

July 10, 2009

Chairman Kristin K. Mayes
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2996

Dear Chairman Mayes:

The Bureau of Land Management recently held public scoping meetings about the SunZia transmission line proposal [1]. That project would be an extremely bad investment for our state. With abundant solar resources near the locations that require energy, Arizona has no need to bear the substantial financial, economic, and environmental costs of importing and developing the renewable energy of New Mexico and Florida (Florida Power & Light Group owns and manages the only large wind farm in the energy zone of SunZia's origin [1,2]).

The SunZia project was conceived in 2006 to transmit power from New Mexico and the gas-burning Bowie Power Station to areas near Phoenix that were expected to sustain explosive population growth [3,4,5]. The renewable-energy option appears to have been added to improve marketability, and to enable Public Service Company of New Mexico to export its wind-generated electricity [6,7] (thereby also enabling PNM to unload the transmission expense onto uninformed tax- and rate-payers [8]). The best wind farms generate about 5 kilowatts per acre, or 0.03 kilowatt hours per square meter per day [9]. As shown on the SunZia Western Renewable Energy Zones map, the sun offers 250 times more power to Arizona land at 7.5 kwh/sqmtr/day [10]. Furthermore, due to its unpredictable variability and intermittence, wind power is a very inefficient use of transmission-line capacity [8].

Considering the imminent technological advancements that will allow full use of sunlight's tremendous potential, the smart money is on the local generation and distribution of solar power, and not on 2006 ideas like SunZia. So rather than have us pay for that unnecessary and costly project, please help us invest in the valuable solar resources that are in Arizona's own backyards....and front yards....and rooftops.

Thank you for your attention, and for your strong advocacy of solar energy. Please feel welcome to contact me.

Jon C. Sjogren

[1] http://www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/prog/more/lands_realty/sunzia_southwest_transmission.html

[2] <http://www.pnm.com/systems/nmwec.htm>

[3] http://www.sunzia.net/project_information.php

[4] http://www.westconnect.com/filestorage/swat_project_zia_081706.pdf

[5] http://www.sunzia.net/pdf/SWAT_091306.pdf

[6] http://www.westconnect.com/filestorage/swat_az_nm_status_082305.pdf

[7] http://www.westconnect.com/filestorage/swat_sun_zia_overview_101806.pdf

[8] http://www.mnforsustain.org/windpower_schleede_costs_of_electricity.htm

[9] http://www.heartland.org/policybot/results/24041/Pickens_Plan_Fails_to_Account_for_Limitations_on_Wind_Power.html

[10] http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/nm/programs/more/lands_and_realty/sunzia/sunzia_maps.Pa.r.41410.File.dat/WREZ-sunzia-corridor-map.pdf