

## SUNZIA ACC TALKING POINTS

### Impacts to Lower San Pedro Valley Conservation

- The San Pedro Valley is nationally known for its rich riparian habitat and bird- and wildlife. It is considered one of The Nature Conservancy's "Last Great Places."
- The valley has been the focus of major federal, state, and corporate conservation efforts for four decades.
- Nearly \$50 million has been invested in lower San Pedro Valley conservation with more than 200,000 acres protected.
- SunZia must cross and would badly damage lands included in Pima County's Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan and would impact the county's Multi-Species Conservation Plan, risking both species and the county's investments.
- SunZia must open an entirely new corridor down the San Pedro Valley for 30 miles with an accompanying access road, adding side roads to each transmission tower.
- SunZia would cross Buehman Canyon, host to the only perennial stream on the east side of the Catalina and Rincon Mountains, and eight other important, remote valley canyons and tributaries.
- Lower San Pedro Valley lands are being used to mitigate the impacts of Roosevelt Dam, the Central Arizona Project and the Resolution Copper Mine. Harm to these lands could negate and certainly lessen the impacts of the mitigation and also put at risk investments.

### Impacts to San Pedro Valley Environmental Values

- The San Pedro River is the last undammed river in the Desert Southwest.
- More than four million birds use the valley annually in their migrations to and from Central America, and the valley harbors the richest mammal diversity in North America.
- The SunZia Project would fragment the wildest and most intact section of the San Pedro Valley.
- The project must cross vital wildlife linkages that facilitate wildlife migration between the Galiuro and Santa Catalina-Rincon Mountains.

### Lack of a Need for the Project

- No western state needs to import renewable energy to meet needs – the stated purpose of the project – now or in the future, even California.<sup>1,2,3</sup>
- Arizona's solar capacity exceeds the state's power requirements by more than 300 times and plans to export that energy, not import more.<sup>4,5</sup>
- California has nearly met its 33% Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) with mostly its own resources and can easily meet a 50% RPS with those resources if approved<sup>1,2,3</sup>.
- SunZia will NOT increase the use of renewable energy in the western U.S., merely displace its development away from where it might otherwise occur, and then only potentially.

### Damage to Arizona's Renewable Energy Development and Limited Jobs

- SunZia would damage, not enhance, Arizona's ability to develop its own solar resources by commandeering vital central Arizona transmission capacity to deliver New Mexico energy to California, reducing Arizona's ability to develop its own renewable resources for export.
- SunZia would increase competition from outside renewable energy resources, diminishing Arizona's ability to develop and sell its own.
- SunZia would exploit Arizona ratepayers by potentially using more than 2,000 megawatts of transmission capacity built with their money to serve their needs rather than for cross-state power transfers by outside parties.
- The proposed Southline Project would accomplish all that SunZia would in southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona with far fewer environmental impacts and greater benefits.

- SunZia would provide only a limited number of jobs (65-70 construction jobs and a similar number of ancillary jobs), not 2,500 as the project claims.

<sup>1</sup> Kaften, C., 2012. California on track to exceed 2020 RE goals, but issues still exist, *PV Magazine – Photovoltaic Markets and Technology*, March 9, 2012. The article notes, “In fact, the queue of projects scheduled to go online by January 2017 represents *more than double the capacity the state needs to achieve a 33 percent renewable portfolio standard (RPS).*” Available at <http://www.pv-magazine.com/news/details/beitrag/california-on-track-to-exceed-2020-re-goals--but-issues--still-exist-100006045/#ixzz1ySkTA1cC>.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Picker, former Senior Advisor to California Governor Jerry Brown and now Chair of the Public Utilities Commission of California, notes the following in an email to N. Meader dated June 14, 2012: “I was surprised to get your letter regarding SunZia, and the suggestion that the purpose of the powerline might be to sell power into California. That seems like a risky business bet. *Most California utilities report that they are already oversubscribed for renewable power generation.*...In fact, the California Public Utilities Commission reports that the state’s investor-owned utilities have enough contracts from renewable power projects to supply 40% of the state’s electricity needs.”

<sup>3</sup> Todd, W., 2012. California reveals price it pays for renewable energy, *Forbes Green Tech*, available at <http://www.forbes.com/sites/toddwoody/2012/02/07/california-reveals-price-it-pays-for-renewable-energy/>. This article notes, “The report [*Renewables Portfolio Quarterly Report*] shows there’s no shortage of interest by developers in building renewable energy projects in California. Last year, they submitted 1,000 bids that, if all were accepted and built, would have generated 91,000 megawatts of electricity – far above the state’s power demand.”

<sup>4</sup> Burr, J., Hallock, L., and Sargent, R., 2014. *Star Power: The Growing Role of Solar Energy in Arizona*, Environment Arizona Research & Policy Center, 40 pp. The report notes, “Based on renewable energy technical potential reported by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, Arizona has the potential to produce more than 320 times as much electricity from solar PV and concentrating solar power (CSP) installations as the state consumes each year.”

<sup>5</sup> Etherton, M., 2011. *Enhancing Arizona’s Ability to Export Renewable Energy*, A Report to Address the Arizona Corporation Commission’s Sixth Biennial Transmission Assessment, Commission Decision No. 72031, PDS Consulting, PLC, 38 pp. with appendices. Mr. Etherton notes, “The results of these studies [five noted] indicate that Arizona has significant renewable resource potential and has far more supply of renewable resources than demand.”