



Redington Natural Resource Conservation District
P.O. Box 232
Pomerene, Arizona 85627
(520) 212-4242
Charles Kent, Chair

Bureau of Land Management
Adrian Garcia, Project Manager,
SunZia Southwest Transmission Project
P.O. Box 27115
Santa Fe, NM 87502-0115

Dear Mr. Garcia,

As a sub-unit of state government in the state of Arizona instructed by state statute to, “provide for the restoration and conservation of lands and soil resources of the state,” the Redington Natural Resource Conservation District would like to provide public comment to the Bureau of Land Management concerning the proposed possible routes for the Sun Zia transmission line through the Lower San Pedro River Valley.

We are unable to offer our support for this project at this time. The line construction will require that new roads be built and right of ways cleared. This will lead to problems arising from off road vehicle use, and increased soil erosion within the watershed. The Redington NRC D has completed a three year watershed assessment in which erosion from utility corridors as well as poorly constructed and maintained roads was identified as a major natural resource concern in the area. There has also been extensive work done in planning for prescribed burns in the watershed. Wildfire management and prescribed burning will be dictated based upon the needs or protection of the power line, rather than management of the natural resources.

There is also concern for the indirect effects that such a transmission line and its construction will have on wildlife habitat and cultural sites within the valley. The lower San Pedro valley has a large number of important, well preserved historic and prehistoric cultural sites that could potentially be affected by the towers. These sites are also potentially impacted by new roads that would bring traffic into areas that were previously inaccessible.

There are other alternatives identified as possible options that would have much less negative impact on natural resources, cultural resources, and the agricultural economy of the area. Construction along pre-existing highways would be the best alternative.

Sincerely,

Charles Kent,
Chair, Redington NRC D Board of Supervisors