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JOHN F. MUNGER
MARK E. CHADWICK *
MICHAEL S. GREEN
KATHLEEN DELANEY WINGER
EVELYN PATRICK RICK **
LAURA P. CHIASSON
* Also Admitted in Colorado
** Also Admitted in Washington State

MUNGER CHADWICK, P.L.C.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW
A PROFESSIONAL LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY
NATIONAL BANK PLAZA
333 NORTH WILMOT, SUITE 300
TUCSON, ARIZONA 85711
(520) 721-1900
FAX (520) 747-1550
MungerChadwick.com

LAWRENCE V. ROBERTSON, JR.
ADMITTED TO PRACTICE IN:
ARIZONA, COLORADO, MONTANA,
NEVADA, TEXAS, WYOMING,
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

MICHAEL M. RACY (NON-LAWYER)
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS DIRECTOR
DIRECT LINE: (520) 906-4646

OF COUNSEL
LIZÁRRAGA, ROBLES, TAPIA Y CABRERA S.C.
HERMOSILLO, SONORA, MEXICO
(LICENSED SOLELY IN MEXICO)

LINDA WELTER COHEN, APR (NON-LAWYER)
MEREDITH LEYVA (NON-LAWYER)
PUBLIC RELATIONS CONSULTANTS

TUBAC APPOINTMENT OFFICE
2247 East Frontage Road, #1
P.O. Box 1448
Tubac, Arizona 85646
(520) 398-0411

VIA FEDERAL EXPRESS/ PRIORITY OVERNIGHT

December 14, 2004

Colleen Ryan, Supervisor
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1200 W. Washington
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Re: In the matter of Salt River Project *et al.*
Docket No. L-00000B-04-0126
(Case No. 126)

Dear Ms. Ryan:

Enclosed for filing in the above-referenced matter, are an original and twenty-five (25) copies of the following materials:

1. A summary of the testimony of Kenneth Carothers of Carothers Environmental, L.L.C; and
2. A set of eight (8) color photographs of leak repairs being performed upon a natural gas transmission pipeline located in the Hidden Valley area of the subject project.

Mr. Carothers has previously been identified as a witness who will be called by Save Our Valley Association at the public hearings in the above-referenced matter which are scheduled to resume on January 7, 2005; and other materials pertaining to his testimony has previously been filed with Docket Control and provided to the parties of record. In addition, it is anticipated that Mr. Carothers will be using a Power Point presentation and/or other visual exhibits during the course of his testimony on January 7, 2005 which are currently being prepared.

Colleen Ryan, Supervisor
December 31, 2004
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A member of the Save Our Valley Association who personally took the enclosed photographs and conversed with the individuals performing the indicated leak repairs will provide foundation testimony for those photographs at the time of the January 7, 2005 public hearing. The photographs in question were taken during early December 2004.

On Monday, January 3, 2005, a summary of the testimony of Gary Rich will be electronically transmitted to all parties of record, and 25 copies will be couriered to you.

Please contact me in the event you should have any questions regarding the enclosed materials. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Lawrence V. Robertson, Jr.

LVR:cl

cc: Laurie A. Woodall
All Parties of Record
Save Our Valley Association
Kenneth Carothers
Gary Rich

enclosures

SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY
PINAL WEST TO SEV/BROWNING 500KV TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Kenneth R. Carothers
Senior Consultant/Biologist
Carothers Environmental, LLC

Kenneth R. Carothers is Manager/Member and Senior Consultant of Carothers Environmental, LLC (CE). His emphasis has been on the Endangered Species Act (ESA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Clean Water Act (CWA), and environmental assessment and compliance for development and land use projects. Mr. Carothers has been the principal-in-charge and primary author for several NEPA projects including the coordination of public involvement, agency scoping, legal notifications, all aspects of vegetation and wildlife assessment, and Section 7 Consultations. His NEPA involvement has included federal and state agencies, including the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Utility companies, Arizona Department of Transportation, and Bureau of Indian Affairs. NEPA projects have ranged from natural gas pipeline and utilities construction, commercial and residential development, to road improvement projects.

Mr. Carothers has consistently conducted threatened, endangered, and/or sensitive species inventory or monitoring every year since 1989, and is extremely familiar with multiple species' habitat and their ecology. Mr. Carothers is experienced in all levels of field biology survey procedures, especially those concerning threatened, endangered, and sensitive species. Mr. Carothers is currently permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct surveys for several threatened and/or endangered species including the cactus ferruginous pygmy owl and others (TE-050241). Mr. Carothers has supervised crews surveying over 2.5 million acres of U.S. Forest service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and private lands throughout Arizona, Utah, New Mexico, Texas, Colorado, California, Hawaii, and Nevada.

CE was retained by SOVA to evaluate biological, cultural, and other environmental issues concerning a proposed SOVA alternate route along a portion of the Pinal West to SEV/Browning 500kV Transmission Project (Project) alignments in the Hidden Valley area proposed by Salt River Project. The SOVA proposed route (SOVA Route) consists of a modification to the Project's current preferred and alternate routes where the proposed transmission line exits the proposed Pinal West substation and proceeds southeast through Hidden Valley towards the existing Santa Rosa substation. CE conducted biological field reconnaissance and conducted a Class I Cultural Resources Inventory of the proposed SOVA Route as well as performed an extensive review of the Project application and supporting documentation and exhibits. CE has determined that the SOVA Route would create no significant environmental effects.

Biological Resources

On December 7, 2004, CE biologists Jerry Monks and Jack Zittere conducted a field reconnaissance of the SOVA Route to determine the suitability for threatened, endangered and sensitive (TES) species as well as to assess overall environmental significance of the area. All proposed access routes along the SOVA Route were driven or walked in order to assess habitat types and conditions, and probability of supporting TES species. The survey effort was not species specific in nature and was meant to provide an overview of whether listed species have the potential to occur within or near the proposed SOVA Route.

All plants and animals observed were identified to genus and/or species level. Locations of significant species or environmental features were recorded with a handheld Garmin GPS and digitally photographed.

The majority of the proposed SOVA Route occurs within the Colorado River Valley subdivision of the Sonoran Desertscrub habitat type with some transition into the Arizona Upland subdivision of the Sonoran Desertscrub habitat type where the proposed SOVA Route passes along the base of the Haley Hills (Brown 1994).

The aforementioned habitat within and adjacent to the proposed SOVA Route is in fair to excellent condition being largely undisturbed except for the presence of the existing 345 kV transmission line (TEP-Westwing), and a series of access roads leading to and from the transmission line.

Topographically the proposed SOVA Route extends through flat alluvial plains bisected by dry washes. Soils are generally well developed and composed of silt and sand. The areas adjacent to the Haley Hills consist of rolling hills divided by small washes. Soils in these areas are generally undeveloped and consist of gravel and larger rock.

Vekol Wash is crossed by the proposed SOVA Route immediately south of the Haley Hills. This wash represents a fairly significant meso to xeroriparian habitat.

The Colorado River Valley subdivision of the Sonoran Desertscrub habitat type that is prevalent along the north end of the proposed SOVA Route does not represent suitable habitat for TES species. Sections of the proposed SOVA Route that traverse through rural residential home sites west of the Santa Rosa area do not represent suitable habitat for any listed TES species.

Suitable TES species habitat is present within the proposed SOVA Route in two locations. The first is along an approximately 200-meter portion of the proposed SOVA Route adjacent to the Haley Hills and the second is where the proposed SOVA Route crosses Vekol Wash. There is a band of

suitable TES species habitat at this location that spans the width of the wash where the proposed SOVA Route would cross Vekol Wash (approximately 150 meters).

It is CE's opinion that consideration of the proposed SOVA Route would occasion a review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as it includes a portion of federally administered land under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Inclusion of the proposed SOVA Route on BLM administered land is in conformance with the BLM's Gila South Resource Management Plan as it is within an existing BLM designated utility corridor.

Cultural Resources

CE retained EnviroSystems Management Incorporated to conduct a Class I Cultural Resources Inventory of the proposed SOVA Route. The Class I Cultural Resources Inventory is provided in Appendix A. In summary, three previous surveys within and bounding the proposed SOVA Route were discovered through the Class I Cultural Resources Inventory. The first follows the proposed SOVA Route and was conducted in 1974 by the Arizona State Museum for Tucson Gas & Electric's (now TEP) El Sol-Vail Transmission Line (Project No. 1974-1.ASM). This project is superseded by a 1985 survey by ACS for APS's Santa Rosa to Gila Bend 230 kV Transmission Line (1985-219.ASM). This 1985 survey also covered the currently certificated 230 kV ROW, which the proposed SOVA Route generally follows east of the BLM corridor, except for a deviation in Section 2 to avoid diagonally crossing a section of Arizona State Land. This route deviation results in two miles of currently unsurveyed ROW along the proposed SOVA Route. Assuming this two-mile portion of the route would cross private land, a cultural resources inventory would likely be required. Additionally, the 1985 survey route crossing BLM and private lands will likely require a resurvey for cultural resources due to the general policy of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). SHPO generally requires a resurvey after ten years. The third documented previous survey is in Township 6S, Range 2E, Section 12, immediately southeast of Section 2. This survey was completed in 1990 by ACS and involved six regional catchments near Stanfield, Arizona (11-155.SHPO). The last project involved a short pipeline route surveyed in 1981 (BLM-020-12-041); this pipeline is overlapped by the 1985 survey where the 1981 ROW intersects the 345 kV transmission line.

Previous cultural resources surveys documented in the Class I Cultural Resources Inventory resulted in the discovery and documentation of very few sites. Only two sites were recorded within the proposed SOVA Route where it overlaps with the existing TEP 345 kV transmission route. These sites were documented during the original 1974 survey-AZ Z:4:3(ASM) and Z:4:5(ASM), and consist of prehistoric artifact scatters that have not been evaluated as to their eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Interestingly, neither site was updated during the 1985 survey; this observation leads us to believe that the sites may not have been encountered. Only five additional sites are located within about a ½ mile of the proposed SOVA route.

The possibility of locating additional archaeological sites within the proposed SOVA Route is likely if an additional pedestrian survey were conducted; however, it is anticipated the site density will remain relatively low. Furthermore, it is highly probable that certain sites and site types would be somewhat contained and could be avoided by the proposed 500 kV transmission line. Therefore, it is believed that impacts to cultural resources caused by the use of the proposed SOVA Route, if any, would be minimal and affordably mitigable if sites could not be avoided by all construction impacts

Because of implementing regulations issued by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR§1500) the BLM is required to comply with NEPA. Based on these requirements, if the project proponent were to apply for a ROW grant from the BLM, BLM would require the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA), or possibly an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) before they could issue a ROW grant. Based on the January 2004 completion of an EA by the BLM for the Palo Verde to Pinal West Project (BLM Case File Number: AZA-32057CE), this project would likely require an EA rather than an EIS. It is CE's professional opinion that there are no issues concerning biological and/or cultural resources that would prevent regulatory approval of the proposed SOVA Route. All identified potential impacts to biological and cultural resources that may occur along portions of the SOVA route could be mitigated. There are no identified environmental concerns on the SOVA Route that would result in mitigation measures that are not already expected to be required at some level within other areas of the Project's preferred and alternate routes.



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