

LOS PADRES CHAPTER
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~~SIERRA CLUB URGES LEGISLATURE TO INVESTIGATE NIPOMO DUNES PG&E
POWER PLANT PROPOSAL~~

~~The Pacific Gas and Electric Company's proposed nuclear power~~
Nipomo mesa
plant on the ~~Santa Maria Dunes~~ would take over one of the best sites
in California for a beach state park, ~~declared~~ the Sierra Club *said*
an ~~Assembly Rules Committee hearing held in Sacramento November 13.~~

"Many of the issues relating to the construction of the Nipomo
power facilities closely parallel those at Bodega Head" club testi-
mony stressed, referring to the long-standing controversy over
PG&E's recently abandoned plans to construct a nuclear power in-
stallation at the scenic headland north of San Francisco originally
slated to be purchased for the State Park system.

~~"As was the case with Bodega Head,~~ well-known at the time of
the PG&E acquisition of the ~~Santa Maria Dunes~~ site was the fact
that the Dunes were being considered for state park purchase and
dedication", the Sierra Club testimony continued. "Before consult-
ing with conservationists and other interested parties about the
effect a power plant would have upon the park potential, the com-
pany preempted the best part of the Dunes which the National Park
Service 1959 Pacific Coast Recreation Area Survey termed 'unexcelled,
both in scenic quality and extent, by any similar area on the Cali-
fornia Coast.'

"It is not too late for the State of California, the public
generally, and PG&E to avoid at the Santa Maria Dunes the pitfalls

experienced at Bodega Head", the statement said. The Sierra Club called for a "moratorium on Nipomo plant construction until openly-conducted negotiations lead to decisions that protect the public interest." The club further recommended that the Los Padres National Forest and the National Forest Service be encouraged to withhold issuance of cross-forest rights of way for Nipomo Plant Extra High Voltage lines until all ramifications of the plant location have been adequately reviewed.

"As part of a comprehensive land use study, the State, the counties and citizen groups in cooperation with the utility companies of California should consider the creation of a statewide shoreline master plan that indicates which beaches are to be saved for their scenic park potential, and which coastal areas might be available for power development", the Sierra Club said. "The shoreline preservation program in the state has evolved so far on a relatively unplanned, piecemeal basis."

The Sierra Club also recommended a study of "plant location standards and site development techniques which avoid the destruction of natural scenic beauty caused by such installations as those at Bodega Head, Moss Landing, Morro Bay, and the Camp Pendleton-San Onofre site" and urged the Legislature to consider an amendment to the California Public Utilities Act "providing that scenic and community values will be recognized in determining the issuance of a certificate of public convenience and necessity".

The Sierra Club statement noted that the San Luis Obispo manager for PG&E has reaffirmed the company's original timetable for completion of the Nipomo nuclear complex with the plants evidently to remain in the heart of the Dunes. According to the company's 1963 project announcement, two 660,000 kilowatt generators will be con-

pleted by 1970 and 1971 with the other three, each of 1 million capacity or larger, scheduled to operate by 1975, 1976, and 1980. Construction on the first plant, referred to as Nipomo #1, was originally scheduled to start in 1965.

Challenged by conservationists and faced with an adverse Atomic Energy Committee report on earthquake hazards, PG&E recently abandoned its plans to build a nuclear reactor at Pogo's Head after an initial investment of an estimated \$4 million in site preparation.

The Assembly Rules Committee announcement stated that the hearing was on the subject of "development and location of atomic facilities and the various conflicting interests involved."