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Benson, Arizona 85602
October 2, 2015

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AZ CORP COMMISSION
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Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Arizona Corporation Commission

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Re: SunZia Transmission, LLC, Docket Number L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

To Whom It May Concern,

I am new to Cascabel. I moved here just over a year ago. Every day I look out on this beautiful valley, I thank my lucky stars for my good fortune. I landed in an exceptional area. As time goes by, I learn more about the rare and precious environment surrounding me. This valley is one of the most biologically diverse in our nation and a major migration route for birds, in addition to being the site of extensive archeological resources.

I am shocked that a plan is in the works to run huge electrical lines through this part of the state. I am also very puzzled. I regularly travel to Las Vegas to attend classes. I make the trip four or five times a year. Mostly I drive, and I look for new and interesting routes. I have come across many vast solar arrays in my travels. There are several in the southeast corner of Nevada that are so enormous that, when I first saw them, I thought they were a series of lakes in the distance. There is another large one not far from I-10 on the back way to Wickenburg, Arizona. There are several very extensive solar arrays along I-8 on the way to California. I'm sure there are many, many more that I know nothing about. Why, when there are so many already existing generators of solar energy close to Phoenix and California, did SunZia plan an extremely costly, controversial (I understand there have been many objections from various quarters) installation to carry alternative energy to Phoenix and California all the way from New Mexico? We have abundant sun and wind in this state, and so does California. What am I missing here?

I would like to understand. It seems to me that there are opportunities to erect solar and wind installations much closer to where the energy they generate is needed. I cannot fathom why we don't invest the massive amounts of money

involved in this plan in locally produced alternative energy, both wind and solar, and develop local systems of distribution, hiring local folks to do the work of installing and maintaining the equipment. This is a much more secure option, develops Arizona economies and eliminates the need for huge towers which are not only unsightly, but will also have an unknown ecological impact. The construction will be disruptive and destructive to plants, wildlife and archeological sites. Once access has been created for construction and maintenance, inevitably off-road traffic increases. The off-roaders I know are respectful, but there are always a few rotten apples, who spoil it for everyone, by leaving their trash and spent cartridges over large areas of the desert (the off-road folks I know acknowledge - and decry - this problem). The plants and wildlife along SunZia's proposed route which have lived undisturbed for centuries have the most to lose, and they have no voice in these hearings. I wonder what they would say.

I implore you to reconsider the SunZia project, and take a very close look at what will be damaged, should this venture go forward. The San Pedro Valley is home to more plants, animals and birds than any other place in the southwest, and it has been home to humans for over ten thousand years. I have only been to White Sands once and it is magnificent. I don't know if this is still something that is being considered, but I understand at one time Aravaipa Canyon was going to be the site of proposed power lines. I have never been there, but the photographs I have seen and the stories I have heard from those who have been there make me cringe at the thought of tall power lines in that environment. I am saddened that plans like these are even considered, as they reflect a grievous disregard for the special beauty of these places.

Also, I am concerned about the unexpected consequences of this project and the corridor it would create on the life already present in this valley. I friend recently sent me an article that links the survival rate of hummingbird babies with the proximity of hawk and eagle nests. This news surprised even the researchers studying the birds (right around the corner in the Chiricahua Mountains). How can we know what the impact of these power lines - not only constructing the towers, but also maintaining them - will have on the local wildlife here? We are largely ignorant of the delicate but powerful interconnections within our environments. The San Pedro is the last free flowing river in the state. The Sonoran and Chihuahuan deserts interdigitate here, creating an exceptionally diversified population of plants, which attract a wide variety of insects, birds and other critters. Add close water and you have an astonishing array of life. This unique environment is beautiful, diverse and

fragile. Is it worth the risk of endangering the precarious balance of this one-of-a-kind ecosystem, when there are other options?

I am sure that our ingenuity and creativity can come up with strategies to generate and distribute alternative energy in ways that are not only more respectful of the environment, but also more secure and efficient. By mobilizing our intelligence and creativity, we can surely come up with something to create energy independence that is far superior to the SunZia plan. I am no expert and only have common sense to work with, but from what I know, this project seems so disconnected from what is and so inefficient (and therefore, unprofitable), I suspect an unacknowledged motive is involved in creating this corridor.

Lastly, I want to suggest that there is a special power in the precious spots on this beautiful earth, and I maintain the San Pedro Valley is one of those spots. It may not be a power that can be carried on electrical lines, measured in kilowatts or be profitable to a stockholder or owner of a corporation. These beautiful areas uplift our spirits with their mysterious power, and that is something that, in my opinion, needs to be protected and preserved, not just for us, who are in the autumn of our lives, but for future generations.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts with you.

Sincerely,

Dorothy Motheral

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