

August 26, 2009

Adrian Garcia, Project Manager
SunZia Transmission Line Project
PO Box 27115
Santa Fe, NM 97502-0115

Dear Mr. Garcia,

We are very appreciative of the extended comment period. As property owners along the San Pedro River Valley, we are opposed to both of the proposed Aravaipa-San Pedro Routes for the SunZia Transmission line. We are writing with the following concerns and suggestions.

The Middle San Pedro River Valley and its adjacent wild areas is one of the largest intact landscapes in the continental United States. The San Pedro River is the last major free-flowing river in our desert southwest, and in being so, shelters the greatest biodiversity of any landlocked area in the United States, including rare native fish, birds and mammals, and providing the principle migration corridor between North, Central and South Americas. East-West migrations also occur between the mountain ranges that parallel the San Pedro River Valley.

One very important part of our watershed is Aravaipa Canyon. It is the convergence of three designated wilderness areas, and deserves the same protections for the same reasons mentioned herein.

There are more than 500 recorded Archaeological sites between Benson and Winkelman that would need to be avoided by SunZia high-voltage towers and access roads. These access service roads would allow ATV access to the Archaeological sites, with inevitable damage and looting, as well as access to private ranch lands. Land owners would suffer lowered property values, and scarred landscapes.

The construction and subsequent use, of these high-voltage power line corridors and their service roads would cause erosion, negatively affecting vegetation and numerous endangered and threatened species of birds, fish and wildlife of the area. These corridors would require the management of wildfire fuels under the lines causing widespread negative impact in both the uplands and along the river. Invasive non-native weeds would inevitably spread along the disturbed soils of service roads. The SunZia high-voltage power line corridor would seriously impact ecosystem sustainability.

Electromagnetic fields would negatively affect property use and value, recreational values, as well as wildlife, and consequently affect hunting and recreational experiences in the area.

For just these few these reasons, placing the SunZia high-voltage transmission lines along already established rail and highway transportation corridors, would obviously have the least amount of environmental impact.

We realize that responsible development of alternative energy is critical to the future of our country. In our desert SW, local generation and distribution of solar power would be a far more reasonable use of our funds and unlimited solar resources, as opposed to long distance transmission.

Sincerely,
Ross A and Leslie L Maynard
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Benson AZ 85602