

September 8, 2009

OPEN MEETING AGENDA ITEM



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Arizona Corporation Commission (Attn: Docket Control)
1200 West Washington Street
Phoenix AZ, 85007

ORIGINAL

RE: Vail to Valencia 115kV to 138kV Transmission Line Upgrade Project. ACC Docket Number L-00000F-09-0190-00144 for Line Siting Case No. 144.

Arizona Corporation Commission Members:

I own property and live in Rio Rico, Arizona. There is an easement for Unisource Energy Services' (UES) current transmission line on the east side of my property and the preferred alternative (PA) for the proposed route for this project is along the easement of UES' distribution line on the west side of property.

I am a retired biologist, having retired from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Tucson and I am currently a board member of the Friends of the Santa Cruz River (FOSCR), a local volunteer organization dedicated to protecting the Santa Cruz River and its riparian habitat. Prior to moving to Rio Rico and joining FOSCR, I was a founding member of the Arizona Riparian Council. I was a board member for over 20 years and held several offices, including President and Vice-President. Through my education, job and volunteer experience, and personal interest I have become quite knowledgeable about Southwestern riparian ecosystems. I bought my property and built my home where I did because of the excellent riparian habitat and abundant wildlife, especially birds, that are found on my place.

I am very familiar with the habitat along the P.A. Much of it, including my property, is high quality mesquite bosque habitat. It has a good mix of species including mesquite, elderberry, hackberry, and cat-claw acacia. It has many sensitive species and high biodiversity. This is excellent habitat, the kind many people in Santa Cruz County are trying to protect. It is shamefully obvious that UES either 1) did not know how good the habitat within the P.A. is or 2) knew and chose to route the P.A. through it in spite of the fact it would destroy much of it.

Routing the transmission line through along the newly selected P.A. would create unacceptable environmental damage and it would also cause a hardship to many of the landowners living along the P.A. Avoiding these impacts is quite simple and obvious.

I believe that the best solution to protecting the high quality mesquite bosque habitat and meeting the needs of all of the landowners who would be impacted by this project would be to move the transmission line to the west side of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR). A new alignment can be established, with the help of a competent biologist, which does not destroy high value habitat. However, if it is not possible to move the transmission line to the west of the UPRR, then I recommend leaving it in its current location. This would avoid habitat destruction and meet the needs of almost all the landowners.

Sincerely,

Marty Jakle
Marty Jakle

195 Polvo Court
Rio Rico, AZ 85648

Arizona Corporation Commission

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ACC Docket Control

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cc: Ron Campana, Baca Float Coalition; Scott Wilbur, Tucson Audubon Society; Erik Bakken, TEP/UES; Sherry Sass, Friends of the Santa Cruz River, Marshall Magurder, Tubac, AZ