities Commission
Riverway Substation CEQA Document

Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
Taylor Yard Water Recycling Project

California Department of Water Resources
Vista Del Lago Slope Repairs

Energy Policy Expert, Dr. Carl Linvill, Joins Aspen

Energy and environment continue to be issues of paramount importance to the state of California (as well as the rest of the nation). Adequate power to sustain economic development, the need for alternative energy generation sources and methods, the pronounced impacts of Greenhouse Gases on the climate, and necessity to control these emissions all require enhanced levels of energy expertise. In response, Aspen has recently increased our capabilities in the energy sphere. This Fall Aspen has created a new Energy Planning and Analysis department, building upon excellent staff such as Dr. Suzanne Phinney, and is looking to hire distinguished experts to supplement our existing capabilities. We are proud to report that we have recruited noted economist and energy analyst Dr. Carl Linvill to spearhead this effort and welcome him to our Sacramento office where he will be readily available to our clients.

Dr. Linvill was most recently the Energy Advisor to the Governor of Nevada. Prior to this position Dr. Linvill was appointed by the Governor to serve as a commissioner for Nevada's Public Utilities Commission. He has proven experience testifying, speaking, and writing on a variety of technical energy issues including resource planning, renewable energy, and energy efficiency

Cont. on page 3

We are Growing
and searching for key staff members

- **Civil/Hydraulic Engineer**
- **Senior Biologist**

See www.AspenEG.com for details.

Above: Otay River Reservoir. Aspen developed the Otay River Watershed Management Plan, now approved by all jurisdictions. See article on Page 4.

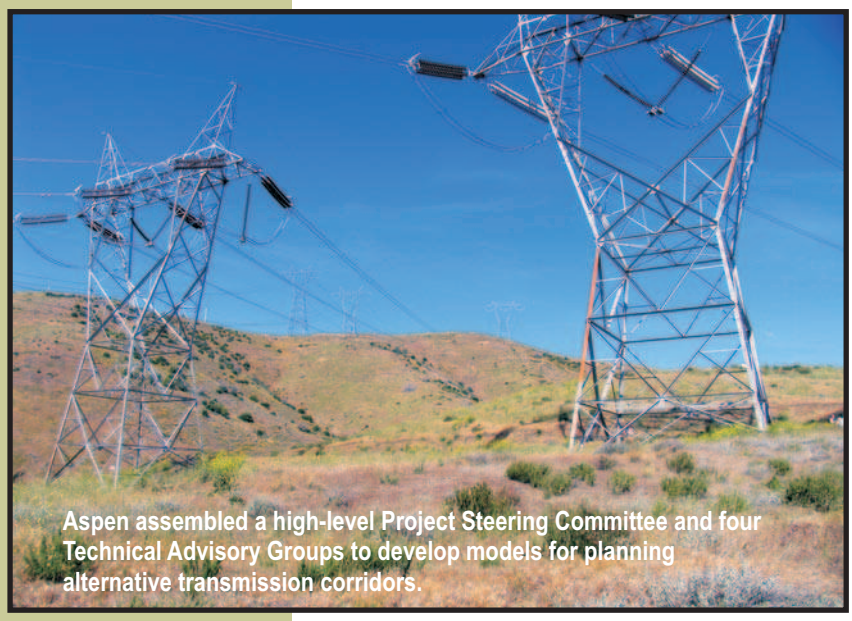
Recent Energy Planning and Analysis Projects

Aspen Team support of the CEC staff in the area of energy planning and analysis has grown significantly in the past year. Our team's work covers a broad range of energy issues including: the natural gas supply and demand; electricity demand forecasting, Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction; nuclear power in California; and transmission planning and reliability studies. The following highlights some of our current key projects.

Major Studies for the Energy Commission.

Electricity Demand Forecasting. Aspen's team of subcontractors will support the Commission on several major fronts in the Commission's efforts to review new methodologies and approaches to electricity demand forecasting and supply assessment. Key areas of focus will be on Least Cost-Best Fit analysis, Public Interest Criteria, Incorporating Probability in Short-term Forecasts and a Global Review of state-of-the-art methods, tools, and models.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction. With the passage of AB 32, land use measures to reduce GHG emissions will move front and center. Aspen recently conducted a workshop for the Energy Commission with 16 experts presenting information on land use planning, smart growth, utility involvement in land use, research and policy options. Aspen's report on land use and energy will be a major focus of the Commission's 2006 Integrated Energy Policy Report Update.



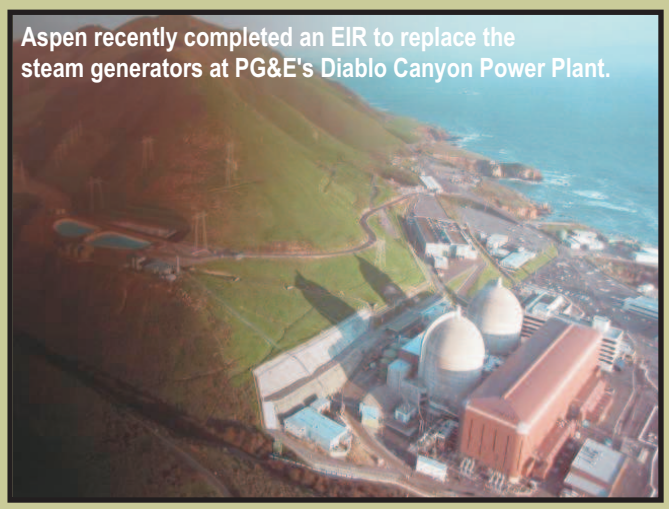
Aspen assembled a high-level Project Steering Committee and four Technical Advisory Groups to develop models for planning alternative transmission corridors.

Transportation Energy Paths. Aspen is helping the Commission oversee a major project to analyze how potential energy paths (vehicles/fuels and associated criteria and GHG emissions) for the transportation sector would affect California's natural gas and electricity systems out to the year 2050. The findings are expected to provide policy-makers with a comprehensive view of relative costs and benefits of particular transportation paths from a systems perspective.

"Our work covers: the natural gas supply and demand; electricity demand forecasting, Greenhouse Gas reduction; nuclear power in California; and transmission planning and reliability studies."

Nuclear Power in California. Nuclear power remains a highly charged and evolving issue. Following up on its 2005 report Nuclear Power in California: Status Report, Aspen sub MRW & Associates, Inc. is providing ongoing evaluation of nuclear energy policy issues and the policy implications of continued operation of California's nuclear power plants.

Planning Alternative Corridors for Transmission. Aspen is providing contract management and technical assistance to the Commission in its 3-year effort to develop a computer model that uses Geographic Information Systems to compare alternative transmission corridors. Aspen assembled a high-level Project Steering Committee and 4 Technical Advisory Groups in the areas of land use, community involvement, visual/aesthetic resources, biological resources, and cultural resources to guide modeling efforts. Results of a Test Case will be presented to the Steering Committee and Advisory Groups by year end.



Aspen recently completed an EIR to replace the steam generators at PG&E's Diablo Canyon Power Plant.

Environmental Support to WESTCARB.

Aspen supports the West Coast Regional Carbon Sequestration Partnership (WESTCARB) in its development of pilot programs for exploring opportunities to remove CO^2 from the atmosphere by enhancing natural processes and by capturing it at industrial facilities before it is emitted. Aspen has prepared environmental review documents for two aspects of WESTCARB's pilot programs: geologic storage (in which CO^2 would be injected into old natural gas fields) and terrestrial sequestration (in which forest management techniques will be evaluated to maximize plant and soil storage of carbon).

Dr. Carl Linvill Hired Cont. from page 1

planning, interstate transmission planning and cost allocation, energy procurement, and risk management. This will be an immediate benefit for Aspen's many energy clients, including the CEC, CPUC, and Western Area Power Administration, and allow us to more efficiently use our many specialized subcontractors.

Having worked in government and in coordination with a multitude of government agencies, Dr. Linvill has professional relationships with senior energy officials in the western states and in Federal government and has developed and negotiated regulatory changes. Dr. Linvill will work with Dr. Phinney as an experienced and knowledgeable liaison between our cadre of selected and most distinguished subcontractors and our energy clients in the energy planning and analysis area. He will increase Aspen's capability to understand our clients' needs and deliver products that are directly responsive.

Following are some of Dr. Linvill's key recent accomplishments:

- Facilitated the development of about 2,000 megawatts of new high efficiency, air cooled gas generation and about 3,000 megawatts of new transmission import capacity.
- Increased federal grants to Nevada as the Director of the Nevada State Office of Energy from about $1,000,000 in 2001 to about $5,000,000 annually in 2003.
- Wrote Nevada's first Strategic Energy Plan in 2002.
- Played an instrumental role in implementing an Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) in Nevada that has led to contracts for nearly 300 megawatts of new geothermal production and will place Nevada first in solar energy produced per capita by the end of 2007. Dr. Linvill was one of 12 people from Nevada recognized as a "2006 Solar Champion" by SEIA and PVNow in recognition of their respective contributions to leading Nevada to become the #1 state in per capita solar production by 2007.
- Coordinated the statewide Energy Planning efforts of numerous state agencies and the public and private utilities in Nevada.

New Energy/Environmental Legislation

To address the increasingly important issues of generation/ transmission of energy and the impact of these activities on the local and global environment, recently, California has passed a number of legislative initiatives that would shape and direct the future activities in the state. Following is a brief summary of some of these legislative actions:

SB 1059 (Escutia) Electric Transmission Corridors authorizes the California Energy Commission to designate feasible transmission corridor zones in California, where future transmission lines can be built. The bill would require cities and counties to consider these zones when determining land use changes that could affect these transmission corridor zones.

AB 32 (Nunez) Air Pollution: Greenhouse Gases: California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency to implement regulations for a cap on stationary sources of GHG emissions. The bill requires that CAL/EPA develop regulations to reduce emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The emission reduction limits and measures that will achieve the limits must by adopted by 2011.

SB 1368 (Perata) Electricity: Emissions of Greenhouse Gases prohibits any load-serving entity and any local publicly owned electric utility, from entering into a long-term financial commitment unless any baseload generation complies with a GHG emission performance standard, to be set by February 1, 2007. The GHG performance standard could not exceed the rate of emissions of greenhouse gases for combined-cycle natural gas baseload generation.

SB 1250 (Perata) Cost-Effective Energy Efficiency Programs: Renewable Energy Resources would make a number of changes to the Reliable Electric Service Investments Act. This Act identifies how "public goods moneys" collected by utilities are used for public interest energy research, demonstration, and development. SB 1250 repeals the requirements for investment plans, legislative authorization prior to expenditure of funds, and independent review of the Commission's PIER program.

SB 107 (Simitian) Renewable Energy would raise the required percentage of renewable electricity generated for consumption in California from 17% of the total electricity by 2006 to at least 20% by December 31, 2010. The bill requires the Commission to develop tracking, accounting, verification, and enforcement mechanisms for renewable energy credits.

Prop 87, which voters will consider in the November 2006 election, would require that oil producers pay a severance tax on oil extracted in California to fund research and production incentives for alternative energy, alternative energy vehicles, efficient technologies, education, and training. The program would be administered by a reorganized California Energy Alternatives Program Authority that would raise and spend $4 billion to reduce petroleum consumption in California by 25% within 10 years.

Southern California Area/Corporate Office
30423 Canwood Street, Suite 215
Agoura Hills, CA 91301-4316
Tel. 818.597.3407

Bay Area and Northwest US
235 Montgomery Street, Suite 935
San Francisco, CA 94104-3002
Tel. 415.955.4775

Sacramento and Central California
8801 Folsom Blvd., Suite 290
Sacramento, CA 95826-3250
Tel: 916.379.0350

Phoenix and Southwest
Aspen Consulting Engineers
426 N. 44th Street, Suite 370
Phoenix, AZ 85008-7694
Tel. 602.231.9221

Sunrise Powerlink Project EIR/EIS

Aspen is performing another in a series of complex, controversial projects in which we have become expert at efficient management. Under contract to the CPUC (CEQA Lead Agency) and under the direction of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) (NEPA Lead Agency), Aspen has started preparing a comprehensive Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the controversial San Diego Gas & Electric Company's (SDG&E) Sunrise Powerlink Project (SRPL). Aspen is managing a team of 10 subcontractors, and using technical experts from all four Aspen offices.

The transmission line would span 150 miles, starting near El Centro and ending in San Diego near the Pacific Coast and include both 500 and 230 kilovolt segments. It would traverse BLM land, unincorporated Imperial and San Diego Counties, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, Department of Defense-MCAS Miramar, City of San Diego, and City of Poway.

Much controversy stems from the proposal to install a 500 kV transmission line through Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, including effects on State Wilderness. In addition to park and open space impacts, opposition groups contend that the need for the line has not been clearly demonstrated, that the proposed route unnecessarily passes through residential areas in communities such as Ramona and Rancho Penasquitos, and that the line is intended to import power generated in Mexico.

A Notice of Preparation for the SRPL was issued in September 2006, and seven scoping meetings will be held in early October. The Aspen Team is spearheading an extensive alternatives screening process, due to the concerns about impacts to Anza-Borrego. The Draft EIR/EIS for this complex project will be published in mid-to-late 2007.

Groundbreaking: Otay River Watershed Management Plan Adopted by Jurisdictions

Culminating a two-year development process, the Final Draft Otay River Watershed Management Plan was adopted by unanimous consent of the County of San Diego Board of Supervisors on May 10, 2006, followed soon thereafter by the City of Imperial Beach (May 17, 2006) and the San Diego Unified Port District (June 6, 2006). Next to consider the document are the City of Chula Vista (November 14, 2006) and City of San Diego's City Councils.

This is the first of several San Diego County watershed management plans in development to be adopted by the local jurisdictions. Adoption is important to secure Proposition 50 and other grant funding for projects recommended by the plan, such as watershed-wide non-native species eradication. During the next year, the jurisdictions and interest groups will form a Watershed Council to determine the specifics of how the plan is implemented and updated. Work will also continue on the Otay River Watershed Special Area Management Plan, a companion plan providing the basis for watershed-wide permitting and aquatic resource conservation and restoration.